A COMMENTARY

ON THE

HOLY SCRIPTURES:

CRITICAL, DOCTRINAL, AND HOMILETICAL,

WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO MINISTERS AND STUDENTS.

BY

JOHN PETER LANGE, D.D.,

IN CONNECTION WITH A NUMBER OF EMINENT EUROPEAN DIVINES.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN, AND EDITED, WITH ADDITIONS,

BY

PHILIP SCHAFF, D.D.,

IN CONNECTION WITH AMERICAN SCHOLARS OF VARIOUS EVANGELICAL DENOMINATIONS.

VOL. VI. OF THE OLD TESTAMENT: CONTAINING THE FIRST AND SECOND BOOKS OF KINGS.

NEW YORK:
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1873.

THE BOOKS

OF

THE KINGS.

BY

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BOOK I.

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PREFACE BY THE GENERAL EDITOR.

THE Commentary on the Books of the Kings, published in 1868, was prepared by the Rev. Dr. BÄHR, of Carlsruhe, who has been long favorably known as the learned author of the *Symbolism of Mosaic Worship* (*Symbolik des Mosaischen Cultus*, Heidelberg, 1837–'39, 2 vols., now undergoing a thorough revision), a Commentary on Colossians, a treatise on the Temple of Solomon (1848), and other works.

The translation from the German, with additions, was executed by the Rev. Dr. HARWOOD, of New Haven, Conn., who assumed the First Book, and by the Rev. W. G. SUMNER, Professor in Yale College, who is responsible for the last chapter of the First, and the whole of the Second Book. The textual revision and original grammatical notes on the First Book must be credited to the Rev. Dr. FREDERIC GARDINER, Professor in the Berkeley Divinity School, Middletown, Conn.

In regard to the principles by which he has been governed in his work, Dr. Bähr says, in his preface:—

"In accordance with the wisely-chosen aim and plan of the BIBLE-WORK of which this volume forms a part, I have taken especial pains to maintain a strict discrimination between the three sections into which the expository matter is divided. In the first section, the *Exegetical and Critical*, I have collected all which seemed essential to the explanation of the original text, and to the determination, both of the sense of the words and of their grammatical connection .... As a matter of course, both the other sections are based on the *Exegetical*. Nothing can properly be made the subject of theological discussion or homiletical treatment which does not rest on a firm exegetical foundation. I have, therefore, omitted from the *Homiletical* section all which, however edifying it might be, in itself considered, had no foundation in the text when this was correctly understood. I have taken the liberty of giving to the second division of the exposition [*Doctrinal and Ethical*], a wider, though more exact, title than that which it bears in the other volumes of the BIBLE-WORK. The specific, and, in fact, exclusive contents of the historical books is *history*, not doctrine or dogma; and this history is, moreover, *soteriological*, that is, it is the history of the redemptive plan of God; the history of the divine revelation, purpose, and providence; the history of the kingdom of God."

Hence Dr. Bähr gives to this section the title: *Heilsgeschichtliche und Ethische Grundgedanken, i.e.: Chief Points* (in the section of text last preceding) *which bear upon the Development of God's Plan of Salvation, or have Ethical Importance.* In consequence of the impossibility of embodying this idea completely in a concise and convenient English title, the translators, while fully appreciating and coinciding in the author's intention, have retained the title which is used for the corresponding section of the other volumes, only substituting *Historical* for *Doctrinal.*

In regard to the *Chronology*, Dr. Bähr continues:—

"I have adopted a somewhat different method from any yet followed in the treatment of this subject. I start from certain dates which are generally accepted, and which may be fixed with the greatest certainty, and then, by grouping the biblical data into periods which are comprised between these fixed dates, I seek to solve this difficult problem (See Pt. II. pp. 86, 180, 283)."

Professor Sumner has added a brief *Appendix* on this subject, together with a *Chronological Table* of the period covered by the Books of the Kings. In Part II. pp. 161, 174, 189, 220, 237, 284 will be found a series of notes on contemporaneous history, so far as it illustrates the references in the text. These notes are based on the results of the latest Assyrian and Egyptian researches.

PHILIP SCHAFF.

NEW YORK, BIBLE HOUSE, *April*, 1872.

THE

BOOKS OF THE KINGS.

INTRODUCTION.

§ 1.

NAME, DATE OF COMPOSITION, AND AUTHOR.

THE name מלכים, which belongs to our books in the Canon of the Old Testament, designates (if not imposed by the author himself), briefly and appropriately, the distinguishing contents of this historical work, in contrast with other writings belonging to the same class, the נביאים ראשונים, *i. e., prophetæ priores.* It contains, not so much the history of the theocracy in general, whereto "the succession of the kings serves only as the visible thread" (Hävernick), as the *history of the Israelitish monarchy* from its ripest bloom on to its destruction, in so far as this history constitutes generally an independent portion of the history of the people Israel. The division of our work into *two* books is not original—it occurs first in the Septuagint. There it is regarded as an immediate continuation of the book שמואל (Samuel), which precedes it in the Canon, and is itself divided into two books, and these four are then designated as Books of the Kings (*βασιλειων α. β. γ. δ.*), (comp. Origen in *Eusebius, Hist. Eccles.* vi. 25). This is retained in the Vulgate (comp. *Hieron. prolog. galeat.*), and came thence, through the printer Dan. Bomberg, in Venice, in the beginning of the sixteenth century, into the editions of the Hebrew Bible. This entire division and designation is just as arbitrary as it is defective. How unfit it is, is shown especially in our own work, the first book of which does not conclude with a paragraph founded in the history itself, but breaks off with a brief account of the reign of king Ahaziah.

The date of its composition is furnished from the conclusion of the work itself, where it is stated that king Jehoiachin was carried away to Babylon in the year 599 B. C., and was held there a prisoner for thirty-seven years—to the year 562—and obtained his freedom from Evil-merodach, the successor of Nebuchadnezzar (2 Kings xxv. 27–30). The composition, consequently, cannot be set down before the year 562. But it does not admit of supposition that it took place after the return from the Babylonish exile in the year 536; for the author concludes with the deliverance of Jehoiachin as a joyful, hopeful event, and does not utter a syllable about the still more important and joyous matter—the return of the whole people—which is first mentioned in Ezra i. The composition, therefore, is to be assigned to the period between 562 and 536, *i. e.*, during the second half of the exile. But we cannot determine whether it was during the brief reign (two years) of Evil-merodach, or after Jehoiachin's death.

In the Bible itself there is no intimation about the *person* of the author. The Jewish tradition names Jeremiah. The Talmud says (*Baba bathra, f.* xv. 1): *Jeremias scripsit librum suum et librum regum et threnos.* Some of the older theologians, and Hävernick also, have agreed

with this statement; but it is refuted alone from the duration of Jeremiah's life. He began his career as prophet (Jer. i. 2) in the thirteenth year of the reign of king Josiah, and must have been then at least from twenty to twenty-two years old; but since now our books could not have been written before the year 562, he must have composed them when he was at least from eighty-six to eighty-eight years old, which appears all the more incredible since the composition presupposes the employing and the arranging of different older written sources. To this must be added that Jeremiah, after the destruction of Jerusalem, went to Egypt (Jer. xliii. 6), and there spent the last years of his life in continuous, grievous conflicts. It cannot, however, be denied, that in the places especially where the author does not report directly from written sources of information, but inserts his own remarks, as in 2 Kings xvii. *sq.*, his mode of thinking and of expression resembles that of Jeremiah, from which, however, nothing more can be concluded than that the author had been entrusted with the writings of this prophet—was, perhaps, his scholar. Bleek suggests, indeed, Baruch, who apparently had charge of collecting and editing the book of Jeremiah, and added to it the 52d chapter, which is consonant with 2 Kings xxv. But in that case, since Baruch went to Egypt with Jeremiah (see on the place), we must suppose that our history was composed there, which is, in the highest degree, improbable. It can scarcely be doubted, rather, that the author wrote in Babylon. If this be not, with some, susceptible of proof, owing to 1 Kings v. 4, where Palestine is described as lying on the other side of the Euphrates, it is, nevertheless, so much the more certain that the author did not write his work for the little band which fled to Egypt, and was there fallen into idolatry and discord, but for the kernel of the whole people then in exile (see below, § 5). While Jeremiah announces the ruin of his corrupted fellow-countrymen in Egypt (Jer. xliv. 11 *sq.*), our author concludes with the deliverance of Jehoiachin promising a better day, and gives, at the same time, details which could have been known only to a contemporary living in the exile; but not then to one who was in distant Egypt. There is an absence of all reference to Egyptian situations and relations, which assuredly would not have been the case had the author and his readers lived in Egypt. After all, we must give up the attempt to designate any particular person as the author. He must have stood high in reputation, anyhow, as is conclusive from the reception of his work into the Canon.

[The prevailing opinion amongst the English seems to be, after Calmet, in favor of Ezra. See Bp. Patrick, Horne, &c. I except Prideaux.—E. H.]

§ 2.

SOURCES.

The author himself states the sources of his historical work, extending over a period of 453 years, viz.:

1) סֵפֶר דִּבְרֵי שְׁלֹמֹה 1 Kings xi. 41.

2) סֵפֶר דִּבְרֵי הַיָּמִים לְמַלְכֵי יְהוּדָה 1 Kings xiv. 29; xv. 7, 22; xxii. 46; 2 Kings viii. 23; xii. 20; xiv. 18; xv. 6, 15, 36; xvi. 19; xx. 20; xxi. 17, 25; xxiii. 28: xxiv. 5.

3) סֵפֶר דִּבְרֵי הַיָּמִים לְמַלְכֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל 1 Kings xiv. 19; xv. 31; xvi. 5, 14, 20, 27; xxii. 39; 2 Kings i. 18; x. 34; xiii. 8, 12; xiv. 28; xv. 11, 15, 21, 26, 31.

Besides these three documentary sources, none else is cited in our books. And since the author refers only to the first, and not to the second or third, for the history of Solomon, and for the history of the kings of Judah only to the second, and for the history of the kings of Israel only to the third, it follows that each one of them was an independent, separate work. The reference is always made with the formula: "The rest of the acts of the king . . . and what he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah (of Israel)?" Thence it follows still farther, that the three documents contained more than the author has incorporated into his work, and were more complete; and that not only were they in existence at the time our books were composed, but they were in the hands, if not of all,

of many, nevertheless, and were circulated generally. For if they were only submitted to *his* inspection, he could not have appealed to them and referred his readers to them. In many respects it is well to bear this in mind.

We obtain now a completer explanation of these documents themselves, through comparison with the citations in the Chronicles, which refers to its own sources with a similar formula. A whole series of paragraphs in our books is repeated word for word in the Chronicles. In this case there is no reference to one of our three documents, but to the writings of given individuals, as their source. So, first of all, with the history of Solomon, in which the following sections are consonant with each other, viz.: 2 Chron. vi. 1–40 with 1 Kings viii. 12–50; 2 Chron. vii. 7–22 with 1 Kings viii. 64—ix. 9; 2 Chron. viii. 2 to the 10th ver. and ver. 17 with 1 Kings ix. 17–23, and ver. 26; 2 Chron. ix. 1–28 with 1 Kings x. 1–28, etc. Here the Chronicles does not, like our author, refer to "the book of the history of Solomon," but to the "דִּבְרֵי of Nathan the prophet, and נְבוּאַת of the [prophet] Ahijah the Shilonite, and the חֲזוֹת of Iddo the Seer" (2 Chron. ix. 29). Consequently the book of the "acts" of Solomon must either have consisted of these three prophetic writings, or at least must have contained essential portions of them. So also in respect of our second document, the book of the "acts" of the kings of Judah. The account of Rehoboam in 2 Chron. x. 1–19 is fully consonant with that in 1 Kings xii. 1–19, that also in 2 Chron. xi. 1–4 with that in 1 Kings xii. 20–24, that still farther in 2 Chron. xii. 13 *sq.* with that in 1 Kings xiv. 21 *sq.;* but the source is not, as in 1 Kings xiv. 29, called the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah, but "דִּבְרֵי of Shemaiah the prophet and of Iddo the Seer" (2 Chron. xii. 15). In the history of king Abijam, the very much abbreviated account in 1 Kings xv. 1–8 refers for what is more extended, to the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah. The Chronicles, on the other hand, which gives the more extended narrative, refers to the "מִדְרַשׁ of the prophet Iddo" (2 Chron. xiii. 22). Such, too, is the case in the history of the kings Uzziah and Manasseh. Our author, in both instances, appeals to the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah (2 Kings xv. 6; xxi. 17), (but) the chronicler, in the case of the former, to the "כָּתַב of Isaiah the prophet the son of Amoz" (2 Chron. xxvi. 22), and in that of the latter to the "דִּבְרֵי חוֹזָי" (2 Chron. xxxiii. 18, 19). From all these references, it follows plainly that the book of the kings of Judah consisted of the historical writings of different prophets or seers. Still more decisively and unanswerably do the following places confirm this. In the history of king Jehoshaphat, 1 Kings xxii. 2–35 coincides with 2 Chron. xviii. 2–34. As usual, our author here refers to the book of the kings of Judah; but the chronicler to the דִּבְרֵי of Jehu the son of Hanani, אֲשֶׁר הֹעֲלָה עַל־סֵפֶר מַלְכֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל, *i. e.*, which are inserted, received into, etc. (2 Chron. xx. 34). So also for the history of Hezekiah, our author appeals again simply to the book of the kings of Judah (2 Kings xx. 20); but the chronicler to the חֲזוֹן of Isaiah, the son of Amoz, עַל־סֵפֶר of the kings of Judah (2 Chron. xxxii. 32). Hence it happens that the purely historical sections in Isaiah, chapters xxxvi. to xxxix., and in Jeremiah, chapter lii., are reproduced in 2 Kings xviii. 30 to xx. 19, and in xxiv. 18 to xxv. 30, since they were certainly regarded as having come from the prophets. But our author, at least in the history of Hezekiah, refers, not to the book of the prophet Isaiah, but to the book of the kings of Judah (2 Kings xx. 20).—After all, if the three documents forming the foundation of our books were not the production of one author, but each of them was made up of the writings of different, and, in fact, prophetic authors, who had recorded the history of their own times, they were *historical compilations* (comp. Bleek, *Einleitung in das Alte Testament*, sec. 157 *sq.;* Bertheau, *Die Bücher der Chron. Einl.*, § 3).

That prophets generally were the historians of the Israelitish people, is universally acknowledged (Knobel, *Der Prophet. der Hebr.*, i. *s.* 58 *sq.*), and has its reason in the nature and destiny of this nation. "In order to recognize Jehovah in the directing of His people, and to explain and gather up all the particular facts in the connection of the theocratic guidance, the Spirit of God was the subjective condition. The history was not to be estimated as an aggregate of facts to be gathered by inquiry, and to be set forth with talent, but as a revelation of Jehovah

in continuous acts, to understand which, properly, the Spirit of God seemed essential as Organ, just as much as for the comprehension of particular, immediate signs, facts (*Geschichte*), and oracles of Jehovah" (Winer, *R.-W.-B.*, i. *s.* 412, Not. 2). The secular historian does not know Hebrew antiquity. The historical books of the Old Testament carry the collective name in the Canon נְבִיאִים, and are distinguished from the books strictly prophetical only in this, that the adjective ראשׁנים, *priores*, is applied to them, and to the latter אחרונים, *posteriores*. But if in any age history would have been written by prophets, this most certainly would have happened when prophecy was in the period of its bloom, and this was in the time of the monarchy (comp. Bleek). The prophets did not write the history of Israel as private persons, but as servants of Jehovah, as "men of God." They are the historiographers of the kingdom of God, of the theocracy, and their narrative has for the people of God an official character, which imparts to their historical, not less than to their strictly prophetical, writings, authority and value in the judgment of the people. Were it not so, our author and the chronicler could not have appealed to them so constantly.

If the three documentary sources of our books consisted, as has been stated above, of several prophetical isolated pieces, the question then arises, when and by whom were the latter collected and combined into each of the three ספרים. In the lack of all specific accounts, this admits only of a conjectural reply. If it were the business of the prophets to write the history of Israel as God's people, and to exhibit in it the threads of divine guidance and revelation, it must, of necessity, have occurred to them that their narrative would not only be continued always, but, also, that the historical material already in hand would be preserved and secured for future generations. This may have been attended to in the smaller prophetical circles, especially in the so-called schools of the prophets. It is hence highly improbable that, as Keil pretends, "just before the fall of the kingdom of Judah," the isolated pieces which had been composed within the period of some centuries, which were scattered about here and there, should have been collected and made up into one whole; for the time immediately preceding the fall of the kingdom was a time of utter disorder, which was least of all fit for such an undertaking, apart from the consideration that the kingdom of Israel perished 130 years sooner, and its history was contained in a special work (*Sammelwerk*), viz., in the third documentary source. More can be said for the supposition that the compilation was not completed at once, in a given time, but gradually, and that the latter isolated pieces were added to the earlier, which would have been entirely natural and easily done. Since our author, as we have remarked above, carefully distinguishes the three documents in his citations, adduces each one separately, and never, in any one of the thirty-four places, confounds the second with the third, we are justified in the opinion that in his day, the three documentary sources were distinct works. In the time of the chronicler the second and third may have been formed into one whole, since he frequently refers to the book of the kings of Judah *and* Israel (2 Chron. xvi. 11; xxv. 26; xxviii. 26; xxxii. 32; xxvii. 7; xxxv. 27; xxxvi. 8); once, also, simply to the book of the Kings (2 Chron. xxiv. 27). We cannot deduce anything from this with entire certainty, however, for the Chronicles, although it often names prophetical individual works, does not, in this respect, observe the accuracy of our books, as, *e. g.*, when in the case of Jehoshaphat and Manasseh, kings of Judah, it refers to the "book of the kings of Israel" (2 Chron. xx. 34; xxxiii. 18), where we must assume either an exchange or an omission of the words "and Judah."

Our author, in his use of the three documents, does not give a uniformly continuous extract from them. Sometimes, indeed, in accordance with the special design of his work (see below, § 5), he quotes entire sections literally, as is clear from sections in Jeremiah, Isaiah, and Chronicles, which are duplicates of each other. Sometimes he abbreviates them very much, as, *e. g.*, is shown by a comparison of 1 Kings xv. 1–8 with 2 Chron. xiii. 1–23. If he have not prepared the historical material furnished him in an independent way, special remarks, insertions, and transitions may, nevertheless, have originated with him. But it is very hazardous to attempt to determine this accurately. Of one section only, viz., 2 Kings xvii. 7–23, can we claim with certainty that it is the author's own.

The sections upon the life and activity of the two great prophets, Elijah and Elisha, form no small portion of our books. In these we miss the usual appeal to one of the three documentary sources. Those which relate to Elijah bear certainly an unmistakably peculiar mark (comp., *e. g.*, 1 Kings xvii. with the preceding chapter); but it does not at all follow that they belong to another than the third document, for this, like the other two, was a collection of isolated pieces of different authors. For since those two prophets were felt so powerfully in the history of the monarchy, and they exerted generally, upon the development of the Old Testament theocracy, an influence vastly greater than that of many a king, a narrative devoted to them would scarcely have been wanting in the compilation. Besides, we cannot conceive why our author, who usually adduces his sources so carefully, and refers to them even in the most insignificant portions of the history of the kings, should have been silent, in the most weighty history of the two prophets, as to whether he had derived the same from another source than that he was constantly making use of (comp. Bleek, *a. a. O.*, *s.* 371). If then of any one portion of our books, of *this* it is certain and self-evident, that it is the production of a prophet. If prophets have written the history of the kings, how much more their own!

What has thus far been submitted respecting the documentary sources of our books, differs more or less from the view now current. Almost universally, by the cited ספרים are understood "public annual registers" or "annals," which were kept by some royal official, and deposited in the state archives. Besides these chief sources, the author (it is thought) has used others still, viz., prophetic writings. According to Delitzsch (in Drechsler, *Der Proph. Jesaja*, ii. 2, *s.* 253, and *Commentar über den Proph. Jesaja*, *s.* ix.), the historical composition was both annalistic and prophetic. "The aims of the two are distinct. The aim of the prophetic is to exhibit the inner divine connections of the outward event which the annalistic registers." . . . . "With David began the official writing of annals, which resulted in those historical works out of which the authors of the book of the Kings and of the Chronicles have chiefly, if not immediately, drawn. We behold David as the supreme chief of the kingdom, exercising the highest authority on all sides, and we find several offices created wholly by him. Under these is included that of the מַזְכִּיר, *i. e.*, as the Septuagint, frequently explaining, translates, ὑπομνηματόγραφος, or (2 Sam. viii. 16) ἐπὶ τῶν ὑπομνημάτων (*Hieron.*, genuinely Roman, *a commentariis*). . . . . The מַזְכִּיר was required to keep the annals of the kingdom. His office is different from that of the סוֹפֵר or chancellor. It was the duty of the סוֹפֵר (chancellor) to issue the public documents, and of the מַזְכִּיר (recorder) to preserve them and to incorporate them into the proper connection of the history of the kingdom. Throughout the ancient East both offices existed generally. Reference to the annals begins at 1 Chron. xxvii. 24 with the דִּבְרֵי הַיָּמִים of David, and is continued in סֵפֶר דִּבְרֵי שְׁלֹמֹה 1 Kings xi. 41. . . . If we regard the state annals as a completed work, it falls naturally into four portions. The first two treated of the history of the kingdom in its unity, the last two were annals of the kings of Judah and of Israel—the history of the dissevered kingdom. The original of the state archives was destroyed doubtless when the Chaldæans burned Jerusalem. But excerpted copies of it were preserved, and the histories of the reign of David and of Solomon, rich especially in annalistic particulars in the historical books in our possession, show that diligence was devoted conspicuously to the circulation of copies of the annals of these sovereigns, and that they probably appeared in separate tractates." Ewald also (*Gesch. Israels*, iii. *s.* 180, 338) maintains that amongst the highest royal functionaries named in 2 Sam. viii. 16, and 1 Kings iv. 3, the מַזְכִּיר was "he whose business it was to record all weighty incidents concerning the royal house and kingdom, and who, at the close of a reign, gave publicly a *résumé* of the history of it." He was also "court-historiographer." David created this "court-office," and it was never afterwards "given up." Besides the "public annals" prescribed by David, there were also in the kingdom of Israel "numerous and continuous prophetico-historical summaries," which were fused subsequently into one work, which again was "perhaps retouched and partially enlarged, yet much more sensibly abbreviated." Our author is

the "latest elaborator," and "the fifth." We remark, against these very plausible assumption, the following:

(*a*) There is not a single passage of the Old Testament to show that the מַזְכִּיר was the writer of the court and kingdom records; that he drew up "protocolled" and "original" archives that were deposited among the "state archives." He never appears the least in the light of a historiographer or annalist when mentioned, or when his function is alluded to, but as a civil officer (comp. 2 Kings xviii. 18, 37; 2 Chron. xxxiv. 8: comp. Winer, *R.-W.-B.*, ii. *s.* 309). Thenius justly remarks, on 1 Kings iv. 3, the maskir "received his name from his office as μνήμων, whose duty it was to bring to the king's remembrance the state affairs to be settled, and about which he was consulted." Had David "newly" founded the office of a court and state scribe, David's own history would have been the first to have been written by this official; but 1 Chron. xxix. 29 says of this very history, that it is "written" עַל־דִּבְרֵי of Samuel the seer, and in the book of Nathan the prophet, and in the book of Gad the seer." Neither could "the book of the acts of Solomon" (1 Kings xi. 41) have been written by the maskir, for the Chronicles, that has so many parallel sections with this history (see above), says that these acts were written in the book of Nathan the prophet, and in the נְבוּאַת of Ahijah the Shilonite, and in the חֲזוֹת of Iddo the seer" (2 Chron. ix. 29). If the office of maskir existed at all in the kingdom of Judah under the kings of David's house, there is not the least trace of it in the separated kingdom of Israel. Here the dynasty was changed nine times, and each was completely cut off by the new ruler. Was then the history of each king written by the maskir of his successor (granting that there was such an official), and preserved among the state archives? Would, for instance, a Jehu, who so unmercifully destroyed the whole house of Ahab (2 Kings x. 11–14) have the history of that house written by a royal official, or have preserved the already-existing annals among the archives of his kingdom? Would a Jezebel have suffered the court-historian to have written yearly accounts of all her shameful acts? Lastly, the assertion that the סוֹפֵר had to prepare the public documents, and the מַזְכִּיר to preserve them, is a pure invention, without any support from a single passage.

(*b*) That there was a סֵפֶר דִּבְרֵי הַיָּמִים of the Medeo-Persian kings (Esth. x. 2), even supposing that archives drawn up by a court-scribe were meant, can never prove that the office of a court-scribe was instituted by David 600 years before, and that this office continued without interruption from that time on in both kingdoms during their separation. But even suppose that there were such archives kept in Israel as well as in Judah, and deposited in the archive-building, yet it must be considered that our author wrote in the latter half of the Babylonian captivity, consequently at a time when the residences of Samaria and Jerusalem had been for a long while destroyed, and when also, as is admitted, the annals that had been preserved in the archive-building no longer existed. The supposition that the Assyrians and Chaldæans kept the archives of conquered dynasties in their capitals, and allowed those exiles who had acquired the favor of the conqueror to make use of them (Stähelin, *Einl. in's Alte Testament*, *s.* 129), is as unfounded as it is arbitrary. At the destruction of Jerusalem, not only the royal palace, but also "all the great houses were burned" (2 Kings xxv. 9). And how could our author refer his readers to writings that either did not exist then, or at least were not within the range of all? But the assertion that excerpted extracts from the originals of the state archives had been preserved, rests on the presupposition that "the annals of each dynasty were made public when it became extinct,"—a presupposition which is again without the shadow of support, and which, though helping out a difficulty, is a purely arbitrary notion.

(*c*) Least of all can the contents of the book of Kings be adduced to prove that the "archives of the kingdom" were the principal authorities for it. The history of the reigns of each of the nineteen kings of Israel begins with the expression: "He did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord." The same expression occurs with regard to twelve of the twenty kings of Judah, and it expresses the general character of their rule. It is even told at length how deeply even the greatest and most glorious king, Solomon, fell. The "sin of

Jeroboam, who made Israel to sin," is represented as the source of all the evils of the kingdom; the conspiracies and murders of a Baasha, a Shallum, a Menahem; the wicked deeds of an Ahab, a Jezebel, and Manasseh, are told unsparingly; and, finally, the chronicler says of king Jehoiakim of Judah: "his abominations which he did, and that which was found in him, behold they are written in the book of the kings of Israel and Judah" (2 Chron. xxxvi. 8). How can we then suppose that all this and much more like it was protocolled by the "court-historiographer" with the knowledge and in the service of the king; that it was recorded in official archives of the kingdom, and then made public? No court-officials could have written books of such contents, none but free-souled prophets who were perfectly independent of the court. Ewald adduces, as unmistakable "remains" of the official archives (*a. a. O.*, *s.* 182), the sections that refer to Solomon's officers, over his household, and his buildings. But we cannot perceive why these sections only should have been written by a court-official. A man who stood so near Solomon as the prophet Nathan, who, according to 2 Chron. ix. 29, wrote a history of that king, could and must know well what officials and how many he had, how he managed his kingdom and court, and how the temple and palace built by him were constructed. The accounts of the building of the tabernacle are much fuller than those of the temple, and yet are certainly not written by secular officials. There is, in fact, nothing in these books that a נָבִיא may not have known and written; and it is indeed astonishing that, notwithstanding all this, people should still insist on the supposed "archives of the kingdom," and obstinately object to the prophetic origin of the three documentary sources.

(*d*) Because there is so much matter that could not possibly have been in the official annals, they have been driven to a wholly unfounded supposition, viz., that the author used other authorities also, which are not named. But this is disproved by the fact that the three authorities used were not official annals at all. The author refers to the sources whence he drew his facts about thirty times, and he refers to them even when he wrote of those kings that only reigned a short time; but he does not once quote any other work. Now, as the greater part of the contents of our books could not possibly have been taken from court-annals, it would be inexplicable that the author should never have named his other authorities. The conclusion that, because everything could not have been found in the archives, the author drew from other sources, is therefore false. We should be much more justified in the inverse conclusion, that because everything may have been contained in the historico-prophetical works of Samuel (and the author only quotes these), they alone, and not such as he never names, were his authorities.

Thenius has put forward a view regarding the sources of the books of the Kings (Comm. *über die Bücher der Könige*, *Einleit.* § 3) which differs from the view we have just discussed, and also from our own. He asserts that there are three "different component parts:" namely, the "properly historical," the "traditional," and these passages that were "really written by the elaborator." There were, he thinks, two different sources of the historical parts, and, in fact, "a larger work," which fell into two halves according to the two kingdoms, and "when the official yearly records of both kingdoms were used, may have been principally composed of what was written regarding the influence of the prophets that had so much weight in public affairs; written partly by the prophets themselves, and partly by others of their time, or recorded soon after." There was then an "extract from this larger work," which he supposes our author to have "found," and to which the "summary accounts contained in our books," and the invariable form of quotation, belong. The traditional portions are in part separate "descriptions drawn from tradition," and in part are peculiarly "a book composed by and for the prophets—a sort of prophet-mirror, the chief design of which was to impress on the pupils of the prophets the necessity for the most implicit obedience to the divine exhortations." Whilst all the sections that enter into detail are taken from the first-named "larger work," the narratives of the prophets, as the history of Elijah and Elisha, were taken from the "prophet-mirror." Thenius has tried to determine precisely to which of these different component parts the separate sections and verses of our books belong. Against this view we advance the following:

(*a*) The author's own statements refute the supposition that one larger work, forming a whole in itself, was his chief authority. The chronicler who wrote much later, refers indeed often to the "book of the acts of the kings of Judah *and* Israel;" but our author does not do so in one of the thirty-four passages where he quotes his authorities, but he always either names the book of the kings of Judah or that of the kings of Israel. Thus he had two separate, independent books before him, for the very nature of the case required that the history of the two separated kingdoms should be separately designated. But even granted that the three ספרים, so accurately distinguished from each other, were only one larger work, we should then have to ask when it was written, what author wrote it, and from what sources it was derived. As in 2 Kings xxiv. 5 only the book of the Kings of Judah is quoted, the former could not have been written till after the time of Jehoiakim; but against this there are the above-mentioned references made by the chronicler to the separate writings of earlier prophets and seers. The author of the "larger work" (whoever he might have been) is supposed to have used the "official yearly records of both kingdoms;" but the grand question is, whether there were any such records, and particularly in the kingdom of Israel. But if the three ספרים are taken to mean the larger work, the official yearly records cannot be meant at the same time; thus no reference can have been made to them.

(*b*) That our author should have used an extract from the larger work as well as the work itself, is an extraordinary assertion, which no one thought of making till now. He certainly needed no such extract, as, being in possession of the larger work, he could have made an extract himself, and could get nothing from any such, made by another, that was not to be found in the work itself. But if he had, as proved, two separate ספרים before him, the book of the kings of Judah *and* that of the kings of Israel, there must have been two extracts, one having been made in each kingdom, and this no one can or will accept. The attempt to determine accurately what belongs to the larger work, what was taken from the extract, and what was the author's own, is, to say the least, very adventurous, and rests alone upon a purely subjective judgment, *i. e.*, is more or less arbitrary. Why, for instance, should not the brief summary statements made in 1 Kings xv. about some kings, be taken from the extended authority cited, which is also quoted in every case, but be borrowed from the supposed extract? Why should the sentence in 1 Kings xiv. 21, "in the city which the Lord did choose out of all the tribes of Israel to put His name there," not belong to the authority used, but have been inserted by the author himself? Why should the same be the case with chap. xv. 4, 5?

(*c*) The distinction between "truly historical" and "traditional" component parts, each of which is said to have its peculiar sources, is founded on the presupposition that every account in which a miracle, or the fulfilment of a prophecy, in fact anything out of the ordinary course of history, is recorded, cannot be historical, but is "legendary." But those narratives are so closely connected with such as are admitted to be "truly historical," that they can only be forcibly separated from the context and laid to a separate "traditional" documentary source. Why, for instance, should the sections 1 Kings x. 1–13 and xi. 1–13 not be historical, but the first be derived from a written and the latter from oral tradition? Why should 1 Kings xx. 1–34 belong to the supposed larger historical work, and vers. 35 to 43, on the contrary, to the so-called prophet-mirror; in the same way 2 Kings iii. 4–27 to the former, and 2 Kings vi. 24–vii. 20 to the latter? Why should everything in the great section 2 Kings xviii. 13–xx. 19 (Isai. xxxvi. 39) be historical, and only the midway verses of 2 Kings xix. 35–37 (Isai. xxxvii. 36–38) have been taken from another and a traditional source?

(*d*) There is nowhere the slightest trace in the Bible of a particular book that was used as "a prophet-mirror." If the author cites one of his three authorities in writing of kings of whom there was but little to say (1 Kings xvi. 15; 2 Kings xv. 13), he would certainly not have omitted to give his authority, if he had one, in the important and deeply-interesting history of the great prophets. Apart from this, too, the supposition of such "a book, compiled for pupils of the prophets," is contrary to the sense and spirit of Hebrew antiquity. The old prophets felt themselves indeed called on to record the history of Jehovah's people; but

it never entered their minds to compile a book of instruction or examples for their pupils, in order to lead them to "the most implicit obedience."* Modern times, indeed, require instruction for the performance of the spiritual office, &c.; but antiquity had no such books. If the three documentary sources were, as we have proved, collections made from writings that were contemporary with or made soon after the נביאים who lived during the events, all the sections that are said to belong to the supposed prophet-mirror might easily have been drawn from them.

§ 3.

UNITY AND INDEPENDENCE.

If any book of the Old Testament forms a complete and independent whole, the books of Kings, which afterwards and erroneously were divided into two books, are such, notwithstanding their character as compilations. This is apparent in their beginning and conclusion, which are the limits of a certain period of the Old Testament history. They begin with the reign of the most glorious king, for whom the building of the temple was reserved, and they end with the ruin of the whole kingdom, and the destruction of that temple. It is plain from 1 Kings vi. 1 that a former period of the history of Israel terminates with the building of the temple, and a new one begins: "In the four hundred and eightieth year after the children of Israel were come out of the land of Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon's reign over Israel, in the month Zif, which is the second month, he began to build the house of the Lord." Why a new period began with the building of the temple by Solomon, is shown in the following passages: 2 Sam. vii. 8–16; 1 Kings v. 3, 4; 1 Chron. xvii. 7–12; xxii. 8-11. The period from the exodus from Egypt to Solomon was the time of wandering (of the "Tabernacle"), of war, and of disturbance; even David was the "man of war." With Solomon, the "man of quiet and peace," the period of full and quiet possession of the promised land, and the period marked by Jehovah's "house," began. With Solomon, also, the "house" of David, *i. e.*, David's dynasty, to whom the kingdom was promised forever, first really began (2 Sam vii. 13; 1 Chron. xvii. 14). This period continues then till the ruin of David's house, which is also the ruin of Jehovah's house, and with this our books conclude (2 Kings xxv).

The unity and independence of these books is shown, not only in their style, but in their contents also. Even De Wette confesses (*Einl.*, *s.* 239): "a certain unity is manifest in matter, style, and manner of exposition, from beginning to end;" and Thenius says (*a. a. O.*, *s.* 1): "There are remarks scattered up and down the whole that are all written in one spirit, and are found in no other historical book, as in the books of the Kings (certainly not in the books of Samuel)." A peculiar style and method of historical writings prevails, and such as we find nowhere else. The time of the beginning of each reign and its duration are first stated in the history of each king, then his general character is given, next an account, more or less full, of his acts, after that the date of his death and burial, and finally mention is made of the authorities used. Some forms of expression are indeed employed (in the extracts) which do not belong to the time of their composition, but to a later period (Stähelin, *Krit. Untersuch*, *s.* 150 *sq.*); but they only prove "that the author not only often quoted his authorities, but used them with some freedom" (Thenius).

The arbitrary designation of the books of Samuel as the first and second books of the Kings by the Sept. and the Vulgate (see § 1) may have occasioned the assertion of recent critics, like Eichhorn and Jahn, that both works are by the same author, and properly belong together. Ewald goes still farther; according to him, the books of Judges, Ruth, Samuel, and Kings, are, in their present form, one connected whole, by one author, whom he asserts was the last of five consecutive elaborators on the existing authorities. But all that distinguishes our books from the other historical ones of the Old Testament so clearly, applies to the books of Samuel also. Here all the chronological data that are so carefully repeated with each king, in our books, are completely wanting, as are also the usual expressions descriptive of char-

acter and mission. The narrative is much more minute, simply strung together without always preserving chronological order; as, for instance, the entire section 2 Sam. xxi.–xxiv, which is a sequel to David's history. The first two chapters of our books have been especially adduced, as an unmistakable continuation of 2 Sam. xx. 26, and showing the same author's style of narration. These chapters, however, are inseparably and closely connected with the three following; they form the indispensable introduction to Solomon's accession, and are, on the other hand, separated from 2 Sam. xx. 26 by the supplement in 2 Sam. xxi.–xxiv. But the similarity of the style is easily explained by the consideration that they were all derived from a common source (1 Chron. xxix. 29). The similarity of some narratives and modes of expression has also been alleged; but it is difficult to perceive what likeness Ewald can find between Abiathar's banishment (1 Kings ii. 26) and the rejection of Eli's house (1 Sam. ii. 35); between the elevation of Jehu to be king (2 Kings ix. *sq.*) and that of Saul (1 Sam. ix. *sq.*). It is just so with 1 Kings iv. 1–6, and 2 Sam. viii. 15 to 18; there the chief officers of Solomon are given, and here those of David also; but neither the offices themselves, their order, nor the persons, are the same. Neither do the following passages: 1 Kings ii. 11 comp. with 2 Sam. v. 5, and 1 Kings ii. 4; v. 17 to 19; viii. 18, 25 comp. with 2 Sam. vii. 12–16, prove the identity of the author; they only show, what is already clear, that our author knew the books of Samuel, which were written before his time. Least of all should the phraseology in 1 Sam. xxv. 22 and 1 Kings xiv. 16; xvi. 11; xxi. 21; 2 Kings ix, 8 be adduced as proof that the author is the same. It is very natural "that an Israelite who was no doubt intimately acquainted with the documents of his people, should often involuntarily use expressions from memory" (Thenius).

§ 4.

CREDIBILITY.

The question of the credibility of these books concerns not so much themselves as the authorities from which they were compiled. But as these were, as § 2 shows, composed by prophets who were contemporaries of the events described, they are at least as much to be relied on as the pretended annals written by court-historiographers, and therefore accredited. The constant citation of the original documents presupposes that they were accounted regular historical authorities, not only by the author himself, but also by his readers, and the whole people; in fact, by reference to them he guards against every suspicion of relating fiction or doubtful facts. That he carefully and conscientiously chose his matter, is shown especially by all those sections which are parallel with others in Isaiah, Jeremiah, or the Chronicles, though not borrowed from them, but taken from the common source now no longer extant. The accuracy of the dates, which is the basis of historical writing, is evidence of the credibility of the narrative. But besides this there are many precise, genealogical, geographical, and statistical remarks, as well as numerous characteristic traits of individuals, which could not be fictitious, and bear the unmistakable impress of truth. An historical book would scarcely have been placed in the Canon and among the נביאים, if it had not been universally esteemed as the true history after the original documents were lost.

While Eichhorn (*Einl.* § 486) recognized the "perfect credibility" of our books, recent critics have only partially and conditionally admitted it. They assert that these books contain "myths" as well as authentic information (De Wette); stories, therefore, which are only the clothing of religious ideas and doctrines, and having no real historical foundation: or else they say that whole sections, especially those relating to the lives and deeds of the prophets, have a "fabulous character" (Thenius); that they are not without historical foundation and substance indeed, but yet are more or less colored and embellished. No books, however, are more free than these, from myths. They do not deal with a prehistoric time, but with a comparatively late historical period, and their design is to give history, and nothing but history, not religious ideas or doctrines in the dress of fictitious history. The history they relate is indeed, in its nature as a part of the history of God's people, of a religious kind, but is not on

that account fiction, but is history in the truest and fullest sense of the word. The idea of mythical ingredients has very rightly been abandoned of late, but a fabulous character has been the more insisted on. Proceeding from negative-dogmatic presuppositions, they endeavor to prove, as already remarked above, § 2, that every miracle and every prophecy belongs to the province of fable. But miracles form (comp. for instance 1 Kings xviii.) the very central point of this history, which is indisputably true in all other respects, and admitted to be such; they must therefore fall or stand along with it. In fact, what is stated to be fabulous in these books is so interwoven with what is admitted as historical, that they can only be arbitrarily separated; and every attempt to decide where history ceases and fable begins, appears arbitrary and vain. To set forth the miraculous in the history of the old covenant as unhistorical, is to deny that there was a divine revelation in it; it is rooted in the election of Israel, from among all people of the earth, to be a peculiar people (Ex. xix. 3–6), *i. e.*, the guardians of the knowledge of the one God and His revelations. This election is, as Martensen aptly terms it (*Dogmatic*, *s.* 363), the "fundamental miracle which no criticism can explain away," because it is a world-historical fact. The prophets stood alone in Israel, as Israel did among all nations of the earth; all their great and extraordinary deeds and announcements were inseparably connected with their peculiar vocation. They themselves were a greater miracle than all the miracles they performed, as Christ was himself the greatest miracle, and all his wonderful deeds were rooted in the miracle of His own person and mission. Neither were the deeds of the prophets mere wonderful sights caused by divine power, but "signs" (אֹתוֹת), that pointed to higher things, and real evidences of the רוּחַ of Jehovah, working through the prophets. That which has been adduced against passages in our books, which do not harmonize with, or which are in direct contradiction with, each other, and tell against its complete credibility, does not amount to much. We refer, also, in this respect, to the commentary upon the passages in question.

§ 5.

OBJECT AND CHARACTER.

As the book was written during the second half of the captivity, and the prophetic writer himself was living among the exiles (§ 1), it is plain that the work must bear the stamp of such extraordinary times and especially refer to them. It was not the author's object to write a historical work that should enrich the Hebrew literature; but he had rather a peculiar object in view, and one that bore upon the times he lived in. No time was so fitting as that of the captivity, to hold before the captive and deeply-humbled people the mirror of their history from the most prosperous period of the kingdom under Solomon to its fall. Such a history would necessarily show them the ways by which their God led them, as well as their great guilt and their fall; and also convince them that the only way to deliverance and freedom, was that sincere penitence and conversion to the Lord their God, and firm adherence to the broken covenant and the promises therewith connected. It was the object of the author to awaken and strengthen this conviction. Now the three prophetico-historical collections that he used, were accessible also to others, otherwise he could not have referred his readers to them so constantly. But it seems, from the formula with which he does so, that they were very minute and voluminous, which must have made their general circulation in the time of the captivity very difficult, or almost impossible. Hence the author undertook to make extracts from them, choosing those events that served the object he had in view. It is very clear that such an historical work was much needed at that particular time.

The style of the history exactly corresponds with the design. The work is anything but a string of historical facts without any plan; on the contrary, the author proceeds from a fixed principle, to which he adheres to the end, through the choice as well as arrangement of the historical matter, and so firmly, that his work bears the character of a pragmatic historical composition more than any other historical book of Scripture. This principle is the fundamental idea of the entire old covenant—the election of Israel from all nations to be a peculiar people

(Ex. xix. 3–6); the fundamental law of this election, *i. e.*, the covenant, declares: "I am the Lord thy God which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt (*i. e.*, made thee an independent people). Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, nor any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them, for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me and keep my commandments" (Ex. xx. 2–6). This supreme commandment of the covenant lies at the root of the author's historical view and representation. According as the historical facts are directly or indirectly connected with it, he relates them more or less in detail; what is utterly disconnected with it he passes over entirely. To him idolatry and image-worship are the sin of all sins, because they destroyed what alone made Israel a peculiar and independent people, chosen from among all nations, and also destroyed its world-historical destiny. All evil, even the ruin of the entire kingdom, was the natural consequence of contempt and transgression of that chief and fundamental law, as, inversely, all good and every blessing followed adherence to the same. The author himself alludes to this fundamental idea in the long reflections which he makes after the ruin of the kingdom, 2 Kings xvii. 7 *sq.*, and it appears here and there throughout the whole work. David is a pattern for all the kings of God's people, not because he was morally free from blame, but because he held to this fundamental law in every situation, and never departed from it one iota; the promise was therefore given him: "Thine house and thy kingdom shall be established forever before thee; thy throne shall be established forever" (2 Sam. vii. 16; comp. 1 Kings viii. 25; ix. 5; xi. 36, 39; 2 Kings viii. 19). This is the reason also that he is so often alluded to in the words: "as his father David," or "he walked in the ways of his father David" (1 Kings iii. 3, 14; ix. 4; xi. 4, 6, 33, 38; xiv. 8; xv. 5, 11; 2 Kings xiv. 3; xvi. 2; xviii. 3; xxii. 2), or: "for David thy father's sake" (1 Kings xi. 12, 13, 32, 34; xv. 3; 2 Kings viii. 19; xix. 34; xx. 6). David, when dying, exhorts his successor with the most impressive words, above all, to hold fast to the fundamental law (1 Kings ii. 3 *sq.*). But when Solomon permitted idolatrous worship in the latter part of his reign, the kingdom was rent from him, "because he had not kept Jehovah's covenant" (1 Kings xi. 9–13). Disregard of the covenant was the cause of the partition of the kingdom, and, in so far, the germ of its destruction. From the time of the partition, the account of every single king of Judah and of Israel begins with the general characteristic: "He did that which was right in the sight of the Lord" (1 Kings xv. 11; xxii. 43; 2 Kings xii 3; xiv. 3; xv. 3, 34; xviii. 3; xxii. 2), or: "He did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord" (1 Kings xv. 26, 34; xvi. 19, 25, 30; xxii. 53; 2 Kings iii. 2; viii. 18, 27; xiii. 2, 11; xiv. 24; xv. 9, 18, 24, 28; xvi. 2; xvii. 2; xxi. 2, 20; xxiii. 32, 37; xxiv. 9, 19). This does not say whether a king lived morally and virtuously, but whether he kept the covenant and first fundamental commandment faithfully; that was the chief thing, and determined the character of his whole reign. The author applies this unfailing test to the conduct of all the kings, as well as of the whole people (1 Kings xiv. 22; 2 Kings xvii. 7, 19). But there is something more. That the kingdom should always remember its duty, not to swerve to the right or left from the fundamental law (Deut. xvii. 19, 20), the prophetic institution came into being, the mission of which was to watch over the keeping of the covenant, to warn against all manner of apostasy, and whensoever it appeared, to exhort, to threaten, and promise. The history of the activity of the prophets is therefore intimately connected with that of the kings, and is, in fact, a part which serves to complete the same. The author could not then avoid bringing the history of the most influential prophets into his history of the kings; had he not done so he would have been guilty of a great omission. And when he, though himself of the tribe of Judah, principally describes, after the captivity, the history of the kingdom of Israel, the reason is no doubt this: that the kingdom, from the beginning of its existence, had completely broken the chief covenant-commandment, and persisted in so doing; and therefore that the contest for it and for theocracy generally was carried on by the prophets principally, until the entire people of the ten tribes was undone forever.

After all, it remains unquestionably certain that these books bear throughout a specific Israelitish-religious character, or, as it is generally termed, a theocratic character. This does not imply that this is owing only to the author's views and style; it lies rather in the nature of the history itself. Oehler very truly says (in Herzog's *Real-Enc.* xvii. s. 247): "The idea of the people of God is, in its very nature, supernatural, this view alone gives the key to the Israelitish history which, if not regarded in the light of divine election and guidance, as it demands, remains a riddle, a 'dark riddle' (comp. what Rosenkranz says in Hegel's Life, s. 49, about the latter's view of the Jewish history: 'it revolted him, and yet fascinated him, tormenting him all his life like a dark enigma')." Later historical writers have (many of them) made it their business to take the so-called purely historical point of view in the history of the kings of Israel: that is, to ignore all special providence in it, or rather to regard it as the religious coloring of the author's mind, and to set it forth, like that of every other ancient nation, in a purely secular light. They trace the fundamental idea of divine election sometimes to egoism, sometimes to the accidentally monotheistic character of the writer, or to the religious genius of the Semitic race, and reduce all special divine influence to priest-rule and priestcraft. What the history represents as great and well-pleasing to God, is insignificant and blameworthy, and what it views as sinful and perverse, is delineated as humanly great and noble: in fact, this history is looked at through the glass of modern political ideas. Their writings take no account whatsoever of a "divine economy," but rather turn it more or less into a thorough caricature. We shall give some examples of this in explanations of particular passages and sections. There are no historical sources regarding the Israelitish monarchy except those of the Bible; we cannot, therefore, compare the facts narrated, with the statements of any other author, who might take a different point of view from our author. To correct the only extant historical source, and to change the facts therein given into totally different ones, according to private judgment and pleasure, is not *to write* but *to make* history. He who cannot accept the principle on which this history of the kings is written, or rejects it beforehand as erroneous, can no more write such a history than the most learned Chinaman could write that of Germany; he should, consequently, leave it alone.

§ 6.

REVIEW OF CONTENTS.

The history of the Israelitish monarchy, from its highest splendor on to its destruction, as it forms the contents of our books, *has three periods*. The first embraces the time of the undivided kingdom under Solomon; the second, which is distributed into three epochs, embraces the time of the divided kingdom down to the fall of the kingdom of Israel; the third embraces the time of the kingdom of Judah down to the Babylonish captivity.

FIRST PERIOD.

THE KINGDOM UNDER SOLOMON.

First Section.—Solomon's elevation to the throne.

A. Adonijah's effort to obtain possession of the kingdom: Solomon's ascension to the throne (I., i.).

B. David's last words and death (I., ii. 1–12).

C. Solomon's dealings with his opponents (I., ii. 13–46).

Second Section.—The beginning of Solomon's reign.

A. His marriage; solemn sacrifice and vision; first judicial decision (I., iii. 1–28).

B. His officers and court-establishment; his high spiritual culture, I., iv. 1–34).

Third Section.—Solomon's buildings.

A. Solomon's negotiations with Hiram about the building of the temple (I., vi. 15–32).

B. The building of the temple (I., vi).

C. The building of the palace, and the manufacture of the vessels, &c., of the temple (I., vii.).
D. The dedication of the temple (I., viii).
E. Sundry statements referring to Solomon's buildings and ships (I., ix.).

Fourth Section.—Solomon's glory and magnificence.
A. The visit of the queen of Sheba (I., x. 1–13).
B. The wealth, splendor, and power of Solomon's kingdom (I., x. 14–29).

Fifth Section.—Solomon's fall and end.
A. Unfaithfulness towards Jehovah and its punishment (I., xi. 1–13).
B. Solomon's adversaries and his death (I., xi. 14–43).

SECOND PERIOD.

THE KINGDOM DIVIDED INTO JUDAH AND ISRAEL.

FIRST EPOCH.

Of the division of the kingdom down to the reign of Ahab.

First Section.—The disruption of the kingdom.
A. The renunciation of the house of David by the ten tribes (I., xii. 1–24).
B. The founding of the kingdom of Israel by Jeroboam (I., xii. 25–33).

Second Section.—Jeroboam's reign in Israel.
A. Warning to Jeroboam by a prophet, and the disobedience and end of the latter (I., xiii. 1–32).
B. The prophecy of Ahijah against the house and kingdom of Jeroboam; the death of the latter (I., xiv. 1–20).

Third Section.—The kingdom in Judah under Rehoboam, Abijam, and Asa.
A. Rehoboam's reign (I., xiv. 21–31).
B. Abijam's and Asa's reign (I., xv. 1–24).

Fourth Section.—The kingdom in Israel under Nadab and Ahab.
A. Nadab's and Baasha's reign (I., xv. 25 to xvi. 7).
B. Ela's, Zimri's, and Ahab's reign (I., xvi. 8–24).

SECOND EPOCH.

From Ahab to Jehu.

First Section.—The prophet Elijah during Ahab's reign.
A. Elijah before Ahab at the brook Cherith and at Zarephath (I., xvii.).
B. Elijah upon Mount Carmel (I., xviii.).
C. Elijah in the wilderness and upon Horeb; his successor (I., xix.).

Second Section.—The acts of Ahab.
A. Ahab's victory over the Syrians (I., xx.).
B. Ahab's procedure against Naboth (I., xxi.).
C. Ahab's expedition, undertaken along with Jehoshaphat, against the Syrians, and his death (I., xxi. 1–40).

Third Section.—The kingdom under Jehoshaphat in Judah, and under Ahaziah and Joram in Israel.
A. Jehoshaphat's and Ahaziah's reign (I., xxii. 41–II. 1).
B. Elijah's departure and Elisha's first appearance (II., ii.).
C. Joram's reign and his expedition against the Moabites (II., iii.).

Fourth Section.—Elisha's prophetic acts.
A. Elisha with the widow in debt, with the Shunammite, and with the "sons of the prophets" during the dearth (II., iv.).

B. The healing of Naaman, Gehazi's punishment, and the recovery of a lost axe (II., v.–vi. 7).
C. Elisha during the Syrian invasion, and at the siege of Samaria (II., vi. 8–vii.).
D. Elisha's authority with the king, and his sojourn in Damascus (II., viii. 1–15).

Fifth Section.—The kingdom under Jehoram and Ahaziah in Judah, and Jehu's elevation to be king of Israel.
A. Jehoram's and Ahaziah's reign in Judah (II., viii. 16–29).
B. Jehu's elevation to be king in Israel (II., ix.).

THIRD EPOCH.

From Jehu to the destruction of the kingdom of Israel.

First Section.—The kingdom under Jehu in Israel, and under Athaliah and Jehoash in Judah.
A. Jehu's reign (II., x.).
B. The reign of queen Athaliah and its overthrow (II., xi.).
C. The reign of Jehoash (II., xii.).

Second Section.—The kingdom under Jehoahaz, Jehoash, and Jeroboam II. in Israel, and under Amaziah in Judah.
A. The reign of the kings Jehoahaz and Joash (II., xiii.).
B. The reign of Amaziah in Judah, and of Jeroboam II. in Israel (II., xiv.).

Third Section.—The kingdom under Azariah (Uzziah) and Jotham in Judah, and under Zachariah and Hosea in Israel.
A. The reign of the kings Azariah and Jotham in Judah, and of the kings Zachariah, Shallum, Menahem, Pekahiah, and Pekah in Israel (II., xv.).
B. The reign of Ahaz in Judah (II., xvi.).
C. The fall of the kingdom Israel under Hosea (II., xvii.).

THIRD PERIOD.

THE KINGDOM IN JUDAH AFTER THE DESTRUCTION OF THE KINGDOM ISRAEL.

First Section.—The kingdom under Hezekiah.
A. Hezekiah's reign: oppression by Sennacherib and deliverance from it (II., xviii., xix.).
B. Hezekiah's sickness and recovery: his reception of the Babylonish embassy, and his end (II., xx.).

Second Section.—The kingdom under Manasseh, Amon, and Josiah.
A. The reign of Manasseh and of Amon (II., xxi.).
B. The reign of Josiah, the discovery of the book of the law, and restoration of the prescribed worship of God (II., xxii. 23–30).

Third Section.
A. The reign of the kings Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin, and Zedekiah (II., xxiii. 31–xxv. 7).
B. The fall of the kingdom of Judah: release of Jehoiachin from prison (II., xxv. 8–30).

§ 7.

LITERATURE.

Passing over commentaries and expositions extending over the entire Old Testament (for a list, see De Wette, *Introduction* to the O. Test. and the Biblewerk), we confine ourselves to notices of those works which concern themselves especially with our books. On the whole, the literature in question is not so extensive as that of many other and less weighty books, as *e. g.*, The Song of Solomon. For a number of centuries no work could be adduced which was specially devoted to our books.

I. *Exegetical treatises.* Ephraem Syr. († 378): *Explanatio in I. et II. regnorum* (*Opp. omn* Romæ 1737. *Tom. I*).—Theodoreti († 457): *Quæstiones in libros III. et IV. regnorum* (*Opp. omn ed. Noesselt.* Halæ 1769. *Tom. I.*).—J. Bugenhagen: *annotationes in libr. Reg.* Basil. 1525.—Seb. Leonhard: *ὑπομνήματα in libr. Reg.* Erfurd 1606.—Piscator: *Comment. in duos libr. Regum.* Herborn 1611.—Seb. Schmidt: *in libr. Regum annotationes.* Argentor 1697.—A condensed collection of expositions up to the close of the seventeenth century may be found in Poole's († 1679) *Synopsis Criticorum aliorumque scripturæ sacræ interpretum et commentatorum.* Francof. ad. M. 1694.—K. Fr. Keil: *Commentar über die Bücher der Könige.* Moskau 1846.—O. Thenius: *Die Bücher der Könige.* Leipzig 1849 (9. *Lieferung des Kurzgefassten Exeget. Handbuchs zum A. T.*).—K. Fr. Keil: *Biblischer Commentar über die prophetischen Geschichtsbücher des A. T. Dritter Band; die Bücher der Könige.* Leipzig 1864.—*Einleitung in die Bücher der Könige.* Leipzig, Halle 1861 (translation with remarks thrown in by Adolf v. Schlüsser).

II. *Historical treatises.* J. J. Hess: *Geschichte David's und Salomo's, und: Geschichte der Könige Juda's und Israel's nach der Trennung des Reichs.* 2 *Bände*, Zürich 1787.—Niemeyer: *Charakteristik der Bibel*, 4 *ter u.* 5 *ter Theil*, 5 *Aufl.* Halle 1795.—Leo: *Vorlesungen über die jüdische Geschichte* 1825 (withdrawn by the author.).—Bertheau: *Zur Geschichte der Israeliten*, Göttingen 1842.—Menzel: *Staats-und Religionsgeschichte der Königreiche Israel und Juda.* Berlin 1853.—Ewald: *Geschichte David's und der Königherrschaft in Israel.* 2 *Ausg.*, Göttingen (the third volume of the history of the people Israel to the time of Christ).—Eisenlohr: *Das Volk Israel unter der Herrschaft der Könige.* 2 *Theil.*, Leipzig 1856.—Schlier: *Die Könige in Israel. Ein Handbüchlein zur heiligen Geschichte*, Stuttgart 1859.—M. Duncker: *Geschichte des Alterthums. Erster Band.* 2 *Aufl.*, Berlin 1855.—Hasse: *Geschichte des Alten Bundes*, Leipzig 1863.—Weber: *Das Volk Israel in der alttestamentlichen Zeit*, Leipzig 1867.—To these must be added special articles in Winer: *Biblisches Realwörterbuch*, 3 *Aufl.*, Leipzig 1847, and in Herzog: *Real-Encyclopädie*, Gotha 1854–1864. Comp. particularly the article in vol. xvii. pp. 245–305: "the people of God," by Oehler.

III. *Homiletic treatises.* Only upon the history of the prophets Elijah and Elisha are there sermons and devotional dissertations, which are cited below in the appropriate place. Notwithstanding the rich material of our books in ancient as well as in recent times, there are fewer homiletical treatises, whether of the whole or only of particular sections, than upon any other books of the Bible. We must rest content here with referring to the works which embrace the entire Bible, and have interpreted it more or less practically and devotionally. Cramer: *Summarien und biblische Auslegung*, 1627, 2 *Aufl.*, Wolfenbüttel 1681, Fol.—L. Osiander: *Deutsche Bibel Luthers mit einer kurzen, jedoch gründlichen Erklärung, herausgegeben von* D. Förster, Stuttgart 1600, Fol.—Würtembergische *Summarien und Auslegungen der ganzen Heil. Schrift. Das Alte Testament, zuerst bearbeitet von* J. K. Zeller, Stuttgart 1677; afterwards "diligently revised and enriched with many useful remarks by the theological faculty of the University of Tübingen, Leipzig 1709. 4. (The new "*Summarien oder Gründliche Auslegung der Schriften des A. T. ii. Band*," by Finkh, Stuttgart 1801–4, are far inferior to the older).—*Berlenburger Bibel, anderer Theil*, 1728, Fol.—A. Kyburz: *Historien-Bet-und Bilderbibel*, 2*ter Theil*, Augsburg 1739. 8.—Joachim Lange: *Biblisch Historisches Licht und Recht, d. i. richtige und erbauliche Erklärung der sämmtlichen historischen Bücher des A. T.*, Halle u. Leipzig 1734, Fol.—Chr. M. Pfaff: *Biblia, b. i. die ganze Heilige Schrift mit Summarien und Anmerk.*, Tübing. Fol. (8 *Ausg. Speyer* 1767).—Starke: *Synopsis Bibliothecæ exeget. in V. T., zweiter Theil, andere verbesserte Auflage*, Leipzig 1745. 4.—G. F. Seiler: *Des grössern bibl. Erbauungsbuches Alten Testaments dritter Theil*, Erlangen 1791. 4.—Richter: *Erklärte Hausbibel. Altes Testament, zweiter Band*, Barmen 1835. 8.—Lisco: *Das Alte Testament mit Erklärungen u. s. w. Erster Band, die historischen Bücher*, Berlin 1844. 8.—O. Von Gerlach: *Das Alte Testament mit Einleitungen und erklärenden Anmerkungen, zweiter Band*, Berlin 1846. 8 (5 *Aufl.* 1867).—(Calwer) *Handbuch der Bibelerklärung für Schule und Haus. Erster Band, das Alte Testament enthaltend*, Calw und Stuttgart 1849. 8.

[The remarks of our author respecting the small number of commentaries and treatises upon the Books of the Kings are true, conspicuously of English theological literature. What

we have is of the most meagre description. In fact, there is nothing to be named; we have no special exposition of our books in the English language. Our clergy and laity, who have depended upon English authors, have been compelled to use Patrick, Lowth, and Whitby, or Thomas Scott, or D'Oyly and Mant, or Adam Clarke, and the rest. These works, as is well known, are utterly deficient in critical acumen, and the amount of information they convey is insignificant. Whatsoever may be the merits or demerits of this work, it will certainly meet a need that has been long felt.

The reader can moreover consult Bp. Horsley's "Notes on the Kings," and for the historical review, Dean Stanley's History of the Jewish Church, and Prof. F. W. Newman's Hebrew Monarchy. Dean Prideaux's work, embracing the period from the declension of the kingdoms of Israel and Judah to the time of our Lord, notwithstanding its faulty construction, remains an abiding monument of genuine erudition.

In Bishop Hall's "Contemplations" the reader will find much that is valuable, and of great spiritual practical insight. It is rich in homiletical suggestions, and can be read with profit in connection with the sacred text. Many sermons, too, have been published, which illustrate particular sections of the Books of the Kings, as, *e. g.*, on *the temple* (chap. vi.), *and its consecration* (chap. viii.), and on the *disobedient prophet* (chap. xiii.), and *on Elijah* (chap. xvii. *sq.*), &c., some of which will be referred to under the texts in their order.

For particular items: Dr. Smith's *Dictionary of the Bible* (Boston, 1860–1863, enlarged by Hackett and Abbott, in 4 vols. 1870), or an abridgment by Mr. S. Barnum, may be used (see especially art. "Temple," by Ferguson). For the temple in respect of comparative architecture, &c., see K. O. Müller, *Archæology of Ancient Art*, &c., translated by John Leitch. London, A. Fullarton & Co., 1847. Also, *Solomon's Temple*, &c., by T. O. Paine, a minister of the New-Jerusalem Church. Boston, 1861.—E. H.]

THE

FIRST BOOK OF THE KINGS.

FIRST PERIOD, (1015 TO 975 B.C.)

THE KINGDOM UNDER SOLOMON.*

(Chapters I.—II.)

FIRST SECTION.

SOLOMON'S ACCESSION TO THE THRONE.

Chap. I., II.

A.—Adonijah's attempt to seize the kingdom for himself; Solomon's elevation to the throne.

Chap. I. 1–53.

1 Now king David was old *and* stricken in years;[1] and they covered him
2 with clothes,[2] but he gat no heat. Wherefore his servants said unto him, Let
there be sought for my lord the king a young virgin [virgin damsel];[3] and let
her stand before the king, and let her cherish him, and let her lie in thy[4] bosom,
3 that my[5] lord the king may get heat. So they sought for a fair damsel through-
out all the coasts of Israel, and found Abishag a [the[6]] Shunammite, and brought
4 her to the king. And the damsel *was* very fair, and cherished the king, and
ministered to him: but the king knew her not.
5 Then Adonijah the son of Haggith exalted himself, saying, I will be king:
and he prepared him chariots and horsemen, and fifty men to run before him.
6 And his father had not displeased him at any time in saying, Why hast thou
done so? and he also *was* a very goodly man; and *his mother* bare him after
7 Absalom. And he conferred with Joab the son of Zeruiah, and with Abiathar
8 the priest: and they following Adonijah helped *him*. But Zadok the priest, and
Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and Nathan the prophet, and Shimei, and Rei, and
9 the mighty men which *belonged* to David, were not with Adonijah. And Ado-
nijah slew sheep and oxen and fat cattle by the stone of Zoheleth, which is by
En-rogel [the well of Rogel], and called all his brethren the king's sons, and all
10 the men of Judah the king's servants: but Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah,
and the mighty men, and Solomon his brother, he called not.
11 Wherefore Nathan spake unto Bath-sheba the mother of Solomon, saying,
Hast thou not heard that Adonijah the son of Haggith doth reign, and David
12 our lord knoweth *it* not? Now therefore come, let me, I pray thee, give thee
counsel, that thou mayest save thine own life, and the life of thy son Solomon.

* [I am indebted to my friend, Frederic Gardiner, D. D., Professor in the Berkeley Divinity School, Middletown, Conn. for the accompanying textual revision and original grammatical notes.—E. H.]

13 Go and get thee in unto king David, and say unto him, Didst not thou, my
lord, O king, swear unto thine handmaid, saying, Assuredly [That[7]] Solomon
thy son shall reign after me, and he shall sit upon my throne? why then doth
14 Adonijah reign? [8]Behold, while thou yet talkest there with the king, I also
will come in after thee, and confirm[9] thy words.
15 And Bath-sheba went in unto the king into the chamber: and the king was
16 very old; and Abishag the Shunammite ministered unto the king. And Bath-
sheba bowed, and did obeisance unto the king. And the king said, What
17 wouldest thou? And she said unto him, My lord, thou swarest by the Lord [Je-
hovah] thy God unto thine handmaid, *saying*, Assuredly Solomon thy son shall
18 reign after me, and he shall sit upon my throne. And now, behold, Adonijah
19 reigneth; and now [thou[10]], my lord the king, thou knowest *it* not: And he hath
slain oxen and fat cattle and sheep in abundance, and hath called all the sons of
the king, and Abiathar the priest, and Joab the captain of the host: but Solomon
20 thy servant hath he not called. And thou,[11] my lord, O king, the eyes of all Israel
are upon thee, that thou shouldest tell them who shall sit on the throne of my
21 lord the king after him. Otherwise [But] it shall come to pass, when my lord
the king shall sleep with his fathers, that I and my son Solomon shall be counted[12]
22 offenders. And, lo, while she yet talked with the king, Nathan the prophet also
23 came in. And they told the king, saying, Behold Nathan the prophet [has
come]. And when he was come in before the king, he bowed himself before the
24 king with his face to the ground. And Nathan said, My lord, O king, hast thou
25 said,[13] Adonijah shall reign after me, and he shall sit upon my throne? For
he is gone down this day, and hath slain oxen and fat cattle and sheep in
abundance, and hath called all the king's sons, and the captains of the host, and
Abiathar the priest; and, behold, they eat and drink before him, and say, God
26 save king Adonijah [let king Adonijah live]. But me, *even* me thy servant, and
Zadok the priest, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and thy servant Solomon,
27 hath he not called. Is this thing done by my lord the king, and thou hast not
shewed *it*[14] unto thy servant[15] who should sit on the throne of my lord the king
after him?
28 Then king David answered and said, Call me Bath-sheba. And she came
29 into the king's presence, and stood before the king. And the king sware, and
30 said, *As* the Lord [Jehovah] liveth, that hath redeemed my soul out of all dis-
tress, even as I sware unto thee by the Lord [Jehovah] God of Israel, saying,
Assuredly [That[16]] Solomon thy son shall reign after me, and he shall sit upon
31 my throne in my stead; even so will I certainly[17] do this day. Then Bath-sheba
bowed with *her* face to the earth, and did reverence to the king, and said, Let
my lord king David live for ever.
32 And king David said, Call me Zadok the priest, and Nathan the prophet,
33 and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada. And they came before the king. The king
also said unto them, Take with you the servants of your lord,[18] and cause Solo-
34 mon my son to ride upon mine own mule, and bring him down to Gihon;[19] And
let Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet anoint him there king over Israel:
and blow ye with the trumpet, and say, God save king Solomon [let king Solo-
35 mon live]. Then ye shall come up after him, that he may [and he shall] come
and sit upon my throne; for [and] he shall be king in my stead: and I have
36 appointed him to be ruler over Israel and over Judah. And Benaiah the son of
Jehoiada answered the king, and said, Amen: the Lord [Jehovah] God of my
37 lord the king say so *too* [so spake[20]]. As the Lord [Jehovah] hath been with
my lord the king, even so be he with Solomon, and make his throne greater
than the throne of my lord king David.
38 So Zadok the priest, and Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah the son of
Jehoiada, and the Cherethites, and the Pelethites, went down, and caused Solo-
39 mon to ride upon king David's mule, and brought him to Gihon.[21] And Zadok
the priest took a horn of oil out of the tabernacle, and anointed Solomon.
And they blew the trumpet; and all the people said, God save king Solomon
40 [Let king Solomon live]. And all the people came up after him, and the people

piped with pipes, and rejoiced with great joy, so that the earth rent with the
sound of them.
41 And Adonijah and all the guests that *were* with him heard *it*, as they had
made an end of eating. And when Joab heard the sound of the trumpet, he
42 said, Wherefore *is this* noise of the city being in an uproar? And while he
yet spake, behold, Jonathan the son of Abiathar the priest came: and Adonijah
said unto him,[22] Come in; for thou *art* a valiant man, and bringest good tid-
43 ings. And Jonathan answered and said to Adonijah, Verily our lord king
44 David hath made Solomon king. And the king hath sent with him Zadok
the priest, and Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and the
Cherethites, and the Pelethites, and they have caused him to ride upon the
45 king's mule: and Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet have anointed him
king in Gihon:[23] and they are come up from thence rejoicing, so that the city
46 rang again. This *is* the noise that ye have heard. And also Solomon sitteth on
47 the throne of the kingdom. And moreover the king's servants came to bless our
lord king David, saying, [Thy [24]] God make the name of Solomon better than thy
name, and make his throne greater than thy throne. And the king bowed himself
48 upon the bed. And also thus said the king, Blessed *be* the Lord [Jehovah] God of
Israel, which hath given *one* to sit on my throne this day, mine eyes even seeing *it*.
49 And all the guests that *were* with Adonijah were afraid, and rose up,[25] and
50 went every man his way. And Adonijah feared because of Solomon, and arose,
51 and went, and caught hold on the horns of the altar. And it was told Solomon,
saying, Behold, Adonijah feareth king Solomon: for, lo, he hath caught hold on
the horns of the altar, saying, Let king[26] Solomon swear unto me to [this[27]] day
52 that he will not slay his servant with the sword. And Solomon said, If he will
shew himself a worthy man, there shall not a hair of him fall to the earth: but
53 if wickedness shall be found in him, he shall die. So king Solomon sent, and
they brought him down from the altar. And he came and bowed himself to king
Solomon: and Solomon said unto him, Go to thine house.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

[1] Ver. 1.—[בָּא בַּיָּמִים always connected with זָקֵן (Gen. xviii. 11; xxiv. 1; Josh. xiii. 1 *bis*, xxiii. 1, 2) exactly corresponds to the phrase in A. V.

[2] Ver. 1.—[בְּגָדִים bed-clothes (*cf.* 1 Sam. xix. 13), not garments.

[3] Ver. 2.—[The translation of נַעֲרָה in vers. 3 and 4 may well stand here also.

[4] Ver. 2.—In place of the suffix ךָ the Sept. has *αὐτοῦ* and the Vulg. *suo*, which Thenius prefers to the reading of the text.—Bähr.

[5] Ver. 2.—[The Alex. Sept., Syr., and Vulg., read *our*.

[6] Ver. 3.—[The definite article should be expressed as in ver. 15.

[7] Ver. 13.—[The particle כִּי, as is recognized in all the VV., can hardly give the emphasis of the Eng. *assuredly*.

[8] Ver. 14.—[Many MSS. and VV. prefix *and*.

[9] Ver. 14.—[מִלֵּאתִי אֶת־דְּבָרָיִךְ not complete, fill out, but, as in A. V., confirm; Chald. אֲקִים, Sept. *πληρώσω*. The phrase is used of the fulfilment of divine utterances. *Cf.* ii. 27; viii. 15, 24.

[10] Ver. 18.—All the VV. and 200 MSS. [and the early editions] read וְאַתָּה instead of וְעַתָּה, as the connection requires.—Bähr..

[11] Ver. 20.—Instead of וְאַתָּה the Chaldee [Syr. and Vulg.], and some [many] MSS. have וְעַתָּה, which Thenius considers right. On the other hand, Maurer remarks that the pronoun stands here first, just as in Gen. xlix. 8, with emphasis, instead of the suffix.—Bähr.

[12] Ver. 21.—[*Counted* is implied by the connection, but not expressed in the Hbr.

[13] Ver. 24.—[אַתָּה אָמַרְתָּ, the question is indicated only by the tone.

[14] Ver. 27.—[The pronoun *it* is better omitted, as in the Hbr. and all VV.

[15] Ver. 27.—The k'ri has עַבְדְּךָ, also nearly all the translations have the singular; but the reading of the text is preferred.—Bähr. [It is that of many MSS.]

[16] Ver. 30.—[See note ver. 13.

[17] Ver. 30.—[Hbr. and VV. omit *certainly*.

[18] Ver. 33.—[אֲדֹנֵיכֶם in the pl. is rightly rendered by the sing. as referring to David—not to David and Solomon.

[19] Ver. 33.—[The Chaldee and Syr. read *Siloa;* Arabic, *fountain of Siloa*.

[20] Ver. 36.—[The words *say so too* at the end of this ver. in the A. V. should be omitted; כֵּן יֹאמַר יְהוָה is to be taken historically, not optatively. Three MSS. followed by the Syr. and Arab. read יעשה for יאמר.

[21] Ver. 38.—[The Chald., Syr., and Arab., make the same change here as in ver. 33.

[22] Ver. 42.—[The words *unto him* are unnecessary; not contained in the Hbr. nor the VV.
[23] Ver. 45.—[As in vers. 33 and 38.
[24] Ver. 47.—The k'tib [אלהיך] is plainly preferable to the k'ri אלהים —Bähr [and is followed by the Syriac].
[25] Ver. 49.—[The Vatican (not Alex.) Sept. omits *and rose up*.
[26] Ver. 51.—[The Vatican (not Alex.) Sept. omits king.
[27] Ver. 51.—[Instead of כיום some MSS. read היום, which has been followed apparently by the A. V.—F. G.]

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

Ver. 1. **Now king David was old, &c.** Vers. 1–4 introduce the entire narration following, the central point and chief object of which is Solomon's ascension to the throne. Adonijah's endeavor to usurp the throne was the reason why this event took place before the death of David. Adonijah proceeded to carry out his purpose when David was old and infirm, and apparently near his end. The author begins, consequently, with the description of David's condition, and is reminded particularly of Abishag, his waiting-maid, because Adonijah, after the misadventure of his enterprise, sought her for a wife in order to gain the throne by means of her, and so wrought his destruction (chap. ii. 13 *sq.*). The וְ at the beginning has no connection with anything preceding; least of all does it connect our books with the books of Samuel (see Introduction, § 3). Nor is it mechanically retained from a passage of the life of David inserted here (Keil); but it stands, as elsewhere so often at the beginning of a book (Jos. i. 1; Judges i. 1; 2 Sam. i. 1; Ruth i. 1; Esth. i. 1; Ezra i. 1; Ezek. i. 1; Jon. i. 1), where the first verse forms the antecedent to the second.—When David was old and infirm, his servants said unto him. David was then seventy years of age (comp. chap. ii. 11, with 2 Sam. v. 4, 5): that his natural warmth then failed him, was not *ex nimio mulierum usu* (Le Clerc), but was the result of the "extraordinary cares and conflicts of his earlier life" (Ewald).

Vers. 2–4. **Wherefore his servants said unto him, &c.** Josephus expressly names them physicians (*Ant.* vii. 14, 3), comp. Gen. l. 2. The remedy which one of them, in the name of the rest, advised when the "clothes" (בְּגָדִים as in 1 Sam. xix. 13; Numb. iv. 6) were of no use, was known in ancient times. Without skill in internal remedies, men sought to warm, by means of living vigorous bodies, those whose vital powers were chilled and enfeebled. Galen (*Method. Medic.* 8, 7) says: "*Ex iis vero, quæ extrinsecus applicantur, boni habitus puellus una sit accumbans, ut semper abdomen ejus contingat.* Bacon (*Hist. Vit. et Nec.*): *Neque negligenda sunt fomenta ex corporibus vivis.* According to Bartholinus (*De Morb. Bibl.* 9), a Jewish physician advised the Emperor Frederic Barbarossa to allow young and strong boys to lie upon his breast (comp. Trusen, *Sitten, Gebr.* and *Krankh. der Hebræer*, *s.* 257 *sq.*). This was not designed here for the gratification of bodily passion, by means of a "concubine," as Winer calls Abishag, but before all, for service and assistance, such as was deemed most effective after the unavailing application of the usual remedies to the aged man confined to his bed. The physicians expressly state this, and it agrees with the words: *and let her stand before the king*, *i. e.*, let her serve him (Gen. xli. 46; Deut. i. 38), *and be his attendant*, *i. e.*, let her wait upon, help him: *let her lie in his* bosom [not *thy*, see textual note] that he may become warm. If by these last words they may have presupposed that he would "know" her, they do not state it as the design, as, moreover, שָׁכַב בְּחֵיק must not be understood necessarily only of cohabitation (comp. chap. iii. 20; Ruth iv. 16). They sought a beautiful maiden "because she was destined for the king" (Thenius), and they found such at *Shunem*, a city of the tribe Issachar, in the plain of Jezreel, at the foot of the so-called little Hermon (Jos. xix. 18; 1 Sam. xxviii. 4). The text states expressly that *the king did not know her:* she was, therefore, not his concubine, but his waiting-maid and attendant. In a wholly perverse way Josephus, and after him J. D. Michaelis, adduces impotency, in consequence of old age and weakness, as the reason why he did not know her. In that case the remark would be superfluous (Thenius). It serves, however, "to make it clear how it was that Adonijah could seek Abishag for his wife," chap. ii. 17 (Keil), and go to Bath-sheba for her intercession with Solomon. Older interpreters have maintained that she was the actual wife of David, or at least his concubine, and that the relation also, according to the morality of the time, was unobjectionable. But neither here nor in the second chapter is she so named. Amongst the people she may have well passed for such, since Adonijah, through alliance with her, wished to facilitate his way to the throne (see on chap. ii. 13).*

Vers. 5–6. **Then Adonijah the son of Haggith, &c.** Of the sons of David born at Hebron, Adonijah was the fourth (2 Sam. iii. 2–4). The first, Amnon, and the third, Absalom, were already dead, and the second also, Chileab, of whom nothing more is said, had doubtless died much earlier. As the eldest living son, Adonijah believed that he had claims to the throne. Besides this, his beautiful person came into the account, as with Absalom, by which, because it was valued in a ruler (1 Sam. ix. 2; 2 Sam. xiv. 25; xvi. 7; Ezek. xxviii. 12), he hoped for the favorable regard of the people. יָלְדָה ver. 6 cannot, with some, be translated: "and he was born unto him after Absalom," but only, as in Gen. xvi. 1: "and she had borne him after Absalom," *i. e.*, after the latter had been borne of Maacah. The alteration of the text into יָלַד—"he had begotten him after Absalom" (Thenius), is wholly unnecessary. The succession to the throne in Israel was certainly hereditary; but no law required that the eldest son, at the time, should be the heir-apparent. From vers.

* [The allegorical interpretation of Jerome makes the Shunammite damsel the ever-virgin wisdom of God so extolled by Solomon (*sapientia quæ numquam senescit*, *Epist.* § 2; *ad Nepotianum*, chap. iv.; *Opera*, i. p. 288). But in another passage Jerome understands the story literally, and enumerates this relation among the sins and imperfections of David, which would not be allowed under the gospel dispensation (*contra Jovin. l. i.*, chap. xxiv., *tom. i.* 274).—P. S.]

17 and 20, as also from 2 Chron. xi. 22, it is clear that it was regarded as the right of the reigning king to determine who amongst his sons should succeed him. He could transmit the kingdom to his first-born or to his eldest son, but he was not obliged (2 Chron. xxi. 3) thereto. Adonijah was not at all first-born, but only the fourth son. He himself does not take his age into the account, and appeals, in chap. ii. 13 *sq.*, not to this, but to the voice of the people who had shown themselves favorably disposed towards him. David's designation of Solomon as his successor, has its reason in the promise in 2 Sam. vii. 12–16; xii. 24 *sq.*; 1 Chron. xxii. 9, 10; he regarded him as the one who, according to the prescript touching a king in Deut. xvii. 15, was chosen by Jehovah. Of a formal "right" to the throne, possessed by Adonijah, which he thought to "assure" himself of (Thenius), there can be no discussion. That he knew well the will of his father, by virtue of which Solomon was to be his successor, is clear from the circumstance that he invited all his brothers, and the men who were employed in the royal service, to a feast prepared by him. Solomon only, and the more confidential friends of David, were not invited. His design was to render null the purpose of his father, and to possess himself of the throne, by conspiracy and force, in opposition to his wish. His undertaking was a formal usurpation, and like that of Absalom, to which the whole narrative manifestly points. Upon this account also the text says: "*he exalted himself*," *i. e.*, he over-exalted himself—made himself somewhat that did not become him (נִשָּׂא used here as in Prov. xxx. 32; Numb. xvi. 3), with this result, that his father left him to his will (מִיָּמָיו means from his, Adonijah's days, and is not, with Seb. Schmidt, to be understood first of his attempt at royal sovereignty). The moral infirmity of the royal father, coupled now with bodily weakness, induced Adonijah to enter upon his guilty enterprise. Just as Absalom had done (2 Sam. xv. 1), he provided himself with what, according to 1 Sam. viii. 11, is designated as the first "royal prerogative," chariots, riders, and body-guardsmen, *i. e.*, a brilliant court, in order thereby to impose upon the multitude.

Vers. 7–10. **And he conferred with Joab,** &c. Through the commander-in-chief, Adonijah hopes to win over the army, and through the high-priest, to secure also the priesthood. Not the conviction "that he had right on his side" (Thenius), induced both men to enter into his plans. Joab had observed that he was sunken in the good graces of David (chap. ii. 5), and consequently could not hope for much for himself from Solomon; but from Adonijah he could hope, especially if made king by his assistance. *Abiathar* seems to have felt himself set aside by David for Zadok, which priest was at the tabernacle with the ark of the covenant at Zion (see on vers. 33 and 39), and to have feared that the high-priestly family of Eleazar, to which Zadok belonged, would supplant his own, viz.: the family of Ithamar. Upon *Benaiah*, comp. 2 Sam. viii. 18 and xxiii. 20 *sq.*; upon Nathan, see 2 Sam. vii. and xii. Shimei is mentioned in chap. iv. 18: Josephus names *Rei* ὁ Δαυίδου φίλος. Doubtless these latter filled high offices. That they were the only surviving brothers of David (Ewald), has nothing probable to rest upon. Upon the *heroes of David*, comp. 2 Sam. xxiii. 8 *sq.*, and 1 Chron. xi. 10 *sq.* Adonijah, like Absalom (2 Sam. xv. 8, 12), prepared a great feast, which was ostensibly also sacrificial, in order to impart to the transaction a religious coloring. The *well*, *i. e.*, the sources of Rogel (Jos. xv. 7; xviii. 16), lay, according to 2 Sam. xvii. 17, southeasterly from Jerusalem, in the loveliest, most fruitful plain; according to Josephus, in *βασιλικῷ παραδείσῳ*; according to Schulz (*Jerus.*, *s.* 79), "even now a place of recreation for the inhabitants of Jerusalem." Thenius derives the name Zoheleth from זחל, to crawl—a rock which one must climb with difficulty. This place was in every respect suited for a public festivity. (Comp. Robinson, *Palestine*, vol. i. p. 333; Boston, 1868.)

Vers. 11–14. **Wherefore Nathan spake unto Bath-sheba,** &c. According to the custom prevailing anciently in the East, on the occasion of the forcible seizure of the throne, of murdering the dethroned ruler, or the opposing pretenders to the crown, with all their nearest relations (Judg. ix. 5; 1 Kings xv. 29; 2 Kings x. 6, 13; xi. 1), in the event of the success of Adonijah's undertaking, there was very much to fear for the life both of Solomon and of his mother. That David knew nothing of the plans of Adonijah, and that Nathan was first informed of them only at the moment of their execution, shows how secretly the affair had been managed. This would have been unnecessary had Adonijah a recognized right to the throne, and had his own conscience been right in the premises. David, moreover, would not have been so very much surprised at his undertaking. The prophet Nathan also deemed it his duty to prevent, as far as possible, a repetition of the history of Absalom. With great wisdom and prudence, he addressed himself to the mother of Solomon, who was especially beloved of David, begging her to apply to the king, with whom rested the right to designate his successor, to represent to him the mortal peril which threatened both her son and herself, and to remind him of his promise to her. When David's mind should first, by this means, become aroused, than he (the prophet) would, in the name of Jehovah, appear before the king, and place before him his given word (1 Chron. xxviii. 5), in order to incite him to immediate action. "When David first promised Bath-sheba, upon his oath, that her son Solomon should become king, is not known. Obviously it was after the promise he had received in 2 Sam. vii." (Keil).

Vers. 15–27. **And Bath-sheba went in unto the king,** &c. The statement that king David was old, &c. (ver. 1), explains the words: "*into the chamber*" (ver. 15), and means he was so feeble that he could not leave his sick-room, and needed constant attention.—From ver. 20, comp. 27, it is most explicit, once more, that no one entertained the thought that Adonijah, as the eldest surviving son of the king, had a right to the succession; but that the right to decide whether of his sons should be king, remained rather with the king, and that his decision was anxiously waited for.—**I and my son Solomon shall be counted offenders,** *i. e.*, we shall be treated as traitors and offenders guilty of death. After these words Bath-sheba retired, and Nathan, informed in the meanwhile, went unto the

king. While the former addressed her statement to the king directly, as a mother, the latter, as prophet, begins with a question in which, upon the one side, a slight reproach was conveyed that David should not have put a stop sooner to the design of Adonijah, and have exposed his own friends to great danger, and on the other side it expressed the confidence that the king would hold to his oath, and carry it out forthwith.—Under "the captains of the host," ver. 25, the servants of the king (the mighty men) in ver. 10 are included. Kings used to be saluted by the people with the salutation, *Live the king!* (1 Sam. x. 24; 2 Sam. xvi. 16; 2 Kings xi. 12; 2 Chron. xxiii. 31.) The order of names in ver. 26 contains a climax in which Solomon, as the highest personage, is named last. Nathan's words are anything else than the expression of wounded vanity — they simply exhibit Adonijah's hostile sentiment towards the friends of the king, and also the fate in store for them should Adonijah become sovereign.

Vers. 28–38. **Then king David answered, &c.** The quick and firm resolution of David shows how strong he was yet in mind and will, notwithstanding all his bodily weakness. He repeats his oath, not, however, employing merely the usual formula, as Jehovah liveth! but adding most significantly, *who hath redeemed my soul out of all distress. i. e.*, to the God who has been true to me, and delivered me wonderfully out of so many and great dangers, will I also remain true unto the end. His oath, coming from deep emotion, is likewise a praise and thanksgiving unto Jehovah. Had Adonijah an actual formal right to the throne, such an oath would have been the greatest sin, in so far as David, while appealing to the divine mercy and grace, would have knowingly trodden under foot the right of his son. The added לְעֹלָם, ver. 31, exhibits the vivacity of the thought. Amongst the Persian kings it appears to have been customary (Dan. iii. 9; v. 10; vi. 22; Neh. ii. 3).

Vers. 33–37. **The king also said unto them, Take with you the servants of your lord, &c.** As no one but the king himself dared ride his mule, the command to let Solomon "ride" thereon was an actual declaration that he was king (Esth. vi. 8, 9). *Gihon* is a place near Jerusalem, on the west side, with a spring of water (2 Chron. xxxii. 30; xxxiii. 14). The valley here situated bears still this name (Robinson, *Palest.*, vol. i., p. 346). It was proper for the anointing to take place at a spot where a large assemblage could be gathered, and whence a solemn entrance into the city, which had no open public square, could be made. Gihon, moreover, was considerably distant from the rock Zoheleth, which was on the southeasterly side of Jerusalem, where Adonijah had gathered together his adherents, so that a collision would be avoided. According to the account of the rabbins, kings were anointed only at places abounding in water, and upon that account also much frequented. But they erroneously identify Gihon with Siloam, which spring lies southeast of Jerusalem. *Thenius* prefers the reading גִּבְעוֹן to גִּחוֹן, because the tabernacle was there, from which, according to ver. 39, Zadok took the "horn of oil." But the three hours' distance of Gibeon from Jerusalem is conclusive against this. Besides, by אֹהֶל, in ver. 39, we are not to understand the tabernacle of the covenant, but the tent erected by David upon Zion for the ark of the covenant (2 Sam. vi. 17; 1 Chron. xv. 1; xvi. 1). David expressly gave order for the *anointing* of Solomon, so that nothing appertaining to the investiture of the king should be wanting. The supposition that anointing took place only with those kings "who were not free from exceptions, or who had no historic right to the throne" (Winer and Grotius, after the rabbins), is unfounded, for David, who here ordered the anointing, regarded Solomon in no respect as an exceptional successor. From the fact that he wished this done not simply by the high-priest, but also by the prophet, we learn the high significance he attributed to the prophetic office in Israel. He says purposely, *ruler over Israel and over Judah.* He had himself, for some time, been ruler only over Judah: then he had conquered Ephraim, which named itself Israel, and had united it again with Judah. The old disunion had again exhibited itself on the revolt of Absalom (2 Sam. xix. 40 *sq.*); hence, with Adonijah's like undertaking in view, he deemed it necessary to declare expressly that Solomon should be ruler over Israel *and* Judah. *Benaiah*, as the person upon whom the execution of the order devolved, *answered* David, and declared himself ready to carry it out,—not, as Thenius supposes, to flatter the paternal vanity, but, in the conviction that the king's command was in conformity with the will of Jehovah, he wished that the divine blessing might rest upon the government of Solomon.

Ver. 38. **So Zadok the priest, &c.** By the Cherethites and Pelethites we must understand the royal body-guard (Josephus, σωματοφύλακες). On the other hand, the modern interpreters are not agreed whether both expressions are to be understood ethnographically or appellatively. They who urge the former, appeal to 1 Sam. xxx. 14, and hold כְּרֵתִי for the designation of the parent-stem of the Philistines, which had migrated from Crete, and that פְּלֵתִי, too, is the same with פְּלִשְׁתִּי. David, who for a long while had remained amongst the Philistines, had collected his body-guard from amongst foreigners and not from his own people, and afterwards the appellative remained (Movers, Hitzig, Bertheau, Ewald). Others derive כרתי from כרת, and פלתי from the Arabic, cognate with פלם, &c., understanding by the former, lictors, the royal executioners of the punishment of death, and by the latter, runners who, like the *ἄγγαροι* of the Persians, had to carry commands to remote places (2 Chron. xxx. 6). We hold to this latter view, along with Gesenius, Keil, and Thenius, for although the plural form ־ִי instead of ־ִים for appellations is certainly unusual, we cannot perceive why two designations should be employed side by side, for one and the same people. (We do not say Britons and Englishmen.) So, then, later the royal body-guard were called הַכָּרִי וְהָרָצִים (comp. 2 Kings xi. 4 *sq.*), *i. e.*, executioners and runners. And last of all, it is highly improbable that David, who was perpetually at war with the Philistines, would have selected his body-guards from them.—**The horn of oil out of the tabernacle** (ver. 39). The "oil of holy oint-

ment" (Ex. xxx. 23 *sq.*) was preserved in the tabernacle in which the ark of the covenant was kept (1 Chron. xv. 1). The pouring of this oil upon the head symbolized the communication of the Spirit (רוּחַ) of Jehovah (1 Sam. xvi. 13). By anointing, the royal office with which Solomon was to be invested was set forth as essentially theocratic. The king of Israel was, upon this account, absolutely the anointed of the Lord (1 Sam. ii. 10, 35; xxiv. 7). The taking of the horn from the "tabernacle" does not force us to the conclusion that the act of anointing took place before or at it and at the same time, also at Gibeon, as Thenius maintains. The great joy and jubilation of the *whole people* shows that they knew nothing of Adonijah's right to the throne, but that they rather accepted David's decision, who alone had the right to decide. They saw in Solomon's elevation a victory over the unauthorized usurper. *Flutes* were used at festivals, especially at the feast of tabernacles (Isai. v. 12; xxx. 29; Winer, *R.-W.-B.*, ii. *s.* 123).

Ver. 40. **The earth rent.** So according to the Chald., which explains תִּבָּקַע by זָעַת. The Sept. has ἤχησε; the Vulg. *insonuit.* Thenius reads תִּתָּקַע, the earth was struck = quaked, which seems unnecessary.

Vers. 41–48. **And Adonijah . . . . heard it,** &c. While the assembled guests heard the noise and the cry in the city, the experienced soldier Joab caught *the sound of the trumpets* especially, and concluded, from this warlike token, nothing good. *Jonathan*, the son of Abiathar, who here, as in 2 Sam. xv. 36 and xvii. 17 appears as the bringer of news, was probably left behind in the city designedly to observe what was going on. Although scarcely himself a witness of what transpired in the royal palace, he could, nevertheless, as Solomon had already made his entrance, be well informed by eye and ear witnesses. Joab named him a *valiant man*, *i. e.*, a person whose report could be trusted. The וַיִּשְׁתַּחוּ at the end of ver. 47, as David was lying upon his bed, certainly cannot mean that he fell upon his knees; still less is a thankful bow in return to those who were congratulating him meant (Thenius). The king bowed himself with his body as far as he could, before his Lord and God, and spake: *Blessed*, &c. The וְגַם at the beginning of ver. 48 does not indicate a new, different action, but simply states that besides his bowing, he spake also the words which follow.

Vers. 49–53. **And all the guests . . . . were afraid,** &c. The panic which forthwith seized Adonijah and his followers, shows that their conscience was not upright in their undertaking, *i. e.*, that they themselves were not convinced of the righteousness of Adonijah's claims, otherwise they would, with Joab at their head, have made a stand, and not scattered at once. To save his life, which he, as a usurper of the throne, believed he had forfeited, Adonijah fled to the altar, which stood before the tabernacle upon Zion (chap. iii. 15; 2 Sam. vi. 17). *He laid hold of the horns of the altar*, as did Joab afterwards (chap. ii. 28), and appealed thereby to the pardoning power and grace of Jehovah (comp. upon the significance of the act, my *Symbolik des Mos. Cult.*, i. *s.* 473 *sq.*). This asylum was ordained originally for unintentional man-slayers (Exod. xxi. 12 *sq*); but later on it appears to have been made use of by persons who feared punishment by death. Solomon regarded Adonijah's flight to the horns of the altar as a confession of his guilt and repentance, and he exercised an act of clemency which could only produce the most favorable impression upon the people. Yet he adds a warning in the words: *Go to thine house*, *i. e.*, not: Do not come into my presence (2 Sam. xiv. 24), but: Keep thyself quiet, live as a private person, then not the least harm shall befall thee.

HISTORICAL AND ETHICAL.*

1. The entire first chapter turns upon the *elevation of Solomon to the throne*, which is narrated so circumstantially with its immediate occasion and all the attending circumstances, because, as has already been shown in the Introduction, § 3, it constitutes in the highest degree a weighty moment in the development of the history of the Old Testament theocracy. With it begins the period of a blooming of the kingdom of Israel which it never had before, and which never came again. Solomon thereby became elevated to the type of a great, mighty, wise, and prosperous king, which he passes for even to this day in the Orient. The prophets even depict the glory and happiness of the Messianic kingdom with expressions which are borrowed from the description of the kingdom of Israel under Solomon. (Comp. Mich. iv. 4, and Zach. iii. 10, with 1 Kings v. 5.) He is, according to his name, the prince of peace, κατ' ἐξοχήν, and the beloved of God (2 Sam. xii. 25), designations which by the prophets and in the New Testament are applied, in like manner, to the Messiah the son of David in the most eminent sense (Is. ix. 5, 6; Eph. i. 6; ii. 14; Col. i. 13). The reception of "The Song of Solomon" into the Old Testament canon shows that to the Jewish synagogue the typical relation was not unknown, and in the Christian Church it has always been maintained.

2. The brief introductory narrative, vers. 1–4, has been found in many respects very scandalous. This has arisen from the wholly false presupposition that it treats of the gratification of the lustfulness of a worn-out old man by means of a concubine. But of this the text declares so little, that it rather states explicitly, David did *not* know Abishag. The means which the physicians—not he himself—selected to restore to him his lost natural warmth, were, if not unheard of, at least morally questionable, yea, from a Christian point of view, decidedly objectionable. That they did not hesitate to recommend it, has indeed its ground, not in conscious immorality and frivolity, but in the perverted views prevalent throughout the entire ancient Orient upon the relation of the sexes, or in the deeply-rooted lack of chastity, which even the stern lawgiver Moses was not able to put an end to. Hence polygamy was not only permitted, but it was regarded by kings as somewhat belonging to their royal estate, and it never occurred to any one to object to them upon that account.

* [The translators, after some hesitation, have adopted the above as a caption. It is not a translation of the author's heading. He has it "*heilsgeschichtliche*," which expresses the conception of the historical process of healing or salvation. It is a term for which we have no available equivalent in English, although the thought embodied by the word is clear enough.]

(Comp. 2 Sam. v. 13; 1 Kings xi. 3; 2 Chron. xi. 21; Judges viii. 30.) This explains the reason why David did not reject the medical advice, and why the matter did not cause any scandal among the people, why even Bath-sheba herself did not feel aggrieved (ver. 15). Whatsoever the narrative has which is repulsive to us, does not adhere to a particular person nor to this particular instance, but to the general lack of conjugal chastity in the Old Testament.

3. Adonijah's undertaking, in which there is so unmistakably a reference to Absalom's, is to be understood throughout as blameworthy. He knew that the decision upon the succession to the throne depended upon his father, and that he had already selected Solomon. He knew also the tragical end of Absalom's attempt. Nevertheless, he would not be warned by it, but set himself up in the way of self over-estimation, making boast of his beautiful figure. King will he be at any cost. He makes his preparations without his father's consent, takes advantage of his infirmity and weakness, and secretly enters into combinations with the most influential men who belonged, more or less, to the class of malcontents. He allows himself to become impatient through his lust for ruling, and to rush into a measure in every respect premature. Upon the first intelligence, nevertheless, of Solomon's accession, a shameful panic seizes him. All courage to risk the least thing for his cause fails him. The whole crowd of his followers scatters like dust, and he himself, in a cowardly way, seeks to save only his life. He anxiously flies to a place of refuge, clings to it, calls himself Solomon's "servant," and salutes him as king. But, scarcely is the danger past, he breaks his pledged word to behave quietly, and starts anew in secret machinations to reach his goal. He flatters the mother of Solomon with hypocritical humility, and seeks to move the heart of the wife (see on chap. ii. 13 *sq.*). Rightly does Ewald say of him: "A man who, according to all the known features of our memorial of him, has much that resembles Absalom, fine form, airy, and ambitious of power, yet inwardly scarcely fit for governing; of an obdurate mind, and yet afraid to venture upon open battle. That he was no proper sovereign for such a kingdom as Israel then was, must be obvious to intelligent men."

4. Nathan here, as always (2 Sam. vii., xii.), appears right genuinely as prophet. When there is an attempt to bring to completion human self-willed beginnings over-against the counsel and will of God, where the safety and well-being of the chosen people were at stake, then it was the calling of the prophet to interfere, counselling and reminding, warning and punishing. It was not so much personal friendship for David, and love for his pupil Solomon, as rather, and before all, the known will of Jehovah, which had determined that the latter should be king, that induced him to take the step which would have had the most disastrous consequences for himself, yea, might have cost him his life, had Adonijah become king. It was not Zadok, nor Benaiah, nor any of the other friends of David, who brought to nought the ill-starred enterprise. But the same prophet, through whom the great promise had been made to David in respect of the succession, by the providence of God, averted also that which interfered with the fulfilment of the promise. And without his prompt, spirited interference there would have been for Israel no Solomon-era, no glorious age of the theocratic house. He proceeded in the matter with great wisdom and circumspection. First he allows the mother of Solomon to prepare the way, conciliating the infirm and feeble king, then he enters before him himself, with all deference indeed, nevertheless at the same time earnestly reminding and slightly reproving him, and calls upon him as a man and servant of God to fulfil the promise he had given unto the Lord.

5. The conduct of David, when he learns what is going on, corresponds fully with the divine will and with his great calling as the founder of the theocratic kingdom, and of the new dynasty which is to sit forever upon the throne of Israel. He does not stagger irresolutely hither and thither, like a sick, feeble old man without any will of his own, but, as if he were still the strong hero, the undismayed, determined, energetic man, such as in his best years he had so often shown himself amid dangers and in critical situations, he raises himself from his sick-bed, swears to observe his word, issues his orders, and puts them into immediate execution. This resolution and firmness could not have proceeded possibly from their opposite, from an inward infirmity, *i. e.*, from compliance with the supplication of a wife, nor from dislike of Adonijah, whom he had never interfered with (ver. 6), but had heretofore always indulged too much. It is to be explained only by his *faith in the promise* of Jehovah, by his firm certainty and assurance that Solomon was appointed by Jehovah to be his successor, and that through him as well his own "house," as the house of Jehovah, which it was permitted himself no longer to take care of, should be built up (2 Sam. vii. 11–13). Upon this account also the Epistle to the Hebrews mentions him expressly in the list of the men who have held the faith and obtained the promise (chap. xi. 32). How could he have sworn by Him who had "redeemed his soul out of all distress," and then, in deep humility, have praised and glorified Him, had he been conscious of any injustice towards Adonijah, and had not, in the prosperous issue of his commands, beheld a gracious guidance of the God of Israel? It is clear that under such a man as Adonijah, who was lacking in all the qualities requisite for the head of the theocracy, the kingdom never would have reached the bloom which it reached under Solomon. It would have been the greatest misfortune for Israel had he ascended the throne, while, viewed apart from the promise, the high and extraordinary endowment of Solomon was a clear indication of Providence that he alone of all his brothers was fitted to preserve, indeed to increase, what David had acquired with indescribable toil and great conflict, under the visible assistance of God. David did not deprive Adonijah of what rightly belonged to him, he only did not bestow upon him what he craved in his foolish arrogance and ambition, to the detriment of the kingdom.

6. Of *Solomon* himself we learn here only this one thing, that he instantly allowed Adonijah to go free, who, by his flight to a place of refuge, was self-convicted of guilt, and, according to the custom in such cases, feared punishment by death. His first act as king was significantly an act of magnanimity and grace, which appears all the more worthy of admiration when we remember

"that Adonijah, had he won, would certainly have destroyed his brother and all his chief supporters" (Ewald), as both Nathan and Bath-sheba undoubtedly expected (vers. 12, 21).

7. The new historic criticism sees "in our narrative, distinctly, the fully natural machinery of human actions" (Thenius), a "court-cabal," the "astute manager" of which is Nathan (Köster). "Bath-sheba sought to secure the crown for her son Solomon, although, after Absalom's death, it devolved upon the fourth son of David, Adonijah, whom Hagith had borne to him. One of the two priests at the ark of the covenant, Zadok, supported Bath-sheba's designs, just as Nathan the prophet. . . . . Both could expect from the young Solomon a greater complaisance towards priestly influence than from the more independent Adonijah, especially if they helped the young man, against right, to the throne. It was characteristic of Bath-sheba to induce David to swear by Jehovah that Solomon, instead of Adonijah, should be his successor. But Adonijah was resolved not to allow himself to be robbed of his good right through an intrigue of the harem. . . As David was sinking upon his death-bed, Adonijah believed that he must anticipate his enemies," &c. (Duncker, *Geschichte des Alterthums*, i. s. 385). Nothing is more certain than that the biblical author did not look upon the matter in such light. This whole exposition is a distinct example of the mode of treating biblical history already described in the Introduction, § 5. It abandons the standpoint of the narrator, arranges the history man-fashion, and then, as is the case here, perverts it into its opposite. The divine promise becomes a fine-spun harem intrigue, the "great prophet," as Ewald also calls him, becomes the intriguing manager of a court-cabal, the true priest is reduced to the level of a self-seeker, the firm believing king, the man after God's heart, the play-ball of a woman and of a court-party, the greatest and wisest king of Israel is a throne-robber, and on the other hand the airy, incapable, deceitful, and cowardly usurper Adonijah becomes a martyr of the right and the unfortunate victim of impure machinations. This entire perverted interpretation rests upon the presupposition, already sufficiently proved groundless, that Adonijah was "the rightful heir," and falls to pieces with it.

8. ["It is true that Adonijah was David's eldest son now remaining, and therefore might seem to challenge the justest title to the crown; but the kingdom of Israel, in so late an erection, had not yet known the right of succession. God himself, that had ordained the government, was as yet the immediate elector; He fetched Saul from among the stuff, and David from the sheep-fold, and has now appointed Solomon from the ferule to the sceptre."—Bp. Hall, *Contemplations*, Bk. xvii., Contemplation i.—E. H.]

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

Vers. 1–4. Weakness and infirmity in old age are: (*a*) the universal human lot to which we must all consider ourselves appointed (Ps. xc. 10); (*b*) they should loosen the bands which hold us to the temporal and perishable, and ripen us for eternity (2 Cor. iv. 17 *sq.*).—Würt. Summ.: They who, through many a cross, and sorrow, and anxiety, expend their bodily powers, should be all the more patient, and console themselves here with the example of David, and know that among the saints of God, also, feebleness of body is found.—We may, and should, follow advice for the relief of our distress and the preservation of our life, in so far as it does not militate against the commands of God; for the Lord says, "it is better," &c. (Matt. xviii. 8).—Old and sick people should, and it is expected of them as a work well pleasing to God that they bear this with a willing heart, with patience, self-denial, and sacrificing love.—Vers. 5–10. Adonijah's attempt to obtain the crown: (*a*) the ground upon which it rests (upon self-assertion, pride, lust of power, ver. 5, but God resisteth the proud, and a haughty spirit goeth before a fall: upon outward qualities, age, and beautiful person, ver. 6, but 1 Sam. xvi. 7; Ps. cxlvii. 10, 11); (*b*) the means which he employed (he seeks to impose upon the people by chariots and horsemen, but Ps. xx. 8; he conspires with false and faithless men, but they forsake him in the hour of danger, ver. 49; Ps. ci. 6, 7; he prepares for appearance' sake a religious festival, ver. 9, but 2 Mos. xx. 7).—Ver. 5. The effort after high things (Rom. xii. 16).—How many a person thinks: I will become a great personage, a man of authority and influence, and then scruples at nothing in order to attain his goal. But that which is written in 1 Cor. vii. 20, 24 applies to the individual as well as to entire classes.—Würt. Summ.: Let no one attempt to take an office against God and His will; "and no man taketh this honor unto himself but he that is called of God" (Heb. v. 4).—Ver. 6. The father who allows his son to go on in his pride and in worldly or sinful conduct, and shuts his eyes, not to trouble him, must expect that the son will trouble him and embitter the evening of his life. It is the right and duty of every father to speak to his son about his conduct even when he is no longer a child, and to ask, Why dost thou so? A perverted parental love is self-punished, Prov. xxix. 17; Sir. xxx. 9.—Ver. 7. High personages always find people for the execution of their sinful plans, who, from subserviency or desire of reward, from ambition or revenge, will act as counsellors and agents; but they have their reward, and for the most part end with terror.—Ver. 8. With those who are meditating treason and destruction we should never make common cause (Prov. xxiv. 21, 22).—Vers. 9, 10. Seiler: He who will not abide his time until God himself shall elevate him, will fall even when he attempts to rise. He who gives the crowd wherewith to eat and to drink, who prepares for them festivities and pleasures (*panem et circenses*), makes himself popular and beloved for the moment; but all who allow themselves to be gained in such way, to-day shout Hosanna! and to-morrow, Crucify! By not inviting Solomon, Adonijah betrayed his plans, and himself gave the occasion for their frustration (Ps. lxix. 23; Rom. xi. 9). It is a rule of the divine world-government that the cause of God, through that whereby its enemies seek to thwart and hinder it, is only so much the more promoted.

Vers. 11–27. Nathan, the type of a true prophet: (*a*) through his watchfulness and fidelity (Ezek. xxxiii. 7), he is not silent when it was his duty to open his mouth (Is. lvi. 10); (*b*) through his wisdom and gentleness (Matt. x. 16); (*c*) through his

earnestness and courage (Matt. x. 28; see *Histor. and Ethical*). How grand is this Nathan, how reproving to all who sleep when they should be wakeful, who are dumb when they should counsel, who flatter when they should warn.—Ver. 11. It is a solemn duty not to conceal what can prove an injury and evil to an individual or to a community, but to expose it at the right time and in the right place, so that the injury may be averted.—Ver. 12. What Nathan here says to Bath-sheba, Christ and his apostles, in an infinitely higher sense, say to us all, especially to every father and to every mother. He who has come into the world to deliver and to save our souls, cries, Come unto me, &c. (Matt. xi. 28, 29), and the apostle advises the jailor, who asks in terror and alarm, What shall I do to be saved? *i. e.*, delivered, Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, so shall thou and thy house be delivered. How many take kindly the good advice of a wise man, for themselves and for their children, in their earthly and outward affairs, but who wish to hear nothing of the best advice which shall bring blessedness to their souls.—Ver. 14. The purity of the counsel is confirmed by the accompanying result.—Vers. 15–21. Bath-sheba before the king. She reminds him of his duty (*a*) towards God, before whom he had sworn (what one has vowed before God, according to God's will, one must hold to under all circumstances; of this one must remind kings and princes); (*b*) towards the people whose well-being and whose woe were in his keeping (the great responsibility of him towards whom all eyes are directed); (*c*) towards the wife and son whose happiness and life were at stake (woe to the father through whose guilt wife and children, after his death, fall into contempt and wretchedness).—Vers. 22–27. As Nathan does not hold back from the fulfilment of his holy calling through consideration of the danger threatening his life, and of the illness of the king, so David is deterred in nothing when it was said, Behold the prophet! from listening to the man of God, though his word, like a two-edged sword, may pierce through his soul. To have a Nathan by one's side, who refers at the right time and in the right way to the will of God, is the choicest blessing for a prince. "He who fears God lays hold of such a friend" (Eccles. vi. 16).—The ministers of God and the preachers of His word should not indeed mingle in worldly business and political affairs, but their calling always requires them to testify against uproar and sedition, for he who resisteth the powers, resisteth the ordinance of God (Rom. xiii. 2).—With questions which lead to a knowledge of self, he who has the care of souls often accomplishes more than by direct reproaches and disciplinary speeches.

Vers. 28–37. David's decision: (*a*) His oath (vers. 29, 30) is an evidence of his firm faith in the divine promise; (*b*) his command is a living proof of the truth of the word, Is. xl. 31, and Ps. xcii. 15 *sq.* (see *Histor. and Ethical*).—Ver. 30 *sq.* The word of a prince must stand firm and not be broken. Happy for the king who, under all circumstances, observes what he has promised. Fidelity in high places meets with fidelity from those below.—Ver. 36. Where the government is in firm hands there is found also a willing, joyous obedience. Upon God's blessing all is founded. Without God's Amen our Amen avails nothing. Loyal subjects know that they can wish for nothing greater and better for their prince and ruler than that God, at all times, may be with him.—Vers. 38–40. The typical in Solomon's elevation to the sovereignty: (*a*) He is established in spite of all machinations against him (Ps. ii. 2; Heb. v. 5); (*b*) he is anointed with oil from the sanctuary (Is. lxi. 1; Luke iv. 18); (*c*) he makes his entry as prince of peace amid the jubilee and praise of the people (Zach. ix. 9; Matt. xxi. 1 *sq.*).—STARKE: My Christian! reflect here upon the trumpet-sounding and the jubilee-shout, when the heavenly Solomon shall take possession of his kingdom (Rev. xi. 16), and see to it that thou also mayest be amongst those who have part in this joy.

Vers. 41–49. The frustration of the schemes of Adonijah (Job v. 12): (*a*) The intelligence he obtains; (*b*) the effect produced by this intelligence. To an evil conscience (Joab) the trumpets which announce victory and joy are judgment-trumpets, which sound forth, Thou art weighed and found wanting. The same message in which David expresses himself, Blessed be, &c., ver. 48, works terror and alarm in Adonijah and his party. So still ever sounds the "good message" that the true Prince of peace, Christ, has won the victory, and is seated at the right hand of God, which to some is for thanksgiving and praise, so that they support themselves upon it, but to others it is a stone of stumbling, so that they fall and are confounded (Is. viii. 14; Luke ii. 34).—In the intoxication of sinful pleasure and of God-forgetting, frivolous jubilation, the holy God sends, oftentimes, the thunder and lightning of his judgment, so that the besotted and maddened may thereby be rendered sober and made to experience that there is an holy God in heaven who will not allow himself to be mocked. When Adonijah held a great festivity he had plenty of friends; but when the messenger came with evil tidings, no one, not even the bold Joab, stood by him; they all forsook him (Eccles. vi. 10–12).—Vers. 50–53. Adonijah covered himself with shame (Prov. xi. 2): (*a*) He was afraid of Solomon (he who does not fear the Lord, must at last become afraid of men). How miserable the contrast between the young, haughty Adonijah and the aged, feeble, but faithful-hearted and humble David; (*b*) he flies to the horns of the altar and begs for mercy: (he who said, I will be king, calls himself Solomon's servant. Ostentation and boasting, as a rule, end in cowardice and cringing. *He* can bring down him who is proud (Dan. iv. 34). In the old covenant the horns of the altar were the places of refuge for those who had forfeited life and sought grace; in the new covenant God has directed us to a horn of salvation (Luke i. 69), the cross of the Lord, which all must seize and hold fast to who seek forgiveness and grace, and wish to pass from death unto life. That is the only and true asylum; he who flees thither avails himself of the word of the great Prince of peace, Go in peace, thy faith hath saved thee. The most beautiful prerogative of the crown is to do mercy for judgment; but mercy must never be for a covering of iniquity. Hence by the side of the word: Thy sins are forgiven thee! stands the other word: Sin no more! Kings and princes do well when, after Solomon's example, they begin their reign with an act of grace.

[BP. HALL. "Outward happiness and friendship are not known until our last act. In the im-

potency of either our revenge or recompense it will easily appear who loved us for ourselves, who for their own ends." Suitable for ver. 7.

Bp. Hall, for ver. 41. "No doubt at this feast there was many a health drunken to Adonijah, many a confident boast of their prospering design many a scorn of the despised faction of Solomon · and now, for their last dish (ver. 49) is served up astonishment, and fearful expectation of a just revenge.—E. H.]

B.—*David's last words to Solomon, and his death.*

Chapter II. 1–12.

1 Now the days of David drew nigh that he should die; and he charged
2 Solomon his son, saying, I go the way of all the earth: be thou strong there-
3 fore, and shew thyself a man; and keep the charge of the Lord [Jehovah] thy
God, to walk in His ways, to keep His statutes, and His commandments, and
His judgments, and His testimonies, as it is written in the law of Moses, that
thou mayest prosper [1] in all that thou doest, and whithersoever thou turnest
4 thyself: that the Lord [Jehovah] may continue [confirm] [2] His word which he
spake concerning me, saying, If thy children [sons] [3] take heed to their way, to
walk before me in truth with all their heart and with all their soul,[4] there shall
5 not fail thee (said he) [5] a man on the throne of Israel. Moreover thou knowest
also what Joab the son of Zeruiah did to me, *and* [*even*] [6] what he did to the two
captains of the hosts of Israel, unto Abner the son of Ner, and unto Amasa the
son of Jether, whom he slew, and shed the blood of war in peace, and put the
blood of war [7] upon his girdle that *was* about his loins, and in his shoes that *were*
6 on his feet. Do therefore according to thy wisdom, and let not his hoar head go
7 down to the grave in peace. But shew kindness unto the sons of Barzillai the
Gileadite, and let them be of those that eat at thy table: for so they came to
8 me when I fled because of [before] [8] Absalom thy brother. And, behold, *thou
hast* with thee Shimei the son of Gera, a Benjamite [a son of the Jaminite] [9] of
Bahurim, which cursed me with a grievous curse in the day when I went to
Mahanaim: but he came down to meet me at Jordan, and I sware to him by
9 the Lord [Jehovah], saying, I will not put thee to death with the sword. Now
therefore hold him not guiltless: for thou *art* a wise man, and knowest what
thou oughtest to do unto him; but his hoar head bring thou down to the grave
with blood.
10 So [And] David slept with his fathers, and was buried in the city of David.
11 And the days that David reigned over Israel *were* forty years: seven years
reigned he in Hebron, and thirty and three years reigned he in Jerusalem.
12 Then sat Solomon upon the throne of David his father; and his kingdom
was established greatly.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

[1] Ver. 3.—[The Heb. תַּשְׂכִּיל bears equally well the sense *prosper* or *do wisely*; *cf.* Josh. i. 7. The VV. generally adopt the former.

[2] Ver. 4.—[*Confirm* is the proper sense of יָקִים as in all the VV.

[3] Ver. 4.—[It is better here to preserve the masculine form as in all the VV., the reference being undoubtedly to the line upon the throne.

[4] Ver. 4.—[The Vatican Sept. omits the words *concerning me*, and also *with all their soul*.

[5] Ver. 4.—[De Rossi rejects as spurious the word לֵאמֹר, which is wanting in Kennicott's MS. 170, and in the Vulg. and Arab.

[6] Ver. 5.—[Many MSS., the Syr. and Arab., express the conjunction וַאֲשֶׁר.

[7] Ver. 5.—[The Sept. have here "innocent blood"—*αἷμα ἀθῷον*.

[8] Ver. 7.—[Heb. מִפְּנֵי.

[9] Ver. 8.—[Heb. בֶּן־הַיְמִינִי—son of the Jaminite, *i. e.*, of the descendants of Jamin, a son of Simeon (Num. xxvi. 12). The Heb. for the patriarch Benjamin is written in one word; the Gentile name is written separately, but without the article. All the instances cited by Gesenius *in verbo*, are either without the article, or else refer to this very Shimei. Of the VV., the Sept. and Vulg. have appreciated the distinction; Chald., Syr., and Arab. agree with the A. V.—F. G.]

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

Ver. 1. **Now the days of David, &c.** The Chronicles omit the history of Adonijah, but narrate instead, that David ordered a solemn act of homage of the entire people, in the persons of their representatives, towards Solomon when he was anointed "a second time" (1 Chron. xxiii. 1 *sq.*, and xxix. 20–25). Such also was the case with Saul (1 Sam. xi. 12–15), and with David himself (2 Sam. v. 1–3; 1 Chron. xi. 1–3). Solomon's first anointing was rather impromptu, called for by the pressure of circumstances, upon which account it was proper that it should be followed by another done with all solemnity before the whole people. It took place also before that which is narrated in the section to be considered. The words, "a second time," show that the first anointing was well known to the chronicler. His narrative, besides, does not "rest upon liberty with the history" (Thenius), but is a filling-out of our own, with which it agrees very well.

Vers. 2–4. **I go the way, &c.** The form of expression reminds one of Josh. xxiii. 14; 1 Sam. iv. 9; but especially of Josh. i. 7. The exhortation: *Be thou strong, therefore, and show thyself a man!* does not mean: be consoled on account of my departure, bear it manfully; but it refers to what follows—be strong and brave in the "charge" of Jehovah, in the fulfilment of His prescripts. The expression: שָׁמַרְתָּ מִשְׁמֶרֶת יְהוָה does not convey the sense: consider what Jehovah wills to have considered, *i. e.*, His laws (for then the following would be pleonastic), but rather *custodies custodiam Jehovae*, keep the charge which thou art bound to Jehovah, to accomplish; be a true watchman in the service of Jehovah and for Him (comp. 1 Chron. xxiii. 32; xii. 29; Numb. iii. 6–8, 38). This charge is fulfilled in walking in the ways of God—in observing His various commandments. The expressions which here, as elsewhere, so frequently standing side by side, denote the latter (Deut. v. 28; viii. 11; Ps. cxviii. 5 *sq.*), do not admit of sharply-drawn distinctions; but they "denote together the totality of the law upon its different sides and relations to men" (Keil).—הִשְׂכִּיל does not mean exactly "to have good fortune" (Gesenius, De Wette, and others), but to be skilful, wise. He who in all things stands upon the commandments of God, and governs himself thereafter, is and carries himself wisely. What he does, will and must have a prosperous issue, and come to a right conclusion (Deut. xxix. 8; Jer. iii. 15 *sq.*); xxiii. 5; Prov. xvii. 8; 2 Kings xviii. 7).—In ver. 4 the positive promise in 2 Sam. vii. 11 *sq.* is expressed in negative form, as also in chap. viii. 25; ix. 5; Jer. xxxiii. 17. The לֹא־יִכָּרֵת "does not denote a completely unbroken succession, but only the opposite of a break forever" (Hengstenberg). Thy house and seed shall never be exterminated, what catastrophies soever may happen.

Vers. 5, 6. The charge which David delivers in vers. 5–9, were not, according to *Ewald* and *Eisenlohr*, originally made by him; but were first, at some subsequent time, put into his mouth in order to explain and justify Solomon's severity to Joab and to Shimei (chap. ii. 28 *sq.*). This supposition is as unnecessary as arbitrary.—Upon the double murder of which Joab was guilty, comp. 2 Sam. iii. 27 *sq.*, and xx. 8 *sq.* The first threw a false suspicion upon David (2 Sam. iii. 37); the second was coupled with scorn and defiance of the royal authority (2 Sam. xx. 11); hence what he has done to me (to my injury).—יָשֶׂם, ver. 5, literally, he shed "blood of war" in peace, *i. e.*, he furnished an unheard of example when he killed Abner and Amasa, not as foes, in open, honorable warfare, but murderously destroyed the inoffensive. Instead of the second "blood of war," *Thenius*, after the Sept. (*αἷμα ἀθῷον*), reads דַּם נָקִי, which makes good sense, certainly, but is unnecessary.—**Girdle** and **shoes** are not here introduced as "especial parts of oriental costume" (Thenius, Keil); nor is it thereby said, "from the girdle of his loins, to the latchet of his shoes," *i. e.*, over and over (Ewald); but girdle and shoes here are rather the marks of the warrior, as in Isai. v. 27 and Eph. vi. 14 *sq.*, for the sword is fastened to the girdle (2 Sam. xx. 8), and the shoes serve for marching, and provided with both, one enters upon battle. David also means to say: Joab has soiled with murder and blood the insignia of his rank and dignity as a soldier and generalissimo, and covered his office with shame and disgrace.—**According to thy wisdom.** "David does not wish Solomon to invent a pretext for taking Joab's life; but he exhorts him to observe wisely the right moment and occasion, when Joab shall furnish a reason, to hold him to account also for his blood-guiltiness, so that no murmuring shall arise among the people; but every one can see the justice of the punishment" (Starke).—**In peace,** *i. e.*, so unpunished as if he had done only good, and committed no crime worthy of death.

Vers. 7–9. **Barzillai.** Comp. 2 Sam. xvii. 27 *sq.* **At thy table,** *i. e.*, not "that they shall have the privilege of eating with the king at the royal table itself" (Keil); but they shall receive their necessary food from the court, like the royal servants (Dan. i. 5). The recollection of the noble service of Barzillai leads to the mention of the crime of **Shimei,** committed on the same occasion (2 Sam. xvi. 5 *sq.*, and xix. 21).—עִמְּךָ (ver. 8) does not mean under thy power (Starke), but near thee. Bahurim, where Shimei dwelt (2 Sam. xvi. 5), was a village in the neighborhood of Jerusalem (Joseph. *Ant.* 7, 9, 7), about one and a-half hours' (five miles and a quarter) distant from it. David does not say simply, he cursed me; but emphatically, he cursed me with a curse, and adds the epithet, נִמְרֶצֶת, which, according to *Thenius*, because the primary signification of מרץ is, to be exhausted, sick, means "heinous" in the sense of *horrendus*. According to *Kimchi* and *Gesenius*, the primary signification is, to be powerful, strong, and for this the remaining passages, where the word occurs, decide (Mich. ii. 10; Job vi. 25; xvi. 3; Vulgate, *Maledictio pessima*).—**For thou art a wise man, and knowest,** *i. e.*, I leave to thy discretion the how and when of the punishment. An *αἰτία εὔλογος* (Josephus), will not be wanting. **With blood,** the opposite of the "in peace" in ver. 6, inasmuch as he has deserved it.

Vers. 10, 11. **In the city of David,** *i. e.*, in Mount Zion, in which, caves that served as burial

vaults were constructed (Winer, *R.-W.-B.*, ii. s. 736). According to Thenius the entrance into these vaults was on the east, in the vale Tyropoeon, in a sloping declivity of the mountain, opposite the spring Siloam. The later kings also were buried here (1 Kings xi. 43; xiv. 31; xv. 8, &c.). The still so-called kings' graves are different, and are situated on the opposite side, to the north of the Damascus gate (Robinson, *Palestine*, vol. i. p. 240 and 357 *sq.*). David had, without doubt, prepared these burial-places for himself and his successors. In what high estimation his tomb was held is clear from the circumstance that it was known even during the time of Christ (Acts ii. 29). According to 2 Sam. v. 5, six months were added to the seven years. Ver. 12 is the transition to the next section, where it is told how Solomon's administration was strengthened.

HISTORICAL AND ETHICAL.

1. *In the last words of David to Solomon*, it is not so much the father speaking to his son, as the king of Israel, the head of the theocratic kingdom, to his successor upon the throne. From this stand-point we must view alike the general and the special portions of the whole discourse. The calling of a king of Israel consisted especially in this: to preserve the "kingdom of Jehovah" (1 Chron. xxviii. 5; xxix. 23); to be not the representative, but the servant of Jehovah, the true and proper king, also to observe "all the words of the Law, and all the ordinances of Jehovah" (Deut. xvii. 14–20); but, before all, that supreme and chief command, Exod. xx. 3–6, to observe completely the covenant which Jehovah had made with His chosen people. With this high calling David's soul was completely filled; and as he had continually "done what was right in the eyes of Jehovah, and had not turned aside from anything that had been enjoined upon him all his life long" (1 Kings xv. 5), so, also, in the last moments of his life, it was his greatest solicitude that his successor upon the throne should stand upon "the charge of Jehovah" (ver. 3), *i. e.*, should take care that the law of Moses, with all its particular prescripts, in their entire circumference, should be maintained. This he earnestly and solemnly sets forth as the foundation of a prosperous and blessed reign, and as the condition of the fulfilment of the promise made to him in respect of the continuance of his "house" (2 Sam. vii.). So David appears here, yet once more, in his grand historical significance, namely, as the type of a theocratic king, by which the conduct of all subsequent kings is measured (chap. iii. 3, 6, 14; ix. 4; x. 4–6; xi. 33–38; xiv. 8; xv. 5–11; 2 Kings xiv. 3; xvi. 2; xviii. 3; xxii. 2). The throne of David is Israel's model throne; no king of Israel has left behind him such a testament as David here.

2. *It is worthy of remark, that the man who reigned forty years*, and whose life as ruler was so rich in experience, should, amongst the counsels he imparted to his successor, have placed *this* in the fore front; "*be thou strong, therefore, and show thyself a man!*" He knew what belongs to the office of ruler. Moral weaknesses, swaying hither and thither like a reed moved by the wind; unseasonable pliability is a greater defect in a ruler than if he be overtaken by this or that particular sin in private life. Rightly says the Scripture, Woe to the land whose king is a child (instead of a man), Eccles. x. 16. Firmness and manliness, however, are not the fruit of caprice, and of an unbroken heart. It is through grace that the heart is made strong (Heb. xiii. 9).

3. *The special directions*, which refer to individual persons, David likewise communicates, not as a private man, but as king of Israel. Joab's double murder had gone fully unpunished. At the time of its commission David was not in a condition to be able to punish him; but he felt the full weight of the deed, and in his horror of it uttered an imprecation of Joab (2 Sam. iii. 29). In the eyes of the people, nevertheless, the non-punishment must have been regarded as an insult against law and righteousness, the charge of which devolved upon the king. "It was a stain upon his reign not yet blotted out. Even upon his death-bed he cannot think otherwise than that it is his duty, as that of the supreme judge, to deliver to his successor a definite direction about it" (Hess, *Gesch. David's*, ii. s. 220). It lay upon his conscience, and he desired that this stain somehow ("do according to thy wisdom," ver. 1) should be removed. Moreover, Joab's participation in Adonijah's revolt must have appeared as dangerous for the throne of Solomon. As the punishment of Joab was to him a matter of conscience, so also was *Barzillai's* compensation. What Barzillai had done, he had done for him as king, as the anointed of Jehovah. Such fidelity and devotion to the legitimate reigning house (*Königthum*) in a time of great and almost universal falling away, ought to be publicly requited, and to be recognized in honorable remembrance after the death of the king. This compensation must serve, no less than the righteous punishment of Joab, to the firm establishment of the throne of Solomon. In direct contrast with the action of Barzillai was that of *Shimei*. He did not curse David as a private person, but he cursed him with the heaviest curse as the "anointed of Jehovah," and therein Jehovah himself directly. For blasphemy against the king was on the same level with blasphemy against God (2 Kings xxi. 10). Both were punished with death (Lev. xxiv. 14 *sq.*; Exod. xxii. 27; 2 Sam. xvi. 9), hence also Abishai thought that Shimei should be put to death (2 Sam. xix. 22). But David wished on the day when God had shown him a great mercy, to show mercy himself, and upon that account spared his life. But "it was no small matter to allow the miscreant to spend his life near him (no banishment was talked of). And to permit him to spend his days quietly under the following reign (which had never been promised him), would have been a kindness that might have been greatly abused as a precedent of unpunished crimes" (Hess). In fact, Shimei was a dangerous man, and capable of repeating what he had done to David. As for the rest, David left Solomon to choose the manner and time of his punishment, only he was not to go unpunished.

4. *David's conduct on his dying-bed* has frequently been regarded as a great reproach to him. The latest (secular) history passes the following judgment upon it: "If David's life and deeds had not sufficiently shown his mind, these last words of the dying man would leave no doubt about his character. . . . We must turn away from such blood-thirsty desire for revenge which, though innate with the Semitic races, is united here with a

concealment of purpose and malice that are peculiar to David. His vengeance, even out of the grave itself, determines to strike, through the hand of his son, an insignificant man, to whom he (David) had once promised forgiveness when he himself was in a strait. Forgetting all the services and victories he owed to Joab, David determines, in order to gratify a long-cherished ill-feeling, to have a man, to whom he owed his kingdom and whom he himself had not ventured to touch, murdered by his son, ostensibly for two acts which Joab did, if not with David's consent, yet by no means against his will; the fruits of which David had willingly accepted, and which acts he had not made the slightest efforts to punish" (Duncker, *Gesch. des Alterthums*, i. *s.* 386). In this view it is entirely overlooked that David did not then speak as a private man, but as a theocratic king, and this judgment of him is quite false, no regard being paid to the time and the circumstances. The rough, false assassin Joab, who finally conspires with Adonijah, is made to appear as a man of high merit, and the blasphemer and traitor Shimei, as an insignificant, unfairly-treated man, while David, who departs life without one crime on his conscience as king, and who desires to fulfil the demands of justice as well as of gratitude, is said to have displayed the whole of his wicked and malicious character at the last. "Nothing but an uncritical confusion, which wished to behold in David a saint and a complete model of virtue (which the Scriptures nowhere assert him to be), could call forth, as contrast, the degradation of the king, which is as one-sided as unpsychological" (Winer, *R.-W.-B.*, i *s.* 258). [Yes! but our author forgets that David had sworn to Shimei, *Thou shalt not die!* (2 Sam. xix. 23); and "the king" it was (*i. e.*, David as king) that "swore unto him." Clearly David's act of grace to Shimei was an act of royal right, royal clemency, and nothing but sophistry can justify his dying charge to Solomon not to let the unfortunate man die in peace.—E. H.] When Bunsen's *Bibel-werk* says: "The vengeance of David can never be justified from the Christian point of view," it is quite overlooked that *that* point of view is not the fitting one here. David belonged to the Old Testament economy, to the time of the law, not the gospel, and his conduct must be judged in the light of the former. It is an anachronism to measure Old Testament persons by the standard of the sermon on the mount. Besides, the same apostle who exhorts the believers as follows: Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, immediately after, speaking of authorities—and David speaks as such here—tells them that they are "ministers of God, revengers to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil" (Rom. xii. 19; xiii. 4). In the kingdom of God in which the law of earthly punishments prevailed, such a crime (like that of Joab and Shimei) could not remain unpunished. He, too, who, when He was reviled, reviled not again; who, when He suffered, threatened not (1 Peter ii. 23), announced in a parable the final judgment of His enemies: "But those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me" (Luke xix. 27: v. Gerlach). We scarcely find as many instances of personal love to a foe, generosity and goodness, in the life of any Old Testament hero, as in David's. It is evident that the author of our books does not relate the commissions objected to, to vilify David at the last, as Duncker does, but on the contrary he tells them, to his honor, to show how entirely king of Israel David was, even on his dying-bed.

5. Chronicles (I., xxix. 28) *relates the death of David* with the addition that "he died in a good old age, full of days, riches, and honor." We see how much he was honored even in death, from the fact that his weapons were preserved as relics in the sanctuary (2 Kings xi. 10). Compare the eulogy in Ecclesiasticus, chap. xlvii. 2–11. For the character of the great, and indeed greatest, king of Israel, though now so often unjustly judged, by whose name the expected Messiah was designated by the prophets (Ezekiel xxxiv. 23; xxxvii. 24; Hos. iii. 5), comp. Niemeyer, *Charaktistik der Bibel*, iv. *s.* 107–358, and Ewald, *Gesch. Isr.*, iii. *s.* 250–257, which says, with regard to the "last (poetical) words" of David (2 Sam. xxiii. 1–7): "No prince, especially one who did not inherit the kingdom, could close his life with more blessed divine peace, or a more assured and cheerful view into the future."

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

Vers. 1–9. David's last words to Solomon (*a*) with regard to the kingdom generally (vers. 1–4), (*b*) respecting some individuals (vers. 5–9; see *Historical and Ethical*).—Ver. 2. Various as are the paths of men from their birth, yet they all, kings as well as beggars, rich and poor, go the way to the grave (Ecclesiasticus xl. 1–3). And yet so many live as if they had not to travel that road (Ps. xxxix. 5, 6; xc. 11, 12).—The passing nature and vanity of the world, with its allurements and splendor, is a strong exhortation and warning from God to hold fast to the word that lives forever, and shall not pass even when heaven and earth pass away (1 Peter i. 24, 25; 1 John ii. 17; Luke xxi. 33).—Be firm and be a man! What is requisite to be one? how shall one become one? of what use? (Heb. xiii. 9; 1 Cor. xv. 5–8; xvi. 13).—Ver. 3. The last and best will of a father to his son: (*a*) Trust in God's protection of yourself and all whom God has confided to your care; (*b*) walk in His ways; let Him lead and guide you, He will do it well (Prov. xxiii. 26; Ps. xxxv. 5); (*c*) keep His ways and ordinances (Eccles. xii. 13; Ps. i. 1–6; Tob. iv. 6). Such an inheritance is greater and better than all the gold and land he might leave you.—True prudence and wisdom are not born of human thought and much knowledge, but are the fruit of the fear of God, and of walking in His ways and commandments (Ps. cxi. 10; Job xxviii. 28).—God-fearing parents are more anxious about their children keeping close to God and His word, than about leaving them temporal goods.—Ver. 4. The promises of God only proceed from His grace, not our merit; but their fulfilment is always coupled with conditions, which we have to perform if we would enjoy them (Heb. xi. 6; 1 Tim. iv. 8).—Vers. 5–9. We cannot go the way of all the world in peace, as long as we have anything remaining on our conscience, or any debt to justice and grateful love to cancel. We should forgive our enemies from our hearts, as we desire the Lord to forgive us, and especially on our dying-beds. But authority was instituted to "do justice; to prevent and punish wickedness;" it commits a sin and has a crime to answer for so long as it does not do

this (Rom. xiii. 4; Gen. ix. 6).—Ver. 6. Gray hairs, if found in the way of righteousness, are a crown of glory (Prov. xvi. 31), adorned with which a man may go the way of all flesh in peace and comfort; but an old sinner, whom even gray hairs have not brought to repentance, goes down to the grave without solace or peace.—Ver. 7. A noble heart does not forget what was done for him in times of trouble especially, and thinks of it even in the hour of death. The world is ungrateful. A blessing rests on deeds of faithfulness and self-sacrificing disinterested love, and it descends to children and children's children.—Vers. 8, 9. A curse rests on those who curse the "powers" which are God's ministers, instead of praying for them, and they are made, sooner or later, to feel the curse (1 Peter ii. 17, 6). The Lord prayed for those who cursed Him; but when they did not repent and become converted, divine judgment came down on them. No doubt a wicked man often goes a long time unpunished for his deeds, but divine justice does not fail to overtake him finally, ere he is aware.—It requires wisdom to punish; a premature ill-judged chastisement does more harm than good.

Vers. 10–12. David's death: (*a*) He slept with his fathers (STARKE: The death of believers is a sleep, and being gathered to their fathers, who also still live with God, and await the coming resurrection to eternal life, Isai. xxvi. 19); (*b*) they rest in the grave. (Rest is good to those who have borne the burden and heat of the day forty years long—that rest which God has promised to those who strive after eternal life with patient continuing in good works. Rom. ii. 7; Isai. lvii. 2).—David's grave is a pledge that the memory of the just is blessed (Prov. xl. 7; Acts ii. 29), and that the blessing of the father builds the children's houses (ver. 12; Ecclesiasticus iii. 11).

C.—*Solomon's course with the opposers of his accession to the throne.*

CHAP. II. 13–46.]

13 AND Adonijah the son of Haggith came to Bath-sheba the mother of Solo-
14 mon.[1] And she said, Comest thou peaceably? And he said, Peaceably. He
15 said moreover, I have somewhat to say unto thee. And she said,[2] Say on. And
he said, Thou knowest that the kingdom was mine, and *that* all Israel set their
faces on me, that I should reign: howbeit the kingdom is turned about, and is
16 become my brother's: for it was his from the Lord [Jehovah]. And now I ask
17 one petition of thee, deny me not. And she said unto him, Say on. And he said,
Speak, I pray thee, unto Solomon the king, (for he will not say thee nay,) that
18 he give me Abishag the Shunammite to wife. And Bath-sheba said, Well; I
will speak for thee unto the king.
19 Bath-sheba therefore went unto king Solomon, to speak unto him for Adoni-
jah. And the king rose up to meet her, and bowed himself unto her, and sat
down on his throne, and caused a seat to be set for the king's mother; and she
20 sat on his right hand. Then she said, I desire one small petition of thee; *I pray
thee*, say me not nay. And the king said unto her, Ask on, my mother; for I
21 will not say thee nay. And she said, Let Abishag the Shunammite be given
22 to Adonijah thy brother to wife. And king Solomon answered and said unto
his mother, And why dost thou ask Abishag the Shunammite for Adonijah?
ask for him the kingdom also; for he *is* mine elder brother; even for him, and
23 for[3] Abiathar the priest, and for Joab the son of Zeruiah. Then king Solomon
sware by the Lord [Jehovah], saying, God do so to me, and more also, if Ado-
24 nijah hath not spoken this word against his own life. Now therefore, *as* the
Lord [Jehovah] liveth, which hath established me, and set me on the throne of
David my father, and who hath made me a house, as he promised, Adonijah
25 shall be put to death this day. And king Solomon sent by the hand of Benaiah
the son of Jehoiada; and he fell upon him that he died.
26 And unto Abiathar the priest said the king, Get thee to Anathoth, unto
thine own fields; for thou *art* worthy of death: but I will not at this time[4] put
thee to death, because thou barest the ark of the Lord [Jehovah] God before Da-
vid my father, and because thou hast been afflicted in all wherein my father was
27 afflicted. So Solomon thrust out Abiathar from being priest unto the Lord [Je-
hovah]; that he might fulfil the word of the Lord [Jehovah], which he spake
concerning the house of Eli in Shiloh.
28 Then tidings came to Joab: for Joab had turned after Adonijah, though he
turned not after Absalom.[5] And Joab fled unto the tabernacle of the Lord [Je-
29 hovah], and caught hold on the horns of the altar. And it was told king Solo-
mon that Joab was fled unto the tabernacle of the Lord [Jehovah]; and, behold,

he is by the altar.[6] Then Solomon sent Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, saying,
30 Go, fall upon him.[7] And Benaiah came to the tabernacle of the Lord [Jehovah],
and said unto him, Thus saith the king, Come forth. And he said, Nay;[8] but I
will die here. And Benaiah brought the king word again, saying, Thus said
31 Joab, and thus he answered me. And the king said unto him, Do as he hath said,
and fall upon him, and bury him; that thou mayest take away[9] the innocent
32 [*omit*] blood, which Joab shed [without cause], from me, and from the house of
my father. And the Lord [Jehovah] shall return his blood[10] upon his own head,
who fell upon two men more righteous and better than he, and slew them with
the sword, [and] my father David not knowing *thereof* [knew *it* not[11]], *to wit*,
33 Abner the son of Ner, captain of the host of Israel, and Amasa the son of Jether,
captain of the host of Judah. Their blood shall therefore return upon the head
of Joab, and upon the head of his seed for ever: but upon David, and upon his
seed, and upon his house, and upon his throne, shall there be peace for ever from
34 the Lord [Jehovah]. So Benaiah the son of Jehoiada went up, and fell upon him,
and slew him: and he was buried in his own house in the wilderness.
35 And the king put Benaiah the son of Jehoiada in his room over the host:[12]
and Zadok the priest did the king put in the room of Abiathar.[13]
36 And the king sent and called for Shimei, and said unto him, Build thee an
house in Jerusalem, and dwell there, and go not forth thence any whither.
37 For it shall be, *that* on the day thou goest out, and passest over the brook
Kidron, thou shalt know for certain that thou shalt surely die: thy blood shall
38 be upon thine own head.[14] And Shimei said unto the king, The saying *is* good:
as my lord the king hath said, so will thy servant do. And Shimei dwelt in
39 Jerusalem many days. And it came to pass at the end of three years, that
two of the servants of Shimei ran away unto Achish son of Maachah king of
40 Gath. And they told Shimei, saying, Behold, thy servants *be* in Gath. And
Shimei arose, and saddled his ass, and went to Gath to Achish to seek his ser-
41 vants: and Shimei went, and brought his servants from Gath. And it was told
Solomon that Shimei had gone from Jerusalem to Gath, and was come again.
42 And the king sent and called for Shimei, and said unto him, Did I not make
thee to swear by the Lord [Jehovah], and protested unto thee, saying, Know for
a certain, on the day thou goest out, and walkest abroad any whither, that thou
shalt surely die?[15] and thou saidst unto me, The word *that* I have heard *is* good.
43 Why then hast thou not kept the oath of the Lord [Jehovah], and the command-
44 ment that I have charged thee with? The king said moreover to Shimei, Thou
knowest all the wickedness which thine heart is privy to, that thou didst to
David my father; therefore the Lord [Jehovah] shall return thy wickedness upon
45 thine own head: and king Solomon *shall be* blessed, and the throne of David
46 shall be established before the Lord [Jehovah] for ever. So the king commanded
Benaiah the son of Jehoiada; which went out, and fell upon him, that he died.
And the kingdom was established in the hand of Solomon.[16]

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

[1] Ver. 18.—[The Sept. adds *καὶ προσεκύνησεν αὐτῇ* (Al. *αὐτήν*).

[2] Ver. 14.—[Two MSS. and some editions (followed by the Sept., Vulg., and Syriac) add לוֹ = to him.

[3] Ver. 22.—[All the VV. here give a sense which seems based on the supposition that ל before Abiathar and before Joab is pleonastic; but for this there is no authority. Thus the Vulg.: "*et habet Abiathar*," etc. Sept.: *καὶ αὐτῷ Ἀβιάθαρ κ.τ.λ.* Similarly Syr. and Arab. The Chald.: "*nonne in consilio fuerunt ille et Abiathar*," etc.

[4] Ver. 26.—[The Sept., without authority, alters the place of the conjunction so as to read *ἀνὴρ θανάτου εἶ σὺ ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ ταύτῃ, καὶ οὐ θανατώσω σε.*

[5] Ver. 28.—[The Vulg., Sept., (Vatican) and Syr. curiously substitute here the name of Solomon for that of Absalom. The Arab. attempts to reconcile both by translating "neither did he love Solomon."

[6] Ver. 29.—[The Sept. add "And king (Alex. omit *king*) Solomon sent to Joab, saying, What has been done to thee that thou hast fled to the altar? And Joab said, Because I was afraid of thee, and I fled to the Lord."

[7] Ver. 29.—[The Sept. add "and bury him." See ver. 31.

[8] Ver. 30.—[One MS., followed by the Sept., Vulg., and Syr., adds אֵצֵא after לֹא.

[9] Ver. 31.—[The Sept. add *σήμερον* and translate חִנָּם accurately "without cause." The Chald. gives both senses. The Vatican Sept. omits the name of Joab.

[10] Ver. 32.—[Sept. = the blood of his iniquity.

[11] Ver. 32.—[There is no reason for omitting the conjunction and changing the preterite of the Hebr. which are preserved in the Sept. and the Chald.

[12] Ver. 35.—[The Sept. add καὶ ἡ βασιλεία κατωρθοῦτο ἐν Ἱερουσαλήμ. *Cf.* ver. 46.

[13] Ver. 35.—[The Sept. add καὶ Σαλωμὼν υἱὸς Δαυὶδ ἐβασίλευσεν ἐπὶ Ἰσραὴλ καὶ Ἰουδα ἐν Ἱερουσαλήμ. (Thus far Alex. omits) καὶ ἔδωκε κύριος φρόνησιν τῷ Σαλωμὼν καὶ σοφίαν πολλὴν σφόδρα καὶ πλάτος καρδίας ὡς ἡ ἄμμος ἡ παρὰ τὴν θάλασσαν. (See iv. 29.) Then follows the first verse of chap. iii. much altered, and a long interpolation which may be thus translated: "And the wisdom of Solomon was increased greatly above the wisdom of all the ancients and above all the wise men of Egypt (see iv. 30), and he (iii. 1) took Pharaoh's daughter, and brought her into the city of David, until he had made an end of building his own house and the house of the LORD in the first *place*, and the wall of Jerusalem round about: in seven years he made and finished *them*." V. 15 follows then. . . "And Solomon made the sea and the bases and the great lavers and the pillars and the fountain of the court and the brazen sea. And he built the citadel *and* battlements upon it, he divided the city of David. So Pharaoh's daughter went up from the city of David into her own house which he built for her. Then he built the citadel. And three times in the year Solomon offered whole burnt-offerings and peace-offerings upon the altar which he built to the Lord, and he offered incense before the Lord, and finished the house. And these *were* the chiefs (v. 16) which were set over the works of Solomon: three thousand and six hundred rulers of the people that wrought in the work. And he built Asshur and Magdo and Gezer (ix. 15, 17, 18) and Beth-horon the upper and Ballath. Besides his building the house of the Lord and the wall of Jerusalem round about, after these he built these cities." Then follows, with some variations, ii. 8, 9, which form the junction again with ver. 36.

[14] Ver. 37.—[The Sept. add καὶ ὥρκισεν αὐτὸν ὁ βασιλεὺς ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ ἐκείνῃ. *Cf.* vers. 42, 43.

[15] Ver. 42.—[The Vatican Sept. omits the rest of ver. 42. The last clause is sometimes pointed, "The word is good: I have heard."

[16] Ver. 46.—[Here follows in the Sept. a passage made up of extracts from chap. iv. and containing about one-fourth of that chapter, most of which is omitted from its place.—F. G.]

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

Ver. 13. **And Adonijah . . to Bath-Sheba,** &c. What Adonijah really aimed at in his petition to Bath-Sheba is made apparent in ver. 22. He did not care about the fair Abishag, but about the kingdom, which he hoped to acquire through possession of her. In the ancient East, after a king died, or his kingdom passed from him, the harem fell to the new ruler. On the other hand, also, he who took to himself the king's wives, was regarded as having taken to himself the rights of the king. The claim to the possession of the women of the harem was understood to mean the claim to the throne. It was so also with the Persians (Herodot. iii. 68; Justin x. 2: *occiso Cyro Aspasiam pellicem ejus rex Artaxerxes in matrimonium acceperat. Hanc patrem cedere sibi, sicuti regnum Darius postulaverat*). When Absalom went, according to Ahithophel's advice, into the king's harem and to his concubines in the sight of all the people, it was a public, practical announcement that he had assumed the king's rights (2 Sam. xvi. 20–23; comp. xii. 11). When, therefore, Adonijah demanded Abishag for his wife, ostensibly from love to her, it was a secret claim to the throne; for Abishag was looked on by the nation as David's last wife, although he had not known her. He did not venture to make his request personally to Solomon, but, as Grotius says: *aggreditur mulierem, ut regnandi ignaram, ita amoribus facilem.* He plays, before Bath-Sheba, the part of an humble saint who has been set aside—who is resigned to God's will, thus softening her woman's heart. His assertion that all Israel wished him for their king, if not exactly a lie, showed great self-deception and boasting. He very wisely and prudently says, instead of: through thy intercession my brother became king (chap. i. 17)—*the kingdom is turned about*, and it was his from the Lord, which he of course did not believe, because he wished himself to be king. Bath-Sheba may have thought that a discontented subject might be satisfied by granting his request, and the kingdom made thus more secure to her son.

Vers. 19–21. **Bath-Sheba therefore went unto king Solomon,** &c., ver. 19. Solomon received his mother as גְּבִירָה (chap. xv. 13). The queen-mother was in great honor; and therefore the name of the king's mother is always expressly given in the account of the commencement of a new king's reign (chap. xiv. 21 · xv. 2, &c.). The כִּסֵּא offered her was not literally a throne, but only a particular seat of honor. The seat at the right hand was the one of highest distinction (Ps. cx. 1; Joseph., *Antiq.* vi.–xi. 9). Bath-Sheba calls her petition a *small* one, because she thought it was only about a love-affair, and did not think of its political results.

Vers. 22–25. **And King Solomon answered,** &c. Solomon instantly detected the intrigue. He says, in asking Abishag for Adonijah, you indirectly request the kingdom for him too. He is my elder brother, and thinks that the kingdom belongs to him on that account; if he gets Abishag as wife, he will be further strengthened in his imaginary claims, and his entire party will have a firm footing. The וְלוֹ beginning the concluding statement in ver. 22, cannot be understood otherwise than the preceding לוֹ, and the לְ in the following words must consequently mean the same. The meaning is this then: In asking the kingdom for him, thou askest it at the same time for Abiathar and Joab; they who have joined themselves to him, would reign with and through him; but they are well known to be my enemies. It follows, then, that both are included in Adonijah's plan. We cannot, therefore, translate like the Sept.: καὶ αὐτῷ Ἀβιαθὰρ καὶ αὐτῷ Ἰωὰβ ἑταῖρος, or with the Vulg.: *et habet Abiathar et Joab;* there is therefore no reason to strike out, with Thenius, the לְ before Abiathar and Joab. Solomon's anger, which appears in ver. 23, was the more natural, because Adonijah had dared to gain over and abuse the queen-mother. The oath, which means: may God punish me continually if Adonijah be not, &c., is a usual one (Ruth i. 17; 1 Sam. xiv. 44; xx. 13; Jer xxii. 5).—The words of ver. 24: **and who hath made me an house,** are not to be understood, with Keil and others, as if Solomon had then had issue (his marriage did not occur till afterwards, chap. iii. 1); the meaning is this rather: Adonijah demands Abishag to wife, to found a dynasty through his union with her; but Jehovah has determined that David's dynasty and line of kings shall come from *me* (2 Sam. vii. 11 *sq.*).—The execution of Adonijah was performed by *Benaiah*, as captain of the Cherethites and Pelethites (chap. i. 38). בְּיַד does not mean exactly with "his own hand" (Thenius), but only that Benaiah was charged with the execution. Comp. vers. 34–46. Capital punishment was executed in Egypt, and also in Baby-

lon, by the king's guard, the captain of which was therefore called שַׂר (רַב) טַבָּחִים, Gen. xxxvii. 36; 2 Kings xxv. 8; Dan. ii. 14.

Vers. 26–27. **And unto Abiathar the priest, &c.** The proceedings now commenced against Abiathar and Joab, were no doubt caused by the share both had taken in the new plans of Adonijah to usurp the kingdom.—**Anathoth,** a priests' town in the tribe of Benjamin (Josh. xxi. 18; 1 Chron. vi. 45), about one hour and a quarter's distance northeast of Jerusalem (Robinson, *Palestine*, vol. i. p. 437–8). Abiathar had possessions there.—To strike out the ו before בְּיוֹם with Thenius (according to the Sept.), and place it before לֹא, is unnecessary: the meaning remains the same.—**Bearing the Ark,** on the occasion of David's flight from Absalom (2 Sam. xv. 24). That Abiathar and Zadok went with David then, bearing the ark of the covenant, showed great veneration and fidelity, upon their part, to him. Of course they did not carry the ark themselves; but it was borne by the levites, whose office it was to do so (Num. iv. 15; 1 Chron. xvi. 15), and who did it at their command. It is therefore quite unnecessary to read, with Thenius, אֵפוֹד instead of אֲרוֹן.—It does not follow from the banishment of Abiathar, that every king has the right to set up and depose a high-priest at pleasure. This case was a peculiar one. A high-priest who had repeatedly conspired against the anointed of Jehovah, had thereby become incapable of filling his office, and, strictly speaking, deserved death.—לְמַלֵּא is an addition of the narrator, not the intention of Solomon; it is the ἵνα πληρωθῇ of the New Testament. The divine threatenings upon Eli's house, from which Abiathar was (through Ithamar) descended, were now fulfilled; for when Saul slew the priests, Abiathar alone, of all his house, escaped (1 Sam. xxii. 20). With his deposition the hereditary high-priesthood passed over to Eleazar's house, to which Zadok belonged (Numb. xxv. 13; 1 Chron. xxiv. 5–6).

Vers. 28–35. **Then tidings came to Joab, &c.** The parenthesis means that Joab, who was formerly such a decided enemy of Absalom, who promised much more than his brother, had twice conspired with the pretender, Adonijah, and now feared for his own life, as he heard of his death, and of Abiathar's punishment. All old translations, except the Chaldee, have Solomon instead of "Absalom," and Ewald and Thenius declare the former to be the right reading; this, however, is not sustained by any Hebrew MS., and would, besides, make the sentence superfluous; for when Joab was on Adonijah's side, it follows of course that he was not on that of Solomon.—If Joab, who had been unpunished for his share in the first conspiracy, had felt free from all share in the second, he would not have fled to a place of refuge (chap. i. 50).—The Sept. adds, before Solomon's words, ver. 29: "What has happened to thee, that thou hast fled to the altar? And Joab said: I was afraid of thee, and have fled to Lord." Surely this is only a gloss; but it explains the passage. When Joab saw that Benaiah did not venture to kill him at the altar, he defied him, either because he hoped that Solomon would not dare to give the order, or that if he did, he (Solomon) would be guilty of desecrating the altar. But according to the law (Ex. xxi. 14; Deut. xix. 11–13), the altar was only an asylum for those who had killed unwittingly, and Joab was no such person. He had sinned grievously against Israel and Judah by a double assassination (ver. 32), and yet had gone hitherto unpunished. This guilt could not rest upon David and his house, if the kingdom was to continue in his line (ver. 33). Not to add the utmost disgrace to the punishment (chap. xiv. 11; 2 Kings ix. 35; Jer. vii. 33; xxii. 19), and in consideration of his military achievements, Solomon commanded that Joab should be buried with his fathers in the *wilderness* of Judah, which was not far from Bethlehem, near Tekoa, and was a rocky district containing some towns (Josh. xv. 61; Judges i. 16).

Vers. 36–46. **And the king sent and called for Shimei, &c.**, ver. 36. As Adonijah and his faction had made such repeated efforts to seize the helm of state, Solomon deemed it needful to keep a watch on all suspected persons. Now the restless Shimei was the principal of these; he was a close adherent of the house of Saul, and a bitter foe of David's house. Solomon, therefore, in order to keep him in sight, and test his obedience, ordered him to settle in Jerusalem, and to leave it only under penalty of death. The brook Kidron is scarcely named as the exact limit of his confinement (Ewald); but Shimei was not to cross it, because, in doing so, he went towards Bahurim, in his native district, where he had most influence (2 Sam. xix. 16 *sq.*).—**Thy blood, &c.**—the usual mode of the death sentence, Levit. xx. 9–16.—Shimei declared he was satisfied to observe the king's command, for he knew right well that according to the ideas of that time, no king, not even Solomon, need feel himself bound by the promise of his predecessor (2 Sam. xix. 23), (Ewald, *Gesch. Isr.*, iii. *s.* 271).—The Philistine king *Achish*, of Gath (Josh. xiii. 3; 1 Sam. v. 8), may be the same who is mentioned in 1 Sam. xxi. 11; xxvii. 2; he must have certainly attained a great age; if so, Shimei, then, in spite of his solemn vow, not only left Jerusalem for his native place, not distant, but even went into the far-off land of the Philistines, thus giving proof of his disobedience and obstinacy. Solomon now reproaches him with his old crime, and says to him: thy measure is full; the Lord has turned thy curse into a blessing, as David hoped (2 Sam. xvi. 12).—The Vulgate, Thenius, Bunsen, and others place the concluding sentence of ver. 46 at the commencement of chap. iii.: "and when the kingdom was established in the hand of Solomon, he made affinity," &c.; it seems, however, to refer back to ver. 12, and in the manner of Semitic histories, as Keil remarks, concludes the whole section of Solomon's throne-ascension. Thus the kingdom was established in the hand of Solomon, *i. e.*, under him.

HISTORICAL AND ETHICAL.

1. *The repeated attempt of Adonijah* to gain the throne throws real light on his character. Though his enterprise came to a lamentable and disgraceful end, he immediately began to concoct new plans in spite of the favor and the warning he had received. As he once sought to obtain his purpose by collecting chariots, horsemen, and soldiers,

through making fortified places, in short, by grand and showy preparations, he now pursued the opposite plan of fawning and artifice. He steals alone to Bath-sheba, placing his hopes on woman's influence. When she is astonished at his visit, he utters the most peaceful sentiments, acts as one deeply disappointed, but now humbly and piously resigned to God's will, and as an unhappy lover. If anything deserves the name of a "harem intrigue," through which, according to Duncker, Solomon came to the throne (see above), it is Adonijah's device. He could not have shown more clearly that he was not the chosen of Jehovah (Deut. xvii. 15). What would have become of the kingdom which David had at last brought to tranquillity and its proper position, if a man like Adonijah had succeeded him?

2. *Adonijah and his faction show the truth* of what is often found, namely, that revolutionary men are not discouraged by the failure of their plans, and even disgraceful defeat, but they always brood over the means of attaining their ambitious views and gratifying their thirst for power. Pardon and forbearance do not change them, but generally harden and embolden them. If they do not succeed by open force, they choose deceitful ways, notwithstanding all the promises they may have given; and they feign submission until they think their opportunity has arrived. Every one, however, to whom God has confided the government, should hear the words of David to Solomon (chap. ii. 2): "be thou strong, therefore, and show thyself a man!" for weakness is, in this respect, sin against God and man. The old Würtemburg summaries say: "let authorities learn from Solomon to punish such crimes severely, if they wish to have a happy, peaceful, and lasting reign. If they wink at such things, God's anger and punishments come down on them, on their land and people."

3. *Solomon's treatment of his foes*, has often been called great cruelty, or at least extreme severity. "Solomon," says Duncker, "began his reign with bloody deeds. . . . He first promised Adonijah he should be spared, then had him slain by Benaiah. Joab fled to the sanctuary and caught hold of the horns of the altar. Benaiah trembled to stain the altar with blood, but Solomon tells him to go and stab him there! . . . Benaiah also killed Shimei at Solomon's command." In reading this imperfect and detestable view of the circumstances, we must remember that there is not to be found in the forty years of Solomon's reign, one single trace of barbarous tyranny or cruelty, such as are here said to have characterized him, though these qualities rather strengthen than otherwise with age. We cannot judge Solomon any more than David in the light of the sermon on the mount, but should recollect what the time and circumstances were. The vital point was to establish the kingdom, and in order to avert the dangers that threatened it, "every firm and sagacious ruler had to act so, for the artificial means now used in similar cases, for instance, imprisonment for life, were wholly unknown" (Ewald). As to *Adonijah*, the whole East knew but one punishment for such plans as he cherished, viz., death. Had his enterprise succeeded he would doubtless (see above, on chap. i. 11) have destroyed Solomon and his principal adherents, in accordance with the usual practice hitherto. Solomon, on the contrary, did not follow this custom, but showed forgiveness and generosity; in fact, he avoided all persecution of Adonijah's partisans. Only when Adonijah, contrary to his word, and notwithstanding his humble homage (chap. i. 51), again appeared as pretender to the throne, and sought to reach his end by deceit and hypocrisy, did he order the affixed punishment. He had allowed *Abiathar*, too, to go unpunished at first, which scarcely any other eastern prince would have done. But when the repeated attempt of Adonijah to seize the kingdom was discovered, Abiathar could no longer be passed over. Yet instead of inflicting death on him, he deprived him of his influential office, and let him live at liberty on his estate, on account of his former good behavior. Here was no severity, but gratitude, kindness, and generosity. *Joab* was the most formidable opponent, because of his position at the head of the entire army, and his well-known military roughness and unscrupulousness; he was also unpunished after Adonijah's first attempt, and the last was certainly not planned without his consent, but more likely, as some suppose, originated by him. The fact that he instantly fled to the horns of the altar, on hearing of Adonijah's death, shows that he knew himself to have deserved death. Besides this, the guilt of a double murder rested on him, and should be washed out. "When this was superadded," says Ewald (*s.* 271), "Solomon did not venture to show him any further grace," and adds in the note with great truth: "A superficial observer alone can charge Solomon with needless cruelty here." Finally, with regard to *Shimei*, nothing was more natural than that Solomon, in the circumstances attending the beginning of his reign, should have kept especial guard over such a restless, suspected person, who one day cursed the king, calling him a bloody man, and the next fawned upon and flattered him, and who besides was not without partisans (2 Sam. xvi. 7, comp. with xix. 16–20). Shimei was himself quite content with his confinement to Jerusalem, and Solomon let him live there "many days" (ver. 38), placing his fate in his own hand. After three years (not before), (ver. 39), when Shimei broke his solemn promise, what his king had threatened him with upon oath came upon him. "Surely, every one must at that time have seen in such fatal oblivion of the oath which the old arch-traitor had sworn against David, a divine sign, that that old sin still rested on him and that he must be punished; otherwise he would not have acted with such defiance of God and with such madness. Solomon had him also executed, evidently not out of revenge nor any other passion, but from the belief that the last of those who had sinned greatly against David, should fall under divine Providence" (Ewald, *s.* 272). How weak and forgetful of his word would the king have seemed to all the people if he had let Shimei now go free, particularly with the notions then entertained about a king! (Prov. xvi. 12–15; xx. 2, 26). It is worthy of remark that the settlement of Shimei at Jerusalem was coincident with Solomon's elevation to the throne; that his punishment did not at once follow that of Adonijah and Joab, but was three years later. We cannot therefore possibly reckon this among the "bloody deeds" with which Solomon is said to have begun his reign. The union of mildness and firmness, generosity and official justice, in the conduct of the young sovereign, must have deeply impressed the

people, have increased his authority, and established his rule.

4. *The establishment of Solomon's kingdom* (ver. 46) is the result of all that chapters i. and ii. relate, and is therefore expressly stated again at their close. Our author evidently does this, not only from purely historical, but also from religious and theocratic grounds. In fact, throughout the whole of the genuine Old Testament history of Solomon's succession to the throne, the guiding hand of the living God is made apparent, far above the ferment of human passions and inclinations. He knows how to fulfil his threatenings, and to lead the way which each chooses for himself, to a goal where he shall find retribution of his deeds (Job xxxiv. 11).

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

Vers. 13–25. Adonijah's repeated attempt to gain the throne: (*a*) Wherein this attempt consisted (vers. 13–18); (*b*) how it ended (vers. 19–25).—Vers. 13–18. Adonijah before Bath-sheba: (*a*) The feigned sentiment, in which he comes (vers. 13–15); (*b*) the request he brings (vers. 16, 17); (*c*) the answer he receives (ver. 18).—Ver. 13. Ambitious and power-loving people do not scruple to reach the ends which they cannot obtain by open force, by means that are mortifying to their pride; when they can no longer demand, they beg.—Those are least to be trusted who have proved themselves enemies, and suddenly appear with tokens of peace. Joab met Amasa with the words: Peace be to thee! and while kissing him, ran him through the body (2 Sam. xx. 9). Judas betrayed the Lord with a greeting and a kiss (Luke xxii. 48).—Ver. 15. Adonijah's boast and hypocrisy: (*a*) He boasts, like most rebels, of having all the people on his side, but his few adherents were some faithless men, who were won over by good eating and drinking, and who would desert him with the first change of the wind (chap. i. 41, 49). (*b*) He speaks and acts as a pious man, who humbles himself under God's hand (Job i. 21), while he resists His will in his heart, and seeks to overthrow His purpose (Matt. vii. 21; Prov. xii. 22).—Ver. 16 *sq.* The most presumptuous character is often hid under the mask of unassuming deportment.—Ver. 17. He who has an honest and just request to make seeks no roundabout ways, but goes openly and courageously with it to the person who can grant it. The serpent addresses the woman first, in order to gain the man, in paradise (Gen. iii. 1, 6; 1 Tim. ii. 14).—Ver. 18. Bath-sheba's consent to Adonijah's request shows want of sagacity, experience, and knowledge of human nature, but at the same time shows that her heart was free from revenge and bitterness, and was willing to serve even one who had caused her great anxiety and sorrow (chap. i. 21).—Kind and unsuspicious persons are apt to yield to their first feelings and impressions rather than reflect calmly and deliberately; it is therefore the more needful for them to guard against being led away by flattering speeches into promises and actions that may greatly injure themselves and others.—We ought not to refuse to intercede for others, but to take great care not to do it for the unworthy, thus injuring those who are deserving.—Those who are high in favor with the powerful are often used, without their wish or knowledge, for unworthy ends.

Vers. 19–25. Bath-sheba before the king: (*a*) How she was received by him (vers. 19, 20), but (*b*) was refused her petition (vers. 22–24).—Ver. 19. Solomon, when on the throne, did not forget what he owed his mother. How often do children forget their parents and nearest relations, and even become ashamed of them, when they attain to great riches and honor; but no position or rank dispenses with our observance of the fourth commandment, the first with promise (Ephes. vi. 2; Prov. xix. 26).—Ver. 21. STARKE: Even pious Christians are often ignorant of what they ask (Rom. viii. 26), and are therefore often unheard (Matt. xx. 22).—Ver. 22. Kings and princes should not grant even an apparently small petition, that interferes with the welfare of the kingdom and people committed to their charge. Seeming severity is in such cases sacred duty.—HALL: Considerations arising from personal relationship must be laid aside in the official acts of rulers.

Ver. 25. Punishment of Adonijah, how far it was (*a*) according to law, (*b*) just and deserved.

Vers. 26–46. Solomon's treatment of his enemies (see *Historical*).—Vers. 26, 27. Ecclesiastical office can be no protection from just punishment of crime (see Luke xii. 47; 1 Cor. ix. 27).—Former fidelity cannot efface later treachery. It is most lamentable that a man who was faithful in times of trouble should end his career as a sinner (1 Cor. x. 12).—[BP. HALL: No man held so close to David, . . . yet now is he called to reckon for his old sins, and must repay blood to Amasa and Abner.—E. H.] When circumstances permit, mildness and forgiveness should go hand in hand with justice.—Children should not forget kindness shown to their parents, but look on it as done to themselves; this is fulfilling the fourth commandment.—The promises of God are yea and amen; but so are also His threatenings, which are often executed when men have forgotten them.

Vers. 28–34. The terrible end of Joab: (*a*) He dies conscious of his guilt, without peace and pardon; (*b*) even in the very jaws of death he is defiant, rough, and proud; (*c*) he does not leave the world like a hero, but like a criminal. How differently David dies! (ver. 2).—Ver. 28. An evil conscience can put to flight a hero who never yielded to the enemy in a single bloody field.—STARKE: It is thus the wicked act when they get into danger; though they never before cared about God and His children, they will seek their protection then.—Ver. 30. What good is there in dying in a sacred place if one has not a sanctified heart and pure conscience? Prov. iii. 21–26.—Ver. 31 *sq.* STARKE: God has no sanctuary or city of refuge for an intentional murderer (Ex. xxi. 14).—LANGE: If a ruler leaves shed blood unavenged, the guilt attaches to himself; through just revenge it is averted.—Ver. 33. Only that throne stands firm upon which justice, without respect of persons, is exercised (Prov. xxv. 5).

Vers. 36–46. Shimei's fate plainly proves the truth of the word Job xxxiv. 11; Ps. cxli. 10; Prov. v. 22.—Ver. 39. Avarice, *i. e.*, covetousness, is the root of all evil. The loss of two servants led Shimei to disobedience, even to forget his oath and to risk his life. [Ver. 40 *sq.* BP. HALL: "Covetousness, and presumption of impunity, are the destruction of many a soul: Shimei seeks his servants and loses himself."—E. H.]—Vers. 41 *sq.* Divine justice at length overtakes those whose

crimes have long been unpunished, and when they least expect it.—Those also who have cursed the anointed of the Lord, the eternal king of God's realm, and who have shot their poisoned shafts at Him, shall hereafter say to the mountains: Fall on us! and to the hills: cover us! (Luke xxiii. 30).

SECOND SECTION.

THE BEGINNING OF SOLOMON'S REIGN.

CHAP. III.–V. 14.

A.—*Solomon's marriage, solemn sacrifice and prayer; first judicial decision.*

CHAP. III. 1–28.

1 And Solomon made affinity with Pharaoh king of Egypt, and took Pharaoh's
daughter, and brought her into the city of David, until he had made an end of
building his own house, and the house of the Lord [Jehovah], and the wall
2 [walls] of Jerusalem round about. Only the people sacrificed in high places,
because there was no house built unto the name of the Lord [Jehovah], until
3 those days. And Solomon loved the Lord [Jehovah], walking in the statutes
4 of David his father: only he sacrificed and burnt incense in high places. And
the king went to Gibeon to sacrifice there; for that *was* the great high place:
a thousand burnt-offerings did Solomon offer upon that altar.
5 In Gibeon the Lord [Jehovah] appeared to Solomon in a dream by night:
6 and God[1] said, Ask what I shall give thee. And Solomon said, Thou hast
shewed unto thy servant David my father great mercy, according as he walked
before thee in truth, and in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart with
thee; and thou hast kept for him this great kindness, that thou hast given him
7 a son to sit on his throne, as *it is* this day. And now, O Lord [Jehovah] my
God, thou hast made thy servant king instead of David my father: and I
8 *am but* a little child:[2] I know not *how* to go out or come in. And thy servant
is in the midst of thy people which thou hast chosen, a great people, that cannot
9 be numbered nor counted for multitude. Give therefore thy servant an under-
standing heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and bad:
10 for who is able to judge this thy so great a people? And the speech pleased
11 the Lord,[3] that Solomon had asked this thing. And God said unto him,
Because thou hast asked this thing, and hast not asked for thyself long life;
neither hast asked riches for thyself, nor hast asked the life of thine enemies;
12 but hast asked for thyself understanding to discern judgment; Behold I have
done according to thy words:[4] lo, I have given thee a wise and an understanding
heart; so that there was none like thee before thee, neither after thee shall
13 any arise like unto thee. And I have also given thee that which thou hast not
asked, both riches, and honor: so that there shall not be any among the kings like
14 unto thee all thy days.[5] And if thou wilt walk in my ways, to keep my statutes
and my commandments, as thy father David did walk, then I will lengthen thy
15 days. And Solomon awoke; and, behold, *it was* a dream. And he came to
Jerusalem, and stood before the ark of the covenant of the Lord [Jehovah],[6] and
offered up burnt-offerings, and offered [made][7] peace-offerings, and made a feast
to all his servants.
16 Then came there two women *that were* harlots,[8] unto the king, and stood
17 before him. And the one woman said, O my lord, I and this woman dwell in

18 one house; and I was delivered of a child with her in the house. And it came to
pass the third day after that I was delivered, that this woman was delivered also:
and we *were* together; [9] *there was* no stranger with us in the house, save we two in
19 the house. And this woman's child [son] [10] died in the night; because she overlaid
20 it. And she arose at midnight, and took my son from beside me, while thine hand-
maid slept, and laid it in her bosom, and laid her dead child [son] [10] in my bosom.
21 And when I rose in the morning to give my child [son] [10] suck, behold, it was dead:
but when I had considered it in the morning, behold, it was not my son which I
22 did bear. And the other woman said, Nay; but the living *is* my son, and the
dead *is* thy son. And [11] this said, No; but the dead *is* thy son, and the living
23 *is* my son. Thus they spake before the king. Then said the king, The one
saith, This *is* my son that liveth, and thy son *is* the dead: and the other saith,
24 Nay; but thy son *is* the dead, and my son *is* the living. And the king said,
25 Bring me a sword. And they brought a sword before the king. And the king
said, Divide the living child in two, and give half to the one, and half to the
26 other. Then spake the woman whose the living child *was* unto the king, for
her bowels yearned upon her son, and she said, O my lord, give her the living
child, and in no wise slay it. But the other said, Let it be neither mine nor
27 thine, *but* divide *it*. Then the king answered and said, Give her [12] the living
28 child, and in no wise slay it: she *is* the mother thereof. And all Israel heard
of the judgment which the king had judged; and they feared the king: for they
saw that the wisdom of God *was* in him to do judgment.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

[1] Ver. 5.—[The Sept. and Chald. here repeat LORD; the Syr. follows the Hbr. in reading *God;* while the Vulg. and Arab. avoid repeating the divine name.

[2] Ver. 7.—[Some MSS., followed by the Sept. and Vulg., prefix the conjunction ו.

[3] Ver. 10.—[Many MSS. read יהוה instead of אדני, and are followed by the Chaldee.

[4] Ver. 12.—[Many MSS. and editions, followed by the Vulg., have כדבריך in the plural.

[5] Ver. 13.—[The Sept. put this clause in the past tense: *ὡς οὐ γέγονεν ἀνὴρ ὅμοιός σοι ἐν βασιλεῦσι*, the Vat. ending the clause here; but the Alex., by retaining the last words of the Hbr., *πάσας τὰς ἡμέρας σου*, makes nonsense.

[6] Ver. 15.—[The Sept. add *ἐν Σιών*.

[7] Ver. 15.—[The Hbr. ויעשׂ is the same before "peace-offerings" and before "feast," and is quite different from the ויעל before "burnt-offerings." The distinction is accurately preserved by the Sept. and the Vulg.

[8] Ver. 16.—[This translation is sustained here, as in Josh. ii. 1, by all the VV. except the Chald., and is undoubtedly the invariable and distinctly-marked sense of the frequent Hbr. word. The Chald. renders *inn-keepers*. The author's objection to the sense of *harlots* seems insufficient.

[9] Ver. 18.—[Many MSS., followed by the Sept. and Vulg., prefix the conjunction ו.

[10] Ver. 19.—[It is better to retain throughout the passage the same rendering of the same Hbr. word.

[11] Ver. 22.—[One MS., followed by the Vat., Sept., and Arab., omits the second clause of ver. 22.

[12] Ver. 27.—[The Sept. remove any possible obscurity by paraphrasing, "Give the child to her that said, Give her," &c.—F. G.]

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

Ver. 1. **And Solomon made affinity.** After the rule of Solomon was established by the removal of his enemies from within (chap. ii. 46), he sought to make it outwardly strong, also, by a family alliance with the king of Egypt. After David's great victories over the surrounding nations, and especially after the Philistines were rendered powerless, Egypt was the nearest and most powerful neighbor of the kingdom of Israel. As the latter had increased so much in extent and power, the king of Egypt may also have desired an alliance with the king of Israel (Ewald, *Gesch. Isr.*, iii. *s.* 279); but such an alliance secured Solomon against other nations, and was even productive of an enlargement of his territory (chap. ix. 16). The Pharaoh named here "belonged certainly, following the synchronism, to the 21st Tanaitic dynasty, and may have been its last king, Psusennes or Psusennos, who reigned thirty-five years" (Winer, *R.-W.-B.*, ii. *s.* 363).—This marriage with an Egyptian was not contrary to the law, since it only prohibited union with the daughters of the Canaanite tribes (Ex. xxxiv. 11–16; Deut. vii. 1–3). The supposition of some rabbins, that the Egyptian had become a proselyte, is unnecessary; it is certain, besides, that Egyptian worship was not introduced by her into Jerusalem; and even later no trace of it is found (chap. xi. 4–7).—By the *city of David* we are to understand the ancient and fortified Jerusalem, the citadel of David—the upper city. The dwelling for the queen was but temporary; when the new palace was built she inhabited it (chap. ix. 24).—"He made," says Josephus, "*the walls* wider and firmer than they had been." David had only fortified the upper city (2 Sam. v. 7, 9).

Vers. 2–4. **Only the people sacrificed in high places,** &c. Vers. 2 and 3 do not pronounce a judgment in general upon the condition of public worship in the beginning of Solomon's reign (Keil), but form an introduction to verses 4–15. The connection is this: when the rule of Solomon was

established from within by the extirpation of his foes, and outwardly by an alliance with Pharaoh, Solomon held a great festival for all Israel (2 Chron. i. 2, 3), not only to implore Jehovah's further aid to his successful government, but also in gratitude for the past. But as Jehovah's house was not yet built, and as the people, for want of a central sanctuary, still sacrificed on high places here and there, Solomon followed this custom, but chose the greatest, *i. e.*, the most important height, that at Gibeon, where the ancient tabernacle and the altar of burnt-offering stood. Vers. 2 and 3 serve then to explain how it was that Solomon, who loved Jehovah, and, like David, kept the law, celebrated his great inauguration-festival on a high place. [Bishop Horsley remarks on ver. 3: This is not mentioned as a circumstance of blame either in the people or in the king. For had they not sacrificed and burnt incense on high places, they could not have sacrificed or burnt incense at all. And it appears by the sequel that the sacrifice at Gibeon was acceptable.—E.H.]—*The high places* are very often used in these books in the same sense; but not always. That בָּמָה does not mean "barred entrance," and then "sacred forest" grove (Thenius, Böttcher), is easy to see from Mic. iii. 12, where it is synonymous with הַר, mountain; comp. Mic. i. 3, 4; Jer. xxvi. 18, with Amos iv. 1, where גְּבָעוֹת stands for בָּמוֹת. The fundamental meaning is and must be: height, high place. Among all ancient nations, heights and mountains were naturally chosen as the fit places for offering-up to the Deity who dwells on high, far above earth. But as all prayer to and worship of the Godhead took the form of sacrifice, for which an altar was requisite, בָּמוֹת became the expression for high places upon which altars were erected. By degrees, however, the use of the term became more extended, so that places of sacrifices, even if not on high places, but in towns, and even in valleys, were also called "high places" (2 Kings xvii. 9; Jer. vii. 31; xxxii. 35). In heathen worship, besides the altars for sacrifices, they had many dwellings for the Divinity, not regular temples, but cells, chapels, tents, in which the image of the Deity stood, and these also were named בָּמוֹת (Ezek. xvi. 16); hence the expressions בָּתֵּי הַבָּמוֹת (1 Kings xiii. 32; 2 Kings xvii. 29), and בָּנָה בָּמוֹת (1 Kings xi. 7; xiv. 23). Because the worship at the high places so easily became entangled with idolatry, the Mosaic law commanded that sacrifices should only be offered at Jehovah's dwelling-place—the tabernacle (Levit. xvii. 3). For the unquiet times of the Judges, however, this prescript could not be obeyed; and as the patriarchs sacrificed on high places before the law was given (Gen. xii. 8), their example was followed; even Samuel did this (1 Sam. ix. 12 *sq.*). Thus it happened that this more convenient practice took deep root, and it was not until much later that it was found possible to abolish it (2 Kings xxiii. 4-23); it was always, however, an abnormity, though unavoidable, so long as an house for Jehovah's name, *i. e.*, a central sanctuary, was wanting (for this last expression see below on chap. vi.).—**A thousand burnt-offerings.** In the entire ancient world, the greatest number of animals possible were collected for sacrifice at great festivals (see below on chap. viii. 62). The feast must have at least lasted more than one day. The passage we are considering has very unfairly been selected to prove that the king himself sacrificed, *i. e.*, exercised priestly functions. Even the great number of animals offered contradicts this; so does chap. vi. 2; where king Solomon is said to have built the house of the Lord and made windows, &c., no more means that he performed masons' and carpenters' work than that he himself offered the animals in sacrifice.

Vers. 5-10. **The Lord appeared to Solomon,** &c. The expression נִרְאָה does not mean that Solomon saw Jehovah in any bodily form, but that Jehovah revealed himself to him. If the reading here and in ver. 10 be not יְהוָה, but אֱלֹהִים is to be subjoined to it; the last more general term serves to designate the words which Solomon understood to be really *divine* communications. For it is evident that the word יְהוָה does not specifically belong to the appearing, as Thenius thinks, from examination of the parallel passage in 2 Chron. i. 7, where נִרְאָה אֱלֹהִים occurs.—Solomon grounds (ver. 6) his request that Jehovah would grant him the gifts needful for a sovereign, upon the mercy shown his father David, to whom God had performed His promises, and raised up his son to sit upon the throne of Israel. He humbly calls himself *a little child*, not only as if he were just twelve years old, as some rabbins say, but because his youth was unfitted for the great and arduous task laid on him. Solomon died after a reign of forty years, and was named before (chap. xi. 4) זָקֵן, which makes him, as is also the general opinion, twenty years old at least.—Going out and coming in is, like Deut. xxxi. 2; 1 Sam. xviii. 13, 16; 2 Sam. iii. 25; Ps. cxxi. 8, descriptive of the entire manner of life. The conclusion, from ver. 8, clearly refers to Gen. xxxii. 13; xiii. 16.—The שֹׁמֵעַ with לֵב (like Job xii. 3; xxxiv. 10; Prov. xv. 32, the seat of thought and knowledge, ver. 9), as is to be seen from לִשְׁמֹעַ מִשְׁפָּט (ver. 12), must be connected with the following לִשְׁפֹּט, and is not to be translated, as Luther has it, obedient heart; or as the Vulgate, *cor docile*. A right sentence depends upon the hearing, that is, the trial of the parties, and for this, understanding and judgment are most requisite for the judge (comp. 2 Sam. xiv. 17). Ver. 7 refers to ruling, but ver. 9 to judging: the two conjoined form the kingly office (1 Sam. viii. 6, 20; 2 Sam. xv. 4. *Artemid. Oneir.*, ii. 14: *κρίνειν τὸ ἄρχειν ἔλεγον οἱ παλαιοί*).

Vers. 11-15. **And God said,** &c. Instead of the life of thine enemies (ver. 11), ver. 13 reads כָּבוֹד; it is, therefore, military glory, victory which is meant. לִשְׁמֹעַ מִשְׁפָּט does not mean: "to exercise divine right" (Keil), but: to dispense justice.—**Behold it was a dream,** not that he only knew on awaking that it was but a dream; and not that he remembered distinctly on awaking what he had dreamed (Seb. Schmidt), but: "that it was more than a dream (an ordinary one)—something really divine; of this he became so

convinced on awaking, that immediately after his return to the capital, he went to the place where the sacred ark stood, and worshipped the Lord anew with many sacrifices and thanksgiving-offerings. The thank-offerings were for this extraordinary proof of divine favor" (Hess). The sequel showed that it was not a mere dream.

Ver. 16. **Then came there two women, &c.** This story is meant to show, by one instance, that Solomon had really received what he had prayed for, and what God had promised him (Theodoret: *ἐπιδεῖξαι τὴν τοῦ βασιλέως ἐβουλήθη σοφίαν*). Thenius counts the whole among those passages which the writer gave from oral tradition; but we must not overlook the fact that he did not take it, like other narratives, from the "book of the Acts of Solomon" (chap. xi. 41). [The writer of the Book of the Kings refers only at the end of Solomon's reign to the book of the Acts of Solomon, and not at each step in his career.—E. H.]—The rabbins derive זֹנוֹת from זוּן, to feed, nourish; and explain it thus with the Chaldee, here as in Josh. ii. 1, by פּוּנְדְקָן, *i. e.*, hostesses, evidently to avoid some offence. On this account, it can scarcely allude to harlots, because they, as Calmet remarks, seldom have many children, and if they have, do not usually care much about providing for them. As זָנָה is generally spoken of intercourse which is extra-matrimonial, or adulterous, so this passage refers to "those who have had children, being unmarried" (Gerlach).

Vers. 17–28. **And the one woman said, &c.** She alleges that the other can persist so obstinately in her denial, because there was no one else in the house. The latter probably took the child away to avoid the just and heavy reproach of having killed her own child, and the consequent disgrace she would incur. This is at least more probable than that she wished to continue nursing for her health's sake (Thenius), or that she thought to inherit something in the future from the child (Hess); or, finally, that she intended to sell it afterwards for her support (Le Clerc).—In ver. 21, at first the time given is the morning, in a general way; but next, the expression is the same as *clara luce* (Vulgate), or, "as it was becoming brighter and brighter" (Thenius). רַחֲמִים (ver. 26) is the New Testament *σπλάγχνα* (2 Cor. vi. 12; vii. 15). Comp. Gen. xliii. 30. Luther: "for her motherly heart yearned upon her son." The words: *neither mine nor thine*, &c., do not only show want of maternal love, but also envy and dislike of her accuser.—*They feared.* Comp. Luke iv. 36; viii. 25. The sentence made a deep impression; אֱלֹהִים is here the same as in Ps. lxviii. 16; lxv. 10.

HISTORICAL AND ETHICAL.

1. *Solomon's marriage* with a daughter of Pharaoh was, strictly speaking, a political alliance; but it has, nevertheless, also significance in the history of redemption. The great and mighty king of the land, which for Israel had been "the house of bondage" in which it had eaten "the bread of affliction" (Exod. xx. 2; Deut. xvi. 3), gives now to the king of this once despised and oppressed people, his daughter in marriage, and must, in the providence of God, contribute to the strengthening of the Israelitish throne, and to the increase of the power and glory of the Israelitish kingdom. Thus was this marriage a witness for the divine beneficence in the deliverance from Egypt, to the goal of which Israel had come in the reign of Solomon—the period of the richest bloom of the kingdom: It was likewise a divine seal upon the independence of the people, which had begun with the exodus from Egypt, and now had reached its completeness. [We beg leave to dissent from the position here taken by our author. (Comp. *Exeget.* on ver. 1). Solomon's alliance with the Egyptian princess for political purposes was after the fashion of worldly princes, and in direct hostility with the theocratic spirit. Egypt was quite as much an "abomination" as "Canaan," and we are surprised that our author should apologize for Solomon in the matter.—E. H.]

2. *That sacrificing and burning of incense in high places* was forbidden in the Mosaic law rests, not upon the grounds of outward regulation, but was a natural, necessary consequence of the Mosaic fundamental principles. Jehovah is one, and beside him there is no God. He has chosen Israel, out of all the peoples of the earth, to be His people; He has made a covenant with them, and as a sign and pledge of this covenant will He dwell in the midst of His people. As He himself is one only, so also is and can His dwelling-place be only one. This is the place where He "meets" His people, *i. e.*, exercises the covenant relation (Exod. xxix. 42 *sq.*). The concentration of the Jehovah-cultus is connected as inseparably with monotheism, as is the worship in high places, *i. e.*, in any favorite spot, with polytheism. From the Mosaic standpoint, the worship in high places appeared as an ignoring, yea, as a denial, of the dwelling of Jehovah in the midst of His people, and, consequently, of the election and of the covenant of Jehovah, whereof it was the witness and pledge (*cf.* Josh. xxii.). If the law in question could not be carried out in times of unrest and of convulsion, nevertheless, as soon as the period of the undisturbed possession of Canaan was entered upon, it would remain the business of every truly theocratic king, as the servant of Jehovah, to put an end, as far as possible, to worship in high places. Hence, also, was David, after he had won for Israel victory over all enemies, most earnest to erect an enduring central sanctuary, for which the old tabernacle, especially since the removal of the ark of the covenant from it, was no longer serviceable. Since this, however, was denied him, he laid the charge of it upon Solomon, his son and successor, and made the building of a "house of Jehovah" the first and most pressing duty of his reign (1 Chron. xxviii. 2 *sq.*). After the building of the temple, sacrificing in high places should have disappeared totally; but it forever kept emerging, even under kings who in other respects adhered firmly to the worship of Jehovah. Nevertheless, it is constantly spoken of as a defect or an abnormity (1 Kings xv. 14; xxii. 44; 2 Kings xii. 4; xiv. 4; xv. 4, 35; xxi. 3).

3. *The divine revelation* which Solomon received, came, as in so many other instances both in the Old and also even in the New Testament, through the medium of a *dream*. In itself the dream is, according to the Scripture, something wholly idle and vain (Eccles. v. 6; Job xx. 8; Is.

xxix. 7. 8); in so far, however, as man is then removed entirely from the sensible and outward world, and is in the condition of a pure psychical intuition, he can, more than in the natural, wakeful condition, become a more receptive soil for divine influences and communications. Hence, in Ecclesiasticus xxxi. (xxxiv.) 2 *sq.*, while the nothingness of dreams is taught, yet in ver. 6 this statement follows: *ἐὰν μὴ παρὰ ὑψίστου* [*sc. τὰ ἐνύπνια*] *ἀποσταλῇ ἐν ἐπισκοπῇ, μὴ δῷς εἰς αὐτὰ τὴν καρδίαν σοῦ.* Dreams of the latter description are placed, consequently, on a level with prophecy and visions, which are the operation of the רוּחַ of Jehovah (Joel iii. 1). But these invariably presuppose a certain spiritual temper upon the part of the dreamer. "The prophetic dream of the night, as a rule, is connected with the moral reflections and presentiments of the day" (Lange, on Gen. xx. 3). A soul directed towards God and divine things in its wakeful state, is peculiarly fitted, in the stillness of the night, in its involuntary expressions, *i. e.*, in its dreams, to receive purely spiritual, inwardly divine influences. Such was the case with Solomon. His dream shows what then agitated and filled his soul, and that the festivity he then held was not an empty political ceremony, but resulted from an actual religious need. An Adonijah, at his feast at the spring Rogel (chap. i. 9–25), would never have been able to dream so. If ever dream contained nothing chimerical (visionary), it was Solomon's dream at Gibeon. [Bp. Hall, beautifully: "Solomon worships God by day: God appears to Solomon by night. Well may we look to enjoy God when we have served him.—E. H.]

4. *The prayer of Solomon* unites in itself all that belongs to a true prayer. It affords evidence especially of the genuine theocratic spirit in which this son of David had been educated, and was now entering upon his royal office. He recognises the greatness of the task to be the king of the people which Jehovah has chosen from among all peoples of the earth, and his first and greatest anxiety is to comply with this demand. He feels that he, especially in his youth and inexperience, cannot do this of his own strength, and he prays for enlightenment from on high, not so much for himself as for the sake of the people. It is not his own merit which gives him courage for this prayer, but he rests it upon the divine grace and mercy which his father had so richly experienced. His words are not many, but the few he utters are the expression of a living, child-like faith, as simple and substantial as it is inward and true.

5. *The history of the two women* "is genuinely Oriental, in which we must dismiss from our minds wholly, our forms of justice and processes of proof: since an accurate, striking flash, which solves the difficulty, in living, immediate insight with one stroke, as with the sharpness of a sword, is far loftier than a regular consideration and balancing of the grounds advanced, for and against. Therefore, this wisdom, as belonging to the period, to the land, and to the whole people, must be looked upon as a high gift of God, as, indeed, it actually was". (Gerlach). Examples of similar judicial decision are not wanting in antiquity. Grotius observes: *Non dissimile illud Ariopharnis regis Thracum, qui de tribus filios se Cimmeriorum regis dicentibus eum pro filio habuit, qui jussus cadaver patris jaculis noluerat, incessere. Quæ historia est apud Siculum Diodorum.* Another instance "is adduced by Robertson from an Indian book. A woman in bathing left her child on the bank of a pond. A female demon who was passing by carried it off. Both appear before the goddess with their claims. She commands that each shall seize an arm and a leg and pull at it. The mother of the child is recognised by her refusal" (Philippson). Solomon demonstrated his capacity as judge in the case in hand, in so far especially that, in the absence of witnesses and of outward means of proof, he knew how to bring the secret truth to light in such way as to convince the contestants themselves. The words of Prov. xvi. 10 are here confirmed. While Niemeyer, in the judgment of Solomon, recognises, if not "God's wisdom," at least "rapid decision, presence of mind, and an accurate insight into human nature," other theologians of the *illuminati-period*, have seen nothing more than "the proceeding of an Oriental despot, a fancy which would not do much to subserve the interests of a European prince" (G. L. Bauer in Keil on the place). He who judges so unwisely, only shows in the act, that in like or similar circumstances he would scarcely have reached so wise a judgment as Solomon's. Little as Solomon's procedure may correspond to our present notions of the administration of justice, formally considered, nevertheless that which for all time remains the chief point was not wanting, ver. 12—the divine gift of bringing to light the secret, inward fact, and of awakening the sleeping conscience, so that falsehood and misrepresentation vanish, and the truth comes forth. Without this gift all forms and rules of investigation avail nothing; yea, as experience has so often shown, they serve to pervert the conscience and to conceal the truth.

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

Ver. 1. CRAMER: Although marriage with persons of unlike faith be allowed, and is in itself no sin (1 Cor. vii. 14), it is, nevertheless, better that one avoid it, because the unbelieving perverts the believer more frequently than the believer converts the unbeliever.—STARKE: God has the hearts of all men in His hands, and can bring it to pass that they who have been inimical to us, and have despised us, shall hold us in great honor (Prov. xvi. 7; Gen. xxxi. 24).—As soon as Solomon saw his existence secured, he proceeded to matrimony.—Ver. 2–4. Solomon's Sacrificial Festivity: (*a*) When he celebrated it (at the beginning of his reign to return thanks for the past assistance of God, and to implore its continuance); (*b*) where he kept it (upon the high place at Gibeon, because no temple was built as yet: the place of prayer in the Old and in the New Testament).—Though God dwell not in temples built by human hands, yet it is needful for each congregation to have an house, where with one mouth it praises the name of the Lord. Where this need is not felt, there is a defect in faith and love for the Lord.—Ver. 3. He loved the Lord. This is the best and greatest thing that can be said of a man. So, every one who loves the world, has not in him the love of the Father: this is only where God is loved above all things, His word observed, and His commandments fulfilled with joy and delight (1 John ii. 5, 15; v. 3). Happy is he who, to the question of the Lord: Lovest thou me?

can return the answer of Peter (John xxi. 17). Because Solomon loved the Lord he honored also his father, and walked in his ways. The want of filial piety in our day comes from want of love to the Lord.—Ver. 4. If we should begin our daily work with the sacrifice of our prayer, how much more our life's calling, and every weighty undertaking upon which our own and the well-being of other men depends (God grant it, He who can help, &c.).

Vers. 5–15. The Prayer of Solomon: (*a*) Its contents (ver. 6–9); (*b*) its answer (ver. 10–14).—Ver. 5. STARKE: Those who love God (ver. 3), God loves in return, and reveals himself to them (John xiv. 21).—HALL: The night cannot be otherwise than holy to him whom the previous day has been holy.—In our dreams we often speak and act in such way that we must be frightened, upon awaking, at how much that is impure and corrupt is still within us. Upon this account we should pray in the evening: Ah! may my soul in sleeping also do that which is good, or, if I dream, be it from thee, so that my senses even in sleep may acquire love for thee, &c. (Ps. lxiii. 7).—[One is here reminded of Bp. Ken's beautiful evening hymn: "Glory to thee, my God, this night."—E. H.]—A dream like Solomon's does not happen when the day just past has been spent in revel and riot, in gross or in refined sin.—LISCO: What happened here in dream, Christ commands in "Our Father."—STARKE: God well knew what Solomon needed; but he bid him ask, (1) to show how negligent men are in praying for what is spiritual; (2) that he would only bestow His gifts in the ordinance of prayer; (3) that great personages might have an example of what they should ask of God, above all others. Ask what I shall give thee: (*a*) a test-word, for as man wishes and prays, so does he show of whose spirit he is the child (Ps. cxxxix. 23); (*b*) a word of warning, for we not only may, but we should also ask for all which we have most at heart (Ps. xxxvii. 4).—Ver. 6–10. When is our prayer pleasing to God? (*a*) When we pray in the feeling of our weakness and helplessness, and in confidence in the mercy of God and His promises; (*b*) when before all things we ask for spiritual blessings and gifts (Matt. vi. 33; Eph. i. 3).—The true wisdom for which we have to ask God (James i. 5), does not consist in manifold and great knowledge, but in the understanding of what is good and bad (Job xxviii. 28; James iii. 17; Eph. v. 17), and is a fruit of the renewal of our mind (Rom. xii. 2).—A ruler who does not ask God for an obedient heart for himself, can and ought not to hope for or expect that his people will yield him a submissive heart.—Youth, which as a rule places freedom in lawlessness, needs before all things to ask God daily for an obedient heart.—Vers. 8, 9. PFAFF: Subjects are not simply creatures of the authorities, nor are they designed for the exercise of their pleasures and the splendor of their position (Hoheit); but they are God's people, and as such, are to be governed and judged.

Ver. 11–14. The granting of Solomon's prayer teaches and assures us: (*a*) That God grants more than they request, over and above praying and understanding, to those who call upon him with earnestness, and for spiritual gifts (Eph. iii. 20; Matt. vi. 33); (*b*) that God gives to him upon whom He confers an office, that is, to one who does not rush into an office or calling, but is called thereto by God, the necessary understanding, if he humbly seek it.—Where there is wisdom, there comes, indeed, also gold and silver (Prov. iii. 16 *sq.*), but not the reverse.—Ver. 15. HALL: A heart conscious in itself of the living evidences of a special grace of God, cannot forbear feeling that it should be authenticated through outward signs, and especially through munificence.

Vers. 16–28: LISCO: Solomon's Wise Judgment: (*a*) The question in dispute (vers. 16–22); (*b*) the decision (vers. 23–28).—Vers. 17–22. Such sin brings together, but it unites only for a short time; for it produces discord, wrangling, and controversy. Abiding peace dwells only in the house where the God of peace binds hearts together.—He who takes from the heart of a mother her child, or estranges or deprives her, will not escape the righteous tribunal of the judge to whom the mother (*das mutterherz*) calls and appeals.—Litigation is generally associated with envy, falsehood, and unrighteousness, hence the Lord says, be ready, &c. (Matt. v. 25; Luke xii. 58).—Ver. 26. If an immoral woman be merciful for the son of her body, and cannot forget her little child (*kindleins*), how much more should every Christian mother be ready to offer, when necessary, the heaviest sacrifice to deliver her child from moral ruin.—SEILER: If in the hearts of sinners the love of father and mother be so strong, how strong must the fatherly love of God be (Isai. xlix. 15)?—Envy hardens all human feeling, and makes one hard and heartless.—Ver. 27. When a child, apparently given over to death, is restored to its parents by divine providence, so much the more must their chief solicitude be to educate and bring it up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.—Not power and force, not great pomp, and pride, and tyranny, but wisdom and righteousness, give to the government authority, and call forth genuine fear and the voluntary obedience of the people.—If it were given to a Solomon to bring to disgrace lying and misrepresentation, by judicial wisdom and knowledge of the human heart, and to deliver a righteous judgment, how much less shall liars and hypocrites stand up under the tribunal of Him who could say, A greater than Solomon is here! who, without needing witnesses and judicial examination, will bring to light what is hidden in darkness (1 Cor. iv. 5), and before whose judgment-seat we must all appear (2 Cor. v. 10).

B.—*Solomon's officers, household, and his high intellectual culture.*

CHAP. IV. 1–34 (IV. 1; V. 14).

1, 2 So king Solomon was king over all Israel. And these *were* the princes
3 which he had; Azariah the son of Zadok the priest.[1] Elihoreph and Ahiah, the
4 sons[2] of Shisha, scribes; Jehoshaphat the son of Ahilud, the recorder. And
Benaiah the son of Jehoiada *was* over the host: and Zadok and Abiathar *were*
5 the priests; and Azariah the son of Nathan *was* over the officers: and
6 Zabud the son of Nathan *was* principal officer, *and* the king's friend:[3] and
Ahishar *was* over the household: and Adoniram the son of Abda *was* over the
tribute.
7 And Solomon had twelve officers over all Israel, which provided victuals for
8 the king and his household: each man his month in a year made provision. And
9 these *are* their names: The son of Hur, in mount Ephraim: The son of Dekar, in
10 Makaz, and in Shaalbim, and Beth-shemesh, and Elon[4]-beth-hanan: The son of
11 Hesed, in Aruboth; to him *pertained* Sochoh, and all the land of Hepher: The
son of Abinadab, in all the region [highlands[5]] of Dor; which had Taphath the
12 daughter of Solomon to wife: Baana the son of Ahilud; *to him pertained* Taa-
nach and Megiddo, and all Beth-shean, which *is* by Zartanah beneath Jezreel,
from Bethshean to Abel-meholah, *even* unto *the place that is* beyond Jokneam
13 [Jokmeam]: The son of Geber, in Ramoth-gilead; to him *pertained* the towns of
Jair the son of Manasseh, which *are* in Gilead;[6] to him *also pertained* the region
of Argob, which *is* in Bashan, threescore great cities with walls and brazen bars:
14, 15 Ahinadab the son of Iddo *had* Mahanaim: Ahimaaz *was* in Naphtali; he
16 also took Basmath the daughter of Solomon to wife: Baanah the son of Hushai
17 *was* in Asher and in[7] Aloth: [8]Jehoshaphat the son of Paruah, in Issachar:
18, 19 Shimei the son of Elah, in Benjamin: Geber the son of Uri *was* in the country
of Gilead, *in* the country of Sihon king of the Amorites, and of Og king of
20 Bashan; and *he was* the only officer which *was* in the land. [9]Judah and Israel
were many, as the sand which *is* by the sea in multitude, eating and drinking
and making merry.
21 And Solomon reigned over all kingdoms from the river[10] unto the land of
the Philistines, and unto the border of Egypt: they brought presents, and
22 served Solomon all the days of his life. And Solomon's provision for one day
was thirty measures [cor] of fine flour, and threescore measures [cor] of meal.
23 Ten fat oxen, and twenty oxen out of the pastures, and a hundred sheep, be-
24 sides harts, and roebucks, and fallow deer,[11] and fatted fowl. For he had
dominion over all *the region* on this side the river, from Tiphsah even to Azzah,
over all the kings on this side the river: and he had peace on all sides round
25 about him. And Judah and Israel dwelt safely, every man under his vine and
26 under his fig tree, from Dan even to Beersheba, all the days of Solomon. And
Solomon had forty[12] thousand stalls of horses for his chariots, and twelve
27 thousand horsemen [saddle-horses]. And those officers provided victual for
king Solomon, and for all that came unto king Solomon's table, every man
28 in his month: they lacked nothing. Barley also and straw for the horses and
dromedaries [coursers[13]] brought they unto the place where *the officers* were,
every man according to his charge.
29 And God gave Solomon wisdom and understanding exceeding much, and
30 largeness of heart, even as the sand that *is* on the sea shore. And Solomon's
wisdom excelled the wisdom of all the children of the east country, and all the
31 wisdom of Egypt. For he was wiser than all men; than Ethan the Ezrahite,
and Heman, and Chalcol, and Darda, the sons of Mahol: and[14] his fame was in
32 all nations round about. And he spake three thousand proverbs: and his songs
33 were a thousand and five.[15] And he spake of trees, from the cedar tree that *is*
in Lebanon even unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall: he spake also

34 of beasts, and of fowl, and of creeping things, and of fishes. And there came of all people to hear the wisdom of Solomon, from all kings of the earth, which had heard of his wisdom.[16]

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

[1] Ver. 2.—[Our author translates הַכֹּהֵן "*war der höchste*" for reasons given in the *Exeg. Com.* Keil also takes the same view of the word. On the other hand, all the ancient VV. (the Vat. Sept., however, omits the word) give the usual rendering, *priest;* so also Luther, and the A. V. The question really turns upon which of the names, Azariah or Zadok, the word is to be placed in apposition with. By the Masoretic punctuation, by the Chald., and by the Sept., (ὁ ἱερεὺς in the nominative), it is placed in apposition with Azariah, which, according to ver. 4, cannot be correct, if the translation *priest* be retained. Hence the adoption of the other sense by our author and Keil. But by the Vulg. (*sacerdotis* in the Gen.), by the Syr., and the A.V., it is placed in apposition with Zadok, and the difficulty is thus removed, while the ordinary sense of the word is retained. In this way, too, the absence of the ו before Elihoreph is accounted for. The sense will then be, Azariah (the son of Zadok the priest) was one of the scribes with Elihoreph and Ahiah.

[2] Ver. 3.—[Three MSS., followed by the Sept., write בֵּן in the singular, thus making Ahiah only the son of Shisha.

[3] Ver. 5.—[Here again we have the same question of translation as in ver. 2, but differently solved in the A.V. The Heb. expression זָבוּד בֶּן־נָתָן כֹּהֵן רֵעֶה הַמֶּלֶךְ׃ is rendered by the author as well as by Keil, in the same way as in the A.V. It is urged that כֹּהֵן cannot be in apposition with Nathan because it is without the article (see Nordheimer's *Heb. Gr.*, § 816). Admitting that the Heb. usage requires כֹּהֵן to be regarded as a predicate, it is further urged that it cannot mean *priest*, because Zadok and Abiathar were "the priests." They certainly were the high-priests; but Zabud also may have been *a* priest. The Chald., Syr., and Vulg., all retain the sense of priest, and there seems no sufficient reason for rejecting it. "Zabud, the son of Nathan, *was* a priest, *and* the king's friend." Twelve MSS. and the Syr., for זָבוּד read זכור.

[4] Ver. 9.—[Eleven MSS., followed by the Vulg., prefix the conjunction וְ to בֵּית; the Sept. supply its place by ἕως, and so our author translates. The Arab. uses the relative, "Elon which is in Beth-hanan." The locality is quite unknown.

[5] Ver. 11.—[Here, as in Josh. xi. 2; xii. 23, it is better to preserve the force of the Heb. נָפַת, as in the author's version. The Vulg., Syr., Sept., and Arab. make it a part of the proper name.

[6] Ver. 13.—[The Vat. (not Alex.) Sept. omits the previous clause, and in each case, after the mention of the officer and his district, adds εἷς.

[7] Ver. 16.—[The Vulg., Sept., Syr., and Arab. make the preposition part of the name, and read Baaloth. This cannot be right. See *Exeg. Com.*

[8] Ver. 17.—[The Vat. Sept. omits ver. 17 here, and gives it afterwards instead of the last clause of ver. 19. It also omits verses 20–26 (*cf.* chap. iii.). This whole list of proper names is variously modified in the VV.

[9] Ver. 20.—[Most printed editions of the Heb. begin chap. v. at this point; so our author, and hence his note.—F. G.] The Sept., the Vulg., and Luther [also the A. V. and Walton's *Polyglot*] reckon chap. v. 1–14 as belonging to chap. iv., and begin chap. v. with its 15th verse.—Bähr.

[10] Ver. 21.—[There is here no preposition in the Heb., although it is supplied in the parallel place, 2 Chron. ix. 26. וְעַד־אֶרֶץ פְּלִשְׁתִּים. The Chald. has made up the deficiency by translating "from the river Euphrates unto the land of the Philistines and unto the border of Egypt," but the Vulg. (*a flumine terræ Philisthiim usque ad terminem Ægypti*), Syr., and Arab. reduce Solomon's empire to nothing. The Alex. Sept. has ἀπὸ τοῦ ποταμοῦ γῆς ἀλλοφύλων καὶ ἕως ὁρίου Αἰγύπτου.

[11] Ver. 23.—[מֵאַיָּל Vulg., *cervi;* Sept. (Alex.), ἐλάφοι. צְבִי Vulg., *caprias;* Sept. (Alex.), δορκάδα. יַחְמוּר Vulg. *bubali;* Sept. (Alex.) omits. On צְבִי *cf.* Rosenmüller's *Bochart Hierozoicon*, ii. 808.

[12] Ver. 26.—The parallel place 2 Chron. ix. 25 shows, that not אַרְבָּעִים but אַרְבַּעַת should be read, with which also Chron. x. 26 and 2 Chron. i. 14 accord.—Bähr. [The author accordingly rightly translates "four thousand;" but there is no variation in the MSS. nor in the VV.

[13] Ver. 28.—[Heb. רֶכֶשׁ, a superior kind of horse to the chariot-horses just mentioned. None of the VV. sustain the translation *dromedaries*. Keil translates "runners."

[14] Ver. 31.—[The Vat. Sept. omits this clause.

[15] Ver. 32.—[Sept.: five thousand.

[16] Ver. 34.—[The Vat. Sept. here adds iii. 1, and continues: τότε ἀνέβη Φαραὼ βασιλεὺς Αἰγύπτου, καὶ προκατελάβετο τὴν Γαζέρ, καὶ ἐνεπύρισεν αὐτὴν καὶ τὸν Χαναναῖον τὸν κατοικοῦντα ἐν Μεργάβ· καὶ ἔδωκεν αὐτὰς Φαραὼ ἀποστολὰς θυγατρὶ αὐτοῦ γυναικὶ Σαλωμών, καὶ Σαλωμὼν ᾠκοδόμησε τὴν Γαζέρ.—F. G.]

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

Ver. 1. **So king Solomon was, &c.** According to Thenius, the section from chap. iv. 1 to 28 is borrowed from two different sources, and the contents of both are so woven together that the proper connection is now lost. Chap. iv. 2–19 may belong to the older and purely historical source; chap. iv. 1 and 20 to the later traditional one, as may also vers. 21, 24, 25, 26. "Vers. 22, 23, 27, 28 (probably in the following order: vers. 27, 28, 22, 23) contain the continuation of the account of the functionaries (taken from the more ancient source)." It is true that a perfect accordance is obtained by this arrangement of the text, which is partly founded on the Septuagint; but the question is whether the text, as it lies before us, is so disconnected as to require such a forced alteration of style. We must presuppose the author possessed of enough understanding not to take what he found in good order, in his documentary sources, tear it apart, weave it together, and render the whole without connection. In chaps. i.–iii. he related how Solomon's kingdom became established and respected; in chap. iv. he tells how it was constituted, and in what a well-ordered and flourishing

condition it was. Then he proceeds with the words of ver. 1: So king Solomon was king over all Israel, *i. e.*, with the rule of Solomon over all Israel, such was its estate. Now comes the account of the regular government and management of the entire realm, by the various civil officers of different degrees (vers. 2–19); then the court establishment, which represented the prosperous state of the kingdom (22–28); and lastly, that of the extraordinary acquirements of the king himself (29–34). The first section is very naturally followed (ver. 20) by remarks on the great population and prosperous condition of the kingdom; and this leads to the further remark (ver. 21) that Solomon's dominion not only extended over the populous nation of Israel, but over the neighboring tribes, that were brought under tribute. His court establishment was equally brilliant, and it (vers. 22–28) corresponded with his extended sovereignty (ver. 24), and with the peacefulness which his subjects enjoyed (ver. 25). There is no want of connection in such a narrative.

Ver. 2. **And these were the princes**, the dignitaries (comp. the double list of those under David, 2 Sam. viii. 16–18, and *ibid.* xx. 23–26, where they are not, however, named הַשָּׂרִים), and there are two more here. The order of the offices is different in each of the three lists, so that we cannot therefrom form an opinion of their rank. It is characteristic that the military officers are named first in both of David's lists, and the civil offices are first in Solomon's. The Jewish expounders, the Vulgate, Luther, and Thenius, take הַכֹּהֵן in ver. 2 to be in the genitive case: "Azariah, the son of Zadok the high priest; Elihoreph and Ahiah the sons of Shisha, were scribes." But against this view are the accents (silluk with sophpasuk), according to which, a new sentence begins with Elihoreph; also "the omission of the copula ו before Elihoreph, which was absolutely necessary, if Azariah had been joined in the same office with the brothers Elihoreph and Ahiah" (Keil); finally, the son of the high-priest Zadok is named Ahimaaz in 2 Sam. xv. 27; xviii. 27; and 1 Chron. vi. 8, 9, and then his son Azariah בֶּן must therefore certainly be translated here by: grandson. This, however, is not suitable here, because son is used six times consecutively in the following verses, so that we cannot understand why the writer does not say the son of Ahimaaz. It was scarcely possible either for a grandson of the priest Zadok to have been old enough then to stand at the head of the body of high dignitaries. All things considered, הַכֹּהֵן must here be understood like הַמַּזְכִּיר, ver. 3, as predicate-nominative, according to the opinions of Piscator, Le Clerc, Keil, and others. We may not translate like Ewald and Bunsen: "Azariah, the son of Zadok, was the high-priest," for according to ver. 4, Zadok himself, and also Abiathar, were; but there never were three high-priests at the same time. We are rather compelled, on the contrary, to take כֹּהֵן in the sense it bears in 2 Sam. viii. 18, and xx. 26, where it signifies a secular office. The Chron. (i. 18, 17) gives instead of כֹּהֲנִים in the first place הָרִאשֹׁנִים לְיַד הַמֶּלֶךְ, that is, the first at the king's side, those whom we now name ministers, or privy counsellors. The word in ver. 5 must necessarily have this meaning; where it stands without the article, Zabud was כֹּהֵן. If now Azariah is introduced in ver. 2 as הַכֹּהֵן, wholly analogous to the way in which the high priest, contrasted with the other priests, is absolutely הַכֹּהֵן (Exod. xxix. 30; Lev. xxi. 21; 1 Kings i. 8, 38; 2 Kings xi. 9, 15, etc.), so is he designated as the first or chief of the secular כֹּהֲנִים, upon which account he stands first in the list of the great office bearers. "Among the trusted privy counsellors of the king, he held the first place" (Keil). It is not necessary to suppose that Zadok, whose son he was, was the high-priest, for this name occurs very often (2 Kings xv. 33; Neh. iii. 4–29; xiii. 13; xi. 11), as well as the name Azariah (1 Chron. v. 36–40; ii. 39; 2 Kings xv. 30, &c.).

Vers. 3–6. **Elihoreph . . . were scribes,** &c. סֹפֵר means generally any one whose business it was to write or to count. The סֹפְרִים, as the highest civil officers, had, no doubt, the care of all clerkly as well as financial matters; two are therefore specified.—For the office of the מַזְכִּיר see *Introduc.* § 2. It is plain that he was not the "highest minister of state," as Winer thinks, because he is not the first, but the third in the list. As the copula is wanting before Josaphat, we cannot conclude, with Thenius, that he was above the סֹפְרִים, to whom Azariah must in that case also have belonged.—*Shisha* must be the same as Shavsha in 1 Chron. xviii. 16, and Seriah in 2 Sam. xviii. 7. The office of the father under David, passed to his two sons under Solomon.—For *Benaiah* see chap. ii. 35.—Ewald thinks the words: And *Zadok* and *Abiathar* (were) *the priests* a mere unnecessary repetition of Sam. xx. 25, because, according to chap. ii. 26 and 35, Solomon deposed Abiathar and put Zadok in his place. However, there is no sufficient ground for this view. Abiathar is again introduced as a priest here, either "because he had officiated in the beginning of Solomon's reign" (Philippson), or because, as Grotius remarks, though he was no longer *re* yet he was *nomine* high-priest, and though the ἀρχή was taken from him the ἱερωσύνη nevertheless remained to him (Theodoret). It is highly improbable that Solomon afterwards pardoned and restored him to office (Le Clerc).—*Azariah* and *Zabud* (ver. 5) were not the sons of the prophet Nathan (Thenius), but of the son of David, mentioned in 2 Sam. v. 14, therefore Solomon's nephews (Keil). The former had the officials enumerated in vers. 7–19 under him, the latter is designated as כֹּהֵן רֵעֶה הַמֶּלֶךְ. Ewald looks on this in a very modern way, and thinks it was a "special house-priest" of the king's, "who was his peculiar minister in spiritual affairs." However, there is no more mention of a priest here than in 2 Sam. viii. 18; רֵעֶה explains כֹּהֵן, and both words form together one conception; Zabud was a "privy counsellor, *i. e.*, friend of the king's" (Keil). Luther's translation: the son of Nathan, the priest, is

quite false. Abiathar (ver. 6) was not "minister of the king's household" (Keil), but "master of the palace and household" (Thenius), chap. xviii. 3; 2 Kings xviii. 18; Isai. xxii. 15. This office did not exist under David; but was required by the larger and more splendid court of Solomon. *Adoniram* is the same as 2 Sam. xx. 24 and 1 Kings xii. 18, where he is called Adoram. He was not tithe-master (Luther), but overseer of the hirelings that had to overlook the public works, for מַס nowhere means *vectigal* or impost. Ewald and Thenius think the addition of the Sept.: καὶ Ἐλιὰβ υἱὸς Σάφ ἐπὶ τῆς πατριᾶς, original, but it is easy to see that it is a gloss.

Ver. 7. **Solomon had twelve officers.** The wholly general expression נִצָּבִים (from נצב to place, *i. e.*, people in office), is made clearer by the word: *the provided for*, &c. Hence they were not ἡγεμόνες καὶ στρατηγοὶ (Josephus), neither "court cooks" (Winer), but "chief rent-receivers" (Rosenmüller); whether they were regular chiefs or governors of provinces, the providing for the king being only a part of their office (Thenius), is uncertain. Probably their districts were not arranged with reference to the lands of the tribes, but to the fertility of the soil. *Their number, twelve*, has no relation to the twelve tribes, but to the twelve months of the year, in each of which one of them had to supply his quota. The list of the districts in vers. 8 to 19 is perhaps made with reference to the time of delivery, and makes no account of the geographical position.—The proper names of five of the twelve officials are not given, but only their fathers' names. It is uncertain whether they bore those names with the prefix of Ben, as the Vulgate supposes (*Benhur*, *Bendecar*, &c.). Ben-abinadab (ver. 11) is scarcely a proper name. As these men have no further historical importance, it matters little about their names. Two sons-in-law of Solomon being among them, only shows that the list gives us a view of the civil offices during the middle period of his reign.

Vers. 8–22. **The son of Hur, in mount Ephraim.** We give here only what is most necessary about the situations and nature of particular districts. Thenius, on this place, speaks at length of both. (1) *Mount Ephraim*, in Central Palestine, one of the most cultivated districts of all Palestine (Winer, *R.-W.-B.*, *s. v.*). (2) *Makaz* (ver. 9) is named only here, but must belong, like *Shaalbim*, *Beth-shemesh* and *Elon*, to the tribe of Dan (south of Ephraim and west of Judah). (3) *Aruboth* (ver. 10) also does not appear elsewhere, probably a place in the tribe of Judah, to which *Sochoh* in the south must also have belonged (Josh. xv. 48). *Hepher* cannot be the town Gath-Hepher in Zebulon, but only a southern district, probably west of Sochoh, where a Canaanitish king had reigned before (Josh. xii. 17). (4) *Dor* (ver. 11), a town on the Mediterranean, nine Roman miles north of Cæsarea (Josh. xvii. 11). *Naphat* (*i. e.*, heights) Dor is the hilly stretch of country towards the south of the town, and to this Thenius reckons the whole very fertile pasture-plain of Sharon to Joppa. (5) *Megiddo*, and close to it, in a southeasterly direction, *Taanach* (ver. 12); two towns, that lie on the slope of the Carmel mountains, at the edge of the plain of Jezreel in the tribe of Manasseh. *Beth-shean*, on a straight line, east of Megiddo, where the plain of Jezreel ceases and that of the Jordan meadows begins. Zartanah lay near in a southerly direction, and Abel-meholah still more south the latter was the birth-place of the prophet Elisha. *Jokneam*, according to 1 Chron. vi. 53, a levite town, the situation of which is doubtful, perhaps it was the same as *Kibzaim* (Josh. xxi. 22). The district must then have included the whole land of the tribe of Manasseh on this side (west of) Jordan. (6) *Ramoth-gilead* (ver. 13), a town of the levites beyond Jordan, in the tribe of Gad, which stretched northwards along the tribe of Manasseh, and southwards along that of Reuben (Josh. xxi. 38; Deut. iv. 43). Upon חַוֹּת *of Jair*, comp. Numb. xxxii. 41; Deut. iii. 14; Josh. xiii. 30. Our passage says as plainly as possible that they were in the land of Gilead, but the country of *Argob* was in the land of Bashan. The sixty fortified cities that belonged to the last can therefore not be identical with חַוֹּת (Keil), as Bashan is always made quite distinct from Gilead (Deut. iii. 10; Josh. xii. 5; xiii. 11; xvii. 1; 2 Kings x. 33; Mic. vii. 14), the translation: the "towns of Jair" is not correct either, "because: חיה here does not mean to live, and the German: living in a given place does not signify *vita* but *mansio*" (Cassel, *zu Richt.*, iii. 4). The land of Bashan with Argob lay northeast of that of Gilead. The *brazen bars* mean that the gates of the cities were protected with brass. (7) *Mahanaim* (ver. 14), a town beyond Jordan (2 Sam. xvii. 24–27), on the borders of the tribe of Gad and the further portion of Manasseh on the Jabbok (Josh. xxi. 38). We have no further information about this district of Abinadab. (8) *Naphtali* (ver. 15), the region of the tribe of this name, was quite in the north of Palestine, on this side Jordan, west of Asher's inheritance and bordering, on its south, the tribe of Zebulon. (9) *Asher's* (ver. 16) inheritance lay along the coast of the Mediterranean, northward of the tribe of Issachar (Deut. xxxiii. 24 *sq.*). בְּ in בְּעָלוֹת must certainly be understood as in בְּאָשֵׁר (Luther), but Aloth, like Bealoth, is a quite unknown name, for the latter cannot be Bealoth in Judah (Josh. xv. 24). Thenius boldly conjectures עד מעלה צור to the road leading to Tyre. (10) *Issachar* (ver. 17); its country lay on this side Jordan, between Zebulon on the north and Manasseh on the south (Josh. xix. 17 *sq.*). (11) *Benjamin* (ver. 18); its inheritance was between Ephraim on the north and Judah on the south, and east of Dan (Josh. xviii. 11 *sq.*). (12) *Gilead* (ver. 19) is used here for all the east-Jordan lands in general, but it could only apply to that part which remained over after taking out the sixth and seventh districts, that is, the southern. The kingdom of *Sihon* originally extended from the river Jabbok in Manasseh to the river Arnon, which empties itself into the Dead Sea (Numb. xxi. 24), and passed over to the tribes of Gad and Reuben. *Bashan* lay northeast of Sihon (Numb. xxi. 33). The addition: *an officer*, &c., means: that although this district was perhaps the largest (probably because of the barrenness of the soil), it had only one officer. Ewald would insert יְהוּדָה after בארץ, which is very incorrect, because instead of twelve officers, according to ver. 7, there would have been thirteen. The expression in ver. 20: *as the sand which is by the sea*, clearly refers to the promise in Gen. xxii. 17; xxxii. 12. For eat-

ing and drinking, &c., comp. 1 Sam. xxx. 16; Prov. v. 17. One must either add עַד before אֶרֶץ (chap. v. 1) like the parallel passage in 2 Chron. ix. 26, or bear in mind the בְּ from the preceding passage, as Keil does. *Presents*, a mild expression for tribute, as in 2 Sam. viii. 2–6; 2 Kings xvii. 3–4.

Vers. 22–25. **And Solomon's provision, &c.** Ver. 22. כֹּר (called חֹמֶר before) is the largest measure, and contains, according to Josephus, ten attic medimni [medimnus—nearly twelve gallons. —E. H.] which Böckh reckons at 19857.7 Paris cubic inches; however, it seems from exact calculations made by Thenius (in the *Stud. u. Kritik*. 1846, *s.* 73 *sq.*), that Josephus is wrong,* and that the measures only contained 10143 Paris cubic inches. According to this, the 30 + 60 measures of meal make 171 bushels, from which 28,000 pounds of bread were baked. "If we allow two pounds of bread to each person, Solomon's court must have contained 14,000 people" (others compute them at only 10,000), a number which does not seem too great for the middle period of this reign. Let us think, for instance, of the great harem, the numerous servants, the body-guard, &c., and consider besides, that the families of all the court officials belonged to it, and that there were only payments in provisions. "If we take the flesh of a slaughtered ox to weigh 600 (according to the calculation of those who understood the matter), that of a cow 400, and that of a sheep 70 pounds," the total consumption of meat would be 21,000 pounds, that is, one and a half pounds for each person; and "this is not reckoning the game and fowl for the king's table." There are similar accounts of expenditure at other oriental courts. "According to an ancient author (*Athen. Deipn.*, iv. 10), Alexander found on a column at Persepolis a placard containing an account of the daily consumption at the court of Cyrus; from this list we give the following: 1,000 bushels of wheat of different qualities, the same of barley-meal, 400 sheep, 300 lambs, 100 oxen, 30 horses, 30 deer, 400 fat geese, 100 goslings, 300 pigeons, 600 small birds of various kinds, 3,750 gallons of wine, 75 gallons of fresh milk, and the same of sour milk. Besides this, there was a quantity of maize, that was gathered in single rations for the cattle. . . . . Tavernier reckons the number of sheep daily consumed in the seraglio of the Sultan, in his time, at 500, besides a number of fowls, and an immense quantity of butter and rice" (Philippson; comp. Rosenmüller, *A. u. N. Morgenland*, iii. *s.* 166). For יַחְמוּר (comp. Deut. xiv. 5) see Winer, *R.-W.-B.*, i. *s.* 494. בַּרְבֻּרִים only occurs here, and is variously interpreted; Kimchi thinks it means capons; Gesenius, geese; Thenius, guinea-hens; and Ewald, swans. The splendor of the court is accounted for by vers. 24 and 25. The extent of Solomon's dominion is defined according to the two towns named in vers. 24 and 25. *Tiphsah*, *i. e.*, Thapsæus, was "a large and populous town on the west bank of the Euphrates; it was a place where armies crossed over that river, and a place for landing and shipping wares coming from or going to Babylon on the Euphrates" (Winer, ii. *s.* 612). While this town was the extreme northeasterly point, *Gaza* in the Philistines' land, about three miles (nine and a half or ten Eng.) from the Mediterranean, formed the extreme southwesterly one. It does not necessarily follow, from the expression: *all the region* (land) *beyond the river* [*i. e.*, west], that our author dwelt on the east side of the Euphrates and wrote there (see *Introd.* § 1), as is to be learned from Ezra iv. 10 *sq.*; the expression belonged to the time of banishment, but was retained after the return, and, as it seems, without regard to its geographical signification, just for instance as the expression *Gallia transalpina*. Living under the *vine and fig tree* (2 Kings xviii. 31) describes the happy and blissful state of peace, but was not, however, taken from the description of Messiah's reign (Mic. iv. 4; Zach. iii. 10) (Ewald), but on the contrary was woven into the latter. From *Dan to Beersheba*, boundaries of Palestine north and east (Judges xx. 1; 1 Sam. iii. 20; 2 Sam. iii. 10).

Vers. 26–28. **And Solomon had 40,000 stalls of horses, &c.** In ver. 26 the description of the court appointments, which had been interrupted by the remarks in vers. 24 and 25, is continued. אֻרְוֹת are horse-stalls, stables, mangers (Bochart: *loculi in stabulis distincti*). According to chap. x. 26, Solomon had 1,400 chariots; each of these was, as the representations on Egyptian and Assyrian monuments show, drawn by two horses, making 2,800 of these; the remaining 1,200 were reserves, for if one fell it was usual to attach a third horse (Xenophon, *Cyrop.*, vi. 1–27). פָּרָשִׁים does not mean riders here, but saddle-horses in contrast with harnessed horses, as in 2 Sam. i. 6; Ezek. xxvii. 14. The opinion that Israel lived in peace (ver. 25) because Solomon had made great warlike preparations (ver. 26) with which he protected his kingdom (Thenius, Keil), is quite a wrong one; the question is not of war here, but to what the אֻרְוֹת refers, namely, the maintaining of harness- and saddle-horses, and the expenses of the court. In ver. 27, therefore, it is again said that the twelve officers who had to provide for the sustenance of all the persons in the court, had also to provide for this great number of horses; ver. 28 then gives the kind of provision the latter received, namely, *barley and straw*. Oats were not cultivated in the East, therefore barley was the usual food for horses: the poorer classes alone used it for bread also (Judges vii. 13, and Cassel on the place. Comp. Winer, I. *s.* 410). For רֶכֶשׁ see Esther viii. 10, 14. The coursers served to carry "the king's orders to the different districts" (Thenius). To אֲשֶׁר יִהְיֶה־שָּׁם the Sept., Vulgate, and Thenius supply as subject: the king, which is certainly false, for if Solomon sometimes changed his residence, he did not travel about with 16,000 horses (ver. 26). According to chap. x. 26, the horses were placed in different towns, into which the barley and straw were brought, as Keil says: "where they (barley and straw) should be, according as the horses were distributed about."

Vers. 29–30. **And God gave Solomon wisdom, &c.** Hitherto the narrative treats of the organs by means of which the order and happy condition of Solomon's kingdom was conditioned, but now it turns to the head of the realm, the king himself, and remarks that in him which particularly distinguished him and qualified him to be the ruler, namely, the *wisdom* he had received from God. "While חָכְמָה denotes more the entire spiritual con-

*See below, chap. v. ver. 7.

dition, תבונה designates sharpness of insight, but in רחב לב the *ingenium capax* is set forth" (Thenius), the talent to take up and comprehend all, even the most diversified objects of knowledge. Hence the addition: **as the sand which is by the sea,** which is a figurative description of an innumerable multitude (chap. iv. 20; Gen. xli. 49; xxxii. 13; Ps. cxxxix. 18). Luther's translation, a comforted heart, is wrong.—**All the sons of the east,** that is, not only those Arabians distinguished for their skill in proverbs, but all the tribes living to the east of Palestine (also the northeast), who were famous in any branch of knowledge (Jer. xlix. 28; Gen. xxix. 1; Numb. xxiii. 7; Job i. 3). Opposite these, in the west. was *Egypt*, the wisdom of which was almost proverbial in the ancient world (Isai. xix. 11; Acts vii. 22; Joseph., *Antiq.*, viii. 2–5; Herodot., ii. 160). There were no other lands distinguished for wisdom in Solomon's time; the Greek learning only commenced 400 years later.

Ver. 31. **The sons of Mahol,** not the poets (Luther), for מָחוֹל means as appell. dance, round dance (Ps. xxx. 12; cxlix. 3); but here it is a proper name. It must remain uncertain whether these four men were celebrated persons of more ancient time, or whether they were contemporaries of Solomon; we have no further information about them. *Ethan* and *Heman*, named in 1 Chron. xv. 17 and 19 among the musicians appointed by David, but it is scarcely to be supposed that the wisest men of the time were among them. The headings of Ps. lxxxviii. and lxxxix. are more likely to refer to our Heman and Ethan, as they are there called Ezrahites. All four names are close together 1 Chron. ii. 6: "the sons of Zerah (the sons of Judah); Zimri, and Ethan, and Calcol, and Dara;" Grotius and Le Clerc believed them to be identical with these; as also Movers and Bertheau, more recently; but even if דרדע is the same as דרע, and Ezrach the same as Serach, the difficulty still remains that Chalcol and Darda are here named sons of Mahol, and that there is nowhere else any intimation of the wisdom of Zerach's sons. The rabbinical book *Seder Olam* (ed. Meyer, p. 52 *sq.*), alone says of them: "these were prophets that prophesied in Egypt."

Ver. 32. **And he spake three thousand proverbs,** &c. Prov. i. 1–6 explains what proverbs are and what their use is. **He spake** is as much as: he originated them. The fixed number, 3,000, certainly shows that they were written down and collected, possibly only in part, or possibly not at all, by himself. Unfortunately, the greater number of these proverbs are lost; for if we admit that all those in the biblical book of Proverbs were composed by Solomon, yet there are only 915 verses in the book, and these are not all proverbs. There remains still less of the thousand and five *songs*. It is doubtful if Canticles be one of those. The lxxiid and cxxviith Psalms have Solomon's name at the beginning, and there is no real reason to doubt the genuineness of the heading; many think he was the author of the cxxxiid Psalm; Ewald thinks he wrote only the iid Psalm.

Ver. 33. **He spake of trees,** &c. His wisdom was not only in spiritual, religious, and social matters, and displayed in doctrine and poetry, but in natural things, the entire kingdoms of plants and animals. Josephus is wrong in saying that he derived his proverbs (parables) from all these things. The *cedar* is the largest, most beautiful, and useful of trees, and the hyssop the smallest and most insignificant plant. The hyssop which grows on the wall is a particular kind of wall-moss (Thenius), the other hyssop is a stem-formed plant, that grows to one or two feet high (comp. Winer, *R.-W.-B.*, *s. v.*). *The many kinds of beasts* mean the whole animal kingdom, divided according to the manner of motion: four-footed (בְּהֵמָה), flying, creeping, and swimming (Gen. vi. 20; vii. 8). This passage can scarcely mean that Solomon also wrote works on all plants and animals, but only that he understood these subjects and could "speak" of them. We need not suppose that such works, because they may have had no significance for God's kingdom, should not also have been preserved.

Ver. 34. **There came of all people,** &c. The greatness and extent of Solomon's fame for wisdom are shown by the fact that he not only continued to be the type and model of all wisdom to his own people; but is so regarded in the East, even at the present day. The Koran (Sur. xxvii. 17) praises him as knowing the languages of men and demons, of birds and ants; these all, it says, he could hold intercourse with. The Turks still possess a work of seventy folio volumes, which is called the book of Suleiman, *i. e.*, Solomon. The whole of the wisdom and secret learning of the East is connected with his name.—**From all kings,** certainly means, as Thenius maintains, that they sent ambassadors, who did him homage, or received more certain information about him; comp. the narrative, chap. x.

HISTORICAL AND ETHICAL.

1. *To represent Solomon's* kingdom in its greatness and in its prosperous, well-ordered condition, is the plain design of this entire section, and upon this account the lists of officers, &c., which in themselves are dry, acquire a higher, historical (*heilsgeschichtliche*) signification. The period of the judges was the time of public crudeness in which there was an absence of order, and of organic unity of the kingdom. The age of David was that of continuous wars and battles, in which indeed victory over all enemies at last came, and with it at the same time the beginning of a well-ordered condition; but not complete peace for the kingdom. This first came with Solomon's reign (1 Chron. xxii. 8, 9). The reign of Solomon is the result of all preceding conflicts and divine teachings. It is the kingdom of Israel in its highest maturity. To represent it as such, it needed the authentication which our section supplies, and which in like manner in the whole history of the kings does not occur again. At this highest reach this kingdom was, upon the one side, the fulfilment of the divine promise (Gen. xxii. 17, and Exod. iii. 17 *sq.*; *cf.* with chap. iv. 20, and chap. v. 5), and, upon the other side moreover, it was itself a promise, an historical prophecy, a σκιὰ τῶν μελλόντων. As the whole Old Testament economy in its sensuousness and outwardness points beyond itself, to the New Testament in its spirituality and inwardness, so especially is Solomon's kingdom the type of the Messiah's. What the former is κατὰ σάρκα, the latter is κατὰ πνεῦμα. For the delineation of the latter, the prophets borrowed words from the delineation of the former in

our section here (Mich. iv. 4; Zach. iii. 10. *Cf.* above, on chap. i.).

2. *The great expensiveness of Solomon's household* is brought into the closest connection with the happiness, the prosperity and peace of the whole people (chap. iv. 20, and v. 5). It is hence an entire perversion when recent writers sever one passage from the connection, and cite that expensiveness among the things with which the people under Solomon were burdened, and which by and by had excited dissatisfaction and restlessness (Ewald, *Gesch. Isr.*, iii. *s.* 376; Duncker, *Gesch. des Alterthums*, i. *s.* 389). In absolute states, namely, in the ancient oriental, the king is the nation in person. The splendor of the royal household represents the splendor of the entire people. Far from being a sign of the oppression of the people, it shows rather their happiness and prosperity. The account does not say: the king lived in luxury while the people were poor and felt oppressed, but: as the people, so the king, and as the king, so the people; both were satisfied and enjoyed prosperity and peace.

3. *The delineation of Solomon's wisdom* follows immediately the delineation of the outward and material well-being of the kingdom, and shows in this connection that as Solomon was the representative of this well-being, so also from him, in consequence of special divine endowment, a rich, higher spiritual life, such as hitherto had not been, proceeded, and poured itself like a stream over the whole land (Eccles. xlvii. 14 *sq.*). "All may be ready in a given time and people," says Eisenlohr (*das Volk Isr.*, ii. *s.* 110), "for a spiritual elevation and living action, but one only has the mind and the power for it. Hence we cannot set sufficiently high the influence of the creative personality of the highly-gifted king Solomon." And Ewald observes (*Gesch. Isr.*, iii. *s.* 350), "so there was for the people in this noble time a new age also for science, poetry, and literature, whose rich fruits continued long after the sensuous wealth and superabundance which this time brought, together with the powers of the nation, had melted away." It was just this high condition of spiritual culture which procured for the king, and indirectly for the people, great authority, and which attracted men from all neighboring lands to hear this "wisdom." But also in the connection in which the material and the spiritual well-being of the people are brought together, there is a reference to the truth that for the glory of a king there must be something more than greatness, power, wealth, quiet, or "eating and drinking and amusements," and that where there is not spiritual culture and a higher life, where, for the furtherance of material interests, spiritual interests are thrust aside or neglected, the thought of a glorious condition cannot be entertained. Solomon himself says (Prov. iii. 13, 14): "Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding. For the merchandise of it is better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold."

4. *The wisdom of the East and of Egypt* is not so *much* below that of Solomon in its outward circumference (extensive), as in its most inward, characteristic being (intensive). While the former, in its deepest ground, rests upon the identification of the world with God, and at last discharges itself in pantheism, and, in consequence, is deprived almost wholly of the ethical element, this proceeds from the principle which is expressed in the words which form the title of Solomon's proverbs: "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction" (Prov. i. 7; *cf.* with chap. ix. 10). "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; and the knowledge of the holy is understanding." (Comp. Umbreit, *Commentar über die Spr. Sal. Einleit.*, *s.* 1–65.) It rests upon the knowledge of the one God of heaven and earth, who hath chosen Israel and made with them a covenant, *i. e.*, has revealed himself to them through His word, viz., "the Law." Consequently it is essentially monotheistic, ethical, and, therefore, practical. It does not exclude the knowledge of nature, for which Solomon was also renowned (ver. 13); but the latter is only true and right when it rests upon the former, and is permeated by it. In so far the wisdom of Solomon stood unrivalled throughout the whole of the ancient Orient, and was like an oasis in the desert to which men from all the neighboring countries made pilgrimages, a radiating light which attracted all involuntarily who loved light rather than darkness. "Only forth from the soil of the spirit watered by the spring of religious faith can the tree of wisdom grow strong, and spread out its branches into all regions of life" (Umbreit, *a. a. O.*, *s.* 5). But as Solomon's kingdom refers generally to that of the Messiah (see above), so especially does Solomon's wisdom (monotheistic-legal) point to the wisdom of Him who is greater than Solomon (xii. 42), who is the light of the world, and to whom all kings both from the West and the East shall come, and upon whom all the heathen shall call (Ps. lxxii. 10, 11; Isai. lx. 1–3).

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

Chap. iv. The Kingdom of Solomon a type of the Messiah's (1) in its greatness and extent; (2) in its prosperity and peace; (3) in his wisdom and knowledge.—Chap. iv. 1 to chap. v. 1. WÜRT. SUMM.: Fortunate is the government where all goes orderly. Their eyes shall look around after the faithful in the land, and pious subjects are loved and esteemed; but false people and liars, and those of a perverse heart, who have proud ways and haughtiness, and who calumniate others secretly and maliciously, it will not have nor endure about it, but will clear away and destroy after the example of David (Ps. cx.).—A well-ordered state constitution is the condition of the growth and prosperity of every kingdom; but all ordinances and institutions avail nothing when requisite and proper persons are wanting for their administration and execution. To select such, and to entrust them with different administrative offices, is the first and most difficult task of a ruler. Happy the prince to whom God grants the grace to find the right persons, who can counsel him and deserve his confidence (Eccles. x. 2–5).—STARKE: As a court, where it is beset with flatterers, backbiters, carousers, &c., generally goes down, so also it prospers, on the other hand, when pious servants are there —Chap. iv. 20. STARKE: Not the multitude of a people causes a scarcity in the land, but the wickedness and avarice of men.—Food and drink and amusement are a gift of God (Eccles. iii. 13), when used in the fear of God (Eccles. xi. 9) and with thanksgiving (1 Cor. x. 31; Col. iii. 17); but they become sin when, in the gift, the giver is forgotten, the

belly made a god of, and serves the lust of the flesh. Chap. iv. 21.—CRAMER: The kingdom of Christ is still far greater. He rules from one end of the sea to the other, from the rising of the sun unto the going down thereof (Zach. ix. 10). All kings shall call upon Him: all the heathen shall serve Him (Ps. lxxii. 8–10).

[E. HARWOOD: Chap. iv. vers. 4–5. Comp. 1 Chron. xxii. 7–10. David, the man of action; Solomon, the man of rest. The man of active life usually has more conspicuous virtues and more conspicuous faults than the man of rest. David proposed to build the house—the man of action was the founder: Solomon carried the plans of his father into execution. David was the founder: Solomon the builder.]

Chap. iv. 22.—As, by divine providence and ordering, there are always different conditions, high and low, rich and poor, so their manner of life cannot be the same, but must be conformable to the rank and position which has been assigned to every one by God. The household of a prince who stands at the head of a great and distinguished people ought not, indeed, give to the people the bad example of extravagant show, luxury, and riot; but it must, in abundance and splendor, surpass every private establishment, and ought not to appear needy and impoverished. Ver. 24, 25 (chap. iv. ver. 20). The Blessings of Peace. (1) Wherein they consist; (2) to what they oblige. Peace nourishes: disturbance consumes. Only in peace, not in war, does a nation attain to well-being, therefore should we offer prayer and supplication for kings and all in authority, &c. (1 Tim. ii. 2). Happy the land where goodness and truth are met together, righteousness and peace have kissed each other (Ps. lxxxv. 10). May the eternal God grant us, during our life, an heart ever joyous, and give us noble peace! It must be regarded as an unspeakable blessing of God when, under the protection of a wise and righteous government, every one in the nation, even the least, can remain in the undisturbed possession of his property, and can enjoy the fruits of his industry in the bosom of his family.

Ver. 29–34. The Wisdom of Solomon. (1) Its origin, ver. 29 (Prov. ii. 6; Dan. ii. 21, 6); (2) its greatness (ver. 30 *sq.*); (3) its result (ver. 34).—Ver. 29. Not every one receives from God an equal measure of spiritual endowment; but every one is obliged, with the gift he has received, to dispose of it faithfully, and not to allow it to be fallow (Luke xii. 48; Matt. xxv. 14–29). In the possession of high spiritual endowment and of much knowledge, man is in danger of over-estimating himself, of becoming proud and haughty, hence the highly-gifted Solomon himself says: "Trust in the Lord" &c. (Prov. iii. 5, 6). Not to elevate one's self above others, but in order to serve them, does God bestow special gifts of the Spirit (1 Peter iv. 10).—Ver. 30. Heathen wisdom, great as it may be in earthly things, understands nothing of divine, heavenly things, and is therefore far below the wisdom whose beginning is the fear of the personal, living God, who has revealed himself in His word. This wisdom alone yields true, good, and abiding fruit (Jas. iii. 15, 17).—Ver. 32. All those who have received special gifts of spirit and understanding, act inexcusably and sin grievously when, instead of giving God the honor, and of applying them to the good of their fellow-men, they promote, by doctrine and treatise, forgetfulness of God and unbelief, and the love of the world, and the lusts of the flesh, or gross or refined immorality (Eccles. xii. 9; Jer. ix. 23, 24). The glory which is obtained in the world through bad books, is shame and disgrace before Him who demands account of every idle word.—Ver. 33. STARKE: Far better would it befit lords and princes to find their enjoyment in study rather than to seek satisfaction in dramas, plays, and in immoderate drinking. A man may be able to speak of all possible things, and, at the same time, be without wisdom, for this does not consist in varied knowledge and wide-spread acquirements, but in recognition of the truth which purifies the heart and sanctifies the will. Observation and investigation of nature is only of the right kind, and fraught with blessing, when it leads to the confession of Ps. civ. 24; xcii. 6, 7.—Mark what the man who was wiser than all the men of his generation declares as the final result of all his wisdom and research: It is all vanity! Fear God, and keep His commandments (Eccles. i. 2; xii. 8, 13).—Ver. 34. To Solomon came from all nations people to hearken unto his wisdom; but to Him who is greater than Solomon, the wise men of to-day will not listen (1 Cor. i. 19–21).—How many travel over land and sea to seek gold and silver, but stir neither hand nor foot to find the wisdom and knowledge of the truth, which lie close at hand, and are better than gold and silver (Prov. viii. 11; xxiv. 14; Job xxviii. 18). It is not enough for a wise prince that his people eat, drink, and make merry, and dwell in safety, each one beneath his own vine and fig-tree (chap. iv. 20; v. 5); but he aims likewise at this, that spiritual education, science, and recognition of the truth should be extended and fostered, for this brings more consideration than power or wealth.

THIRD SECTION.

SOLOMON'S BUILDINGS.

(CHAP. V. [V. 15]–IX. 28.)

A.—*Treaty with Hiram in regard to the building of the Temple.*

CHAP. V. 1–18. [15–32].

1 AND Hiram king of Tyre sent his servants unto Solomon;[1] for he had heard
that they had anointed him king in the room of his father: for Hiram was ever
2, 3 a lover of David. And Solomon sent to Hiram, saying, Thou knowest how
that David my father could not build a house unto the name of the Lord his
God, for the wars[2] which were about him on every side, until the Lord put
4 them under the soles of his[3] feet. But now the Lord my God hath given me
5 rest on every side, *so that there is* neither adversary nor evil occurrent. And,
behold, I purpose[4] to build a house unto the name of the Lord my God, as the
Lord spake unto David my father, saying, Thy son, whom I will set upon thy
6 throne in thy room, he shall build a [the] house unto my name. Now therefore
command thou that they hew me cedar trees out of Lebanon; and my servants
shall be with thy servants: and unto thee will I give hire for thy servants according to all that thou shalt appoint: for thou knowest that *there is* not among
us any that can skill to hew timber like unto the Sidonians.
7 And it came to pass, when Hiram heard the words of Solomon, that he rejoiced greatly, and said, Blessed *be* the Lord[5] [Jehovah] this day, which hath
8 given unto David a wise son over this great people. And Hiram sent to Solomon,
saying, I have considered the things which thou sentest to me for: *and* I will do
9 all thy desire concerning timber of cedar, and concerning timber of fir. My
servants shall bring *them* down from Lebanon unto the sea; and I will convey
them by sea in floats unto the place that thou shalt appoint me, and will cause
them to be discharged there, and thou shalt receive *them:* and thou shalt
10 accomplish my desire, in giving food for my household. So Hiram gave Solo-
11 mon cedar trees and fir trees *according to* all his desire. And Solomon gave
Hiram twenty thousand measures [oor] of wheat *for* food to his household, and
twenty measures [cor[6]] of pure oil: thus gave Solomon to Hiram year by year.
12 And the Lord gave Solomon wisdom, as he promised him: and there was peace
between Hiram and Solomon; and they two made a league together.
13 And king Solomon raised a levy out of all Israel; and the levy was thirty
14 thousand men. And he sent them to Lebanon, ten thousand a month by
courses: a month they were in Lebanon, *and* two months at home: and Adoni-
15 ram *was* over the levy. And Solomon had threescore and ten thousand that
16 bare burdens, and fourscore thousand hewers in the mountains; besides the
chief of Solomon's officers which *were* over the work, three thousand and three[7]
17[8] hundred, which ruled over the people that wrought in the work. And the
king commanded, and they brought great stones, costly stones, *and* hewed
18 stones, to lay the foundation of the house. And Solomon's builders and Hiram's
builders did hew *them*, and the stonesquarers: so they prepared timber and
stones to build the house.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

[1] Ver. 1.—[The Vat. Sept., by omitting the first part of this clause, makes an extraordinary statement: *καὶ ἀπέστειλε Χιρὰμ βασιλεὺς Τύρου τοὺς παῖδας αὐτοῦ χρῖσαι τὸν Σαλωμὼν ἀντὶ Δαυὶδ κ. τ. λ.*

[2] Ver. 3.—[The A. V. has here exactly preserved the incongruity of the Heb. of an abstract noun מִלְחָמָה, *war*, followed by the personal pronoun אֹתָם. The Chald. avoids the difficulty by reading מִן קֳדָם עָבְדֵי קְרָבָא = those making war. It has been suggested that the Heb. might have read originally עֹשֵׂי הַמִּלְחָמָה.

[3] Ver. 3.—The k'tib רגלו is here decidedly to be preferred to the k'ri רגלי.—Bähr. [It is also the reading of many MSS., editions, and VV.

[4] Ver. 5.—[אָמַר אֹמֵר לִבְנוֹת, followed by the infinitive, expresses purpose. *Cf.* Ex. ii. 14; 2 Sam. xxi. 16.

[5] Ver. 7.—[The Sept. here read Θεός, not Κύριος. *Cf.* the parallel place 2 Chron. ii. 11, יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל.]

[6] Ver. 11.—[The Sept. enormously multiply this by writing *καὶ εἴκοσι χιλιάδας βαὶθ ἐλαίου*, so also the Heb. in the parallel place, 2 Chron. ii. 9. The Syr. and Arab. still ten times more, by making it twenty thousand cor.

[7] Ver. 16.—[*Cf.* 2 Chron. ii. 17, שֵׁשׁ מֵאוֹת.

[8] Ver. 17.—[The Vat. Sept. omits ver. 17 and the first half of 18. Both recensions of the Sept. add to ver. 18, *τρία ἔτη*.—F. G.]

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

Vers. 1–6. **And Hiram king of Tyre, &c.** After the general description of Solomon's government in the preceding section, the narrative now proceeds to give an account of his great and important undertaking, the building of the Temple (comp. the parallel account, 2 Chron. ii.). *Hiram* is called חִירוֹם in ver. 7 and 19, and חוּרָם in Chron., and Εἴρωμος twice in Josephus. It is uncertain whether of these be the original form. According to 2 Chron. ii. 2, and the present passage also, this Hiram was the same as he who had sent David wood to build his house (2 Sam. v. 11), and it is unnecessary, on the ground of the unreliable chronology of Josephus, to reckon him to be the son of that Hiram (having his father's name) as Le Clerc, Thenius, and others do (*Antiq.*, viii. 31; comp. *Contr. Apion.*, i. 18). If, according to Josephus, the beginning of the building of the Temple, which took place in the fourth year of Solomon's reign, occurred in the eleventh year of Hiram, it follows that the latter must have reigned several years contemporaneously with David, and may very well have reigned twenty years more, simultaneously with Solomon (chap. ix. 10 *sq.*).—The purpose of his embassy to Solomon was to congratulate him on his accession. (The Syriac adds וַיְבָרֶךְ אֹתוֹ, which Thenius, without reason, deems original). It was evidence that he desired Solomon to continue in the same friendly relations to him as David had maintained; and it was the easier for Solomon to make that request to him, mentioned in ver. 6. On vers. 7–9, comp. 2 Sam. viii. 13, and 1 Chron. xxii. 7–11. According to Ewald and Thenius, מלחמה, ver 3, is equivalent to enemies (surrounding him); but in Ps. cix. 3, סבב is also found with the double accusative: they compassed me about also with words of hatred. Upon לְשֵׁם יְהוָה, see on chap. vi.—פֶּגַע רָע, *i. e.*, an unhappy event, as, for instance, rebellion, famine, plague, or other suffering. It appears, from ver. 6, that the part of Lebanon where the best cedars for building grew, belonged to Phœnicia; it was on the northwestern part of the mountain range (Robinson, *Palest.*, vol. iii. pp. 588–594). The *Sidonians* are not the inhabitants of the city of Sidon simply, but of the entire district to which that part of Lebanon belonged. They knew how to hew and prepare wood for building, for they were skilled in ship-building beyond all other nations, and built their own houses also of wood (Schnaase, *Gesch. der bildenden Künste*, i. s. 249). We see from ver. 8 and chap. vii. 13, that Solomon desired cypress-wood, and a Phœnician artisan besides (comp. 2 Chron. ii. 7, 13).

Vers. 7–8. **And it came to pass when Hiram heard the words of Solomon, &c.** "The king of Tyre must have been very desirous of remaining on good terms with Israel, because the land of Israel was a granary for Phœnicia, and the friendship of the former was very important to the Phœnician commercial interests" (Keil). The chronicler adds to יְהוָה (2 Chron. ii. 12), the God of Israel that made heaven and earth. It does not follow, however, as older commentators say, that Hiram acknowledged this God as the only true God, or had become a proselyte. Polytheism is not exclusive: it allows each nation to retain its divinity, and recognizes his power, when it thinks it perceives his workings or his agency and benefactions, without rejecting the specifically national gods. When Hiram, therefore, names Solomon חָכָם, because he is about to build a temple to Jehovah, it is evident that the idea of wisdom (chap. v. 7), essentially includes that of religion (fear of God). *Cypress* is, indeed, inferior to cedar; but is also fitted for building, because "it is not eaten by worms, and is almost imperishable, as well as very light" (Winer). According to 2 Chron. ii. 16, the wood for building was sent down on rafts (on the Mediterranean) to Joppa (*i. e.*, Jaffa, coast-town on the borders of the tribe of Dan, Josh. xix. 46). Thence it was conveyed overland to Jerusalem, which is situated southeast thereof.

Vers. 9–13. **And thou shalt . . . . in giving food, &c.** Every year, as long as Hiram furnished building-materials and workmen, he received, for the sustenance of his court, 20,000 * (cor) measures

* The cor (כֹּר, *κορος*) equals the homer, and the homer was ten times the bath. 20,000 cors = 200,000 baths. This, at a rough calculation, amounts to 260,000 bushels = between 85 and 90,000 barrels. In liquids, again, 20 cors = 200 baths. This would amount to about 1,666 or 1,670 gallons of oil. The computation must be in the rough for obvious reasons,

of wheat, *i. e.*, by Thenius' reckoning, 38,250 Dresden bushels, from Solomon; also 20 (cor) measures of oil, *i. e.*, 100 casks, the cask containing 6 buckets. Pure oil is the finest, not going, after the usual fashion, through the press, but is obtained by pounding olives not quite ripe in a mortar (my *Symbolik des Mos. Cult.*, i. s. 419). The chronicler does not mention this delivery to the court of Hiram; but he gives, in 2 Chron. ii. 10, the reward of the laborers promised in our 6th verse: "I will give to thy servants, the hewers that cut timber, 20,000 (cor) measures of beaten wheat, and 20,000 (cor) measures of barley, and 20,000 baths of wine, and 20,000 baths of oil." The narrative here concerns a different thing, and no one has a right, as Thenius, to turn the 20 (cor) measures of the finest oil, destined for the court, into 20,000 of ordinary quality, and to suppose, with Bertheau, that the quantity of wine and oil is added by the chronicler according to his own whim. "Because the quantity of the wheat which Solomon gave Hiram for the use of the court was as large as that which he delivered for the Sidonian hewers of wood, it does not follow that we are justified in identifying the two accounts" (Keil). Besides, as Bertheau remarks, it appears that the account in the Chronicles does not, like our own, speak of an annual, but only of one delivery. The one account, as often happens, supplements the other. The addition, ver. 12, means: Solomon, by virtue of the wisdom he had received from God, came to the conclusion that it would be well to accept Hiram's propositions, and to enter into terms of friendship with him. Keil also thinks that the verse refers to the wise use he made of the working capacities of his subjects, which is referred to in the following verses, and that this verse, therefore, leads on to them.

Vers. 13–15. **And king Solomon raised a levy.** הֶעֱלָה, strictly *adscendere fecit*, to take out, to take away (Ps. cii. 25). All Israel does not mean here the whole territory, but, as often elsewhere, the people (chap. i. 20; viii. 65; xii. 16, 20; xiv. 13). In ver. 13 it is expressly said that these 30,000 men were (born) Israelites. Of these, 10,000 were always one month in service, and free the two following, when they cultivated their fields and took care of their houses. For *Adoniram*, see chap. iv. 6.—Besides these 30,000 men, who were not sufficient, there were (ver. 15) 70,000 that bore burdens, and 80,000 hewers in the mountains. חצב is, "according to all Versions, to be understood of stone-cutters alone, not of wood-cutters (Gesenius, Ewald), for the (easier) working in wood was sufficiently provided for by the changing 30,000 laborers" (Thenius). The בָּהָר can be understood only of Lebanon, from the context, and not, as Bertheau thinks, of the stone-quarries of the mountains. The 70+80,000=150,000 men (2 Chron. ii. 18) were not changed, but were in constant service; they were not Israelites, but, on the contrary, גֵּרִים (as the parallel passage alluded to expressly says), *i. e.*, strangers in the land of Israel; those of the Canaanites that remained when their land was conquered, and who were made servants (Judg. i. 27 to 30; Josh. xvi. 10). In contradistinction to these 30,000 Israelites, they are named, in chap. ix. 21, מַס עֹבֵד, *i. e.*, servants (2 Chron. viii. 7–9). The assertion of Ewald and Distel that these 150,000 servants were of the "people of Israel," and only "came later when the several buildings became enlarged," is utterly erroneous.—The total number of these workmen is great, but not surprising when we consider those times, when there was no machinery, and everything had to be done by the human hand. According to Pliny (*Hist. Nat.*, xxxvi. 12), 360,000 men had to work twenty years long at one pyramid (comp. Calmet on the place).

Ver. 16. **Beside the chief,** &c. Thenius: "literally the chief of the overseers, and hence the usual expression, overseer: but there are no subaltern overseers mentioned. How great, then, must the number of these have been, when the chief overseers numbered several thousands? The הנצבים לשלמה as a description of the substantive (Vatablus: *principes, qui præfecti erant*) is properly connected therewith by the *Stat. construct.* (comp. Ewald, § 287 b); so, the chiefs not reckoned, those who were appointed by (or for) Solomon, and who oversaw the works."—Chron. gives, instead of the number 3,300 (chap. ii. 17), 3,600, which Thenius thinks the right one, and he would have the text altered accordingly; but Ewald, on the other hand, declares our number to be correct, and that of Chron. wrong. But both numbers are right, as J. H. Michaelis has proved; the difference comes from the different division of the offices of superintendence. In chap. ix. 23, 550 שָׂרֵי הַנִּצָּבִים are named; these, with the 3,300, make 3,850. The parallel passage of Chron. (chap. viii. 10) mentions only 250, which, added to the 3,600, gives the same number, 3,850. This coincidence cannot be chance; the number 550 evidently contains the 250, and the 300, by which the 3,600 exceed the 3,300: 250 of the whole number of overseers were, as appears from the context in 2 Chron. viii. 10, native Israelites; but 300 were foreigners. The chronicler, however, no doubt includes the latter among the subaltern overseers (3,300+300=3,600), because they were not on the same footing with the Israelitish overseers.

Vers. 17–18. **And the king commanded.** The great stones should be יְקָרוֹת, not "weighty" (Thenius), for that is, of course, understood, nor "precious" (Keil), for why should the value of these stones be especially insisted on? but glorious, splendid, fine stones (Ps. xxxvi. 8; xlv. 9; Esth. i. 4). It is plainly said here, as in 2 Chron. iii. 3, that these stones were for the foundation of the building, and not, therefore, for the "consolidation of the Temple structure" (Thenius). Of the latter kind, which Josephus (*Arch.*, 15, 11, 3) so minutely describes, the Bible-text makes no mention. The אַבְנֵי גָזִית are nothing else than the splendid great stones, which were shaped after being hewn out of the quarry. Vulgate: *ut tollerent lapides grandes, lapides pretiosos, in fundamentum templi et quadrarent eos.*—The *Giblites*, ver. 18, are the inhabitants of גְּבַל (Josh. xiii. 5), a Phœnician town near the

as may be seen by reference to Smith's Dictionary, Amer. edition, N. Y., 1870, vol. iv., article WEIGHTS AND MEASURES. The reader can find some strange etymologies in the animadversions of Petavius upon Epiphanius' tractate on Weights and Measures. Epiph., *Opera*, edit. G. Dindorf. Leipsic, 1863, vol. iv. p. 95.—E. H.

part of Lebanon, where the largest cedars were found; *i. e.*, the Byblos of the Greeks. [The Engl. Ver has simply for this word, "stone-squarers."—E. H.] It appears, from Ezek. xxvii. 9, that the Giblites were remarkable for their technical skill in ship-building especially. Thenius reads וַיְגַבְּלוּם, and translates: "they wreathed the stones—put a border round them." Robinson stated (*Palest.*) that he had found stones carved in that manner. Böttcher rightly names these conjectures "ill-founded." Comp. what Keil, on the passage, says against them.

HISTORICAL AND ETHICAL.

1. *Solomon's undertaking to build a "house" to the name of Jehovah* was not an arbitrary, self-devised act, nor was it prompted solely through the wish and will of his father David, but rested upon a divine decision (v. 5), and, as already shown in the Introduction, § 3, has its inward, necessary reason in the development of the Old Testament theocracy. The assertion that "the thought to build a magnificent temple to Jehovah in Jerusalem proceeded from the sight of the temple-service of the Phœnicians and Philistines, and of their ostentatious cultus" (Duncker, *Gesch. des Alt.*, i. *s.* 397), is entirely without foundation and contradicts all historical records. When Stephen, in his discourse before the Sanhedrin, says: "Solomon built him an house. *But* the Most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands," &c. (Acts vii. 47), he does not mean in any way to blame Solomon's undertaking, or to say, as Lechler supposes (in his *Bibelwerk* on the place), the tabernacle was set up at God's will and command; but the design of building a temple and the completion of it is only a human design and a human performance. For that the Most High cannot be shut up within a house, Solomon himself expressly declared at the consecration of the Temple (1 Kings viii. 27). Stephen was opposing rather, from the stand-point of the New Testament, the stiff-necked, Jewish authorities, who, when the promised Messiah appeared, and the New Covenant was introduced along with Him, rejected the same, and clung with tenacious unbelief to the outward sign of the Old Covenant, to the Temple as the permanent central-point of all divine revelation. The accusation, he would say, that this Jesus of Nazareth would destroy this holy place, was in so far correct, as that He certainly had taken away the Old Covenant, and with it had abolished its sign and pledge (John ii. 19). For the day of the New Covenant, the temple at Jerusalem has lost all significance. For the dwelling of God in the midst of His people conditioned through natural descent, has become transferred into a dwelling in the midst of the people who are believers in Christ, to whom the apostle appeals: *Ye are* the temple of the living God, in you is fulfilled, in truth, the word spoken once by God unto Israel: I will dwell in them, and walk in them, and will be their God, and they shall be my people (2 Cor. vi. 16; Eph. ii. 21; 1 Pet. ii. 4, 5). To cling now to the Old Testament temple built by human hands, and to reject the living temple of the living God, Stephen pronounces as a striving against the Holy Ghost (Acts vii. 51).

2. *It is one of those significant divine providences* in which the history of Israel is so rich, that as in the development of the "sacred history" the time had come for "the house of the Lord" (or for for Jehovah), in the land which alone possessed those means and agencies for the execution of the undertaking in which Israel was wanting, a king ruled who entertained a friendly sentiment towards David and Solomon, and was prepared gladly for every assistance, so that even *heathen* nations, whether friendly or conquered, took part in the building of the house for the God of Israel, and so contributed indirectly to the glorifying of God. It was a setting forth in act of the word: "The earth is the Lord's, and all that therein is" (Ps. xxiv. 1); "For the kingdom is the Lord's, and He is governor among the nations" (Ps. xxii. 28); and "all the heathen shall serve Him" (Ps. lxxii. 11). And as Solomon's kingdom, as the most complete outward kingdom of peace, is frequently, with the prophets, a type of the Messiah's kingdom (see above, *Historical and Ethical* on chap. iv.), so do they behold, in the participation by the heathen in the building of the temple, a type and prophecy that the Messiah "shall build the temple of the Lord . . . and that they who are far off shall come and build in the temple of the Lord," &c. (Zech. vi. 12–15).

3. "*In the very time of their highest earthly splendor* the people of God, in respect of worldly art, pursuit, and skill, were inferior to the neighboring Phœnicians" (Gerlach). Solomon had no one amongst his people who could execute a work of art such as the temple was to be (v. 6). As to individual men (1 Cor. vii. 7), so also to nations, God has distributed divers gifts, powers, and destiny. It was not the office of Israel to exercise the arts, but to be the bearer of divine revelation, and to communicate the knowledge of the One living and all-holy God to all nations. *To this end* God has chosen this people out of all peoples; and their entire mode of life and occupation, yea, their whole development and history, are closely connected with it. To the achievement of this its destiny must even other nations serve, with the especial gifts and powers conferred upon them. High as the Phœnicians stood above Israel at that time in technical and artistic accomplishments (*cf.* Duncker, *a. a. O.*, *s.* 317–320), so nevertheless did Israel, notwithstanding all its sins and errors, excel the Phœnicians in the knowledge of the truth. Distinguished as Phœnicia was for its art and commerce, its religion was the most depraved, and its worship most crude (Duncker, *s.* 155 *sq.*).

[4. The genius of the Jewish people never achieved anything eminent in plastic art. Skill in architecture, and in sculpture, and in painting, seems to have been denied them. Their religion forbade it, and the hereditary feeling of the race was one of aversion to all arts of the "graver," to images and forms cut in stones or upon stone, and so in their want of appreciation of beauty of form they were unable to conceive of grand structures; and when Solomon's great buildings were undertaken, the skilled workmen and the artists connected with the work were foreigners. Dr. Prideaux quotes Josephus to this effect (*Antiq.*, Bk. 18. c. 7): "When Vitellius governor of Syria was going to pass through Judæa with a Roman army to make war against the Arabians, the chief of the Jews met him, and earnestly entreated him to

lead his army another way; for they could not bear the sight of those images which were in the ensigns under which they marched, they were so abominated by them. The ensigns therefore, for the sake of those images in them, were abominations to the Jews; and by reason of the desolations which were wrought under them by the Roman armies in conquered countries, they were called desolating abominations, or abominations of desolation, and they were never more so than when under them the Roman armies besieged and destroyed Jerusalem." Poetic feeling, the power of song, belonged to the race; and these, under God, have impressed themselves upon the heart of the nations, so that to this day the "songs of Zion" are sung in temples which the Jewish people never could have built.—E. H.]

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

Vers. 1–5. Solomon's purpose to build a house to the Lord. (1) The motive. Vers. 3–5. Not ambition, the love of glory, the love of pomp, but the divine will, and the charge of his father. In every weighty undertaking one must examine and be assured that it do not proceed from selfish motives, but is the good, acceptable, and perfect will of God (Rom. xii. 2). (2) The time, rest and peace (ver. 4). A time of peace is the time for building in general, but especially for building houses of God, which are a memorial of thanksgiving for the blessings of peace and prosperity. (3) The request for assistance, ver. 6. In important undertakings which are agreeable to the will of God, and propose His honor, we may and should not hesitate to trust in Him who directs men's hearts, like the water-brooks, to ask others for aid and assistance.—Vers. 1–2. True friends whom parents have gained, are an invaluable legacy for the children, for whom the latter cannot be sufficiently thankful (Eccles. xxx. 4). To a God-fearing man like David, if he have many enemies, yet there will never be wanting those who love him his life long, and who prize and honor him after his death, even in his children.—Ver. 3. With every son it should be his earnest business, and likewise pleasure, to fulfil the will of his father, and to complete the good work which he had begun, but could not carry out.—Ver. 4. When God has granted rest and peace, health and happiness, prosperity and blessing, an opportunity is thus at hand to do something for His great name.—Ver. 5. If it cannot come into the mind of every one to build a house of wood and stone unto the Lord, nevertheless, every one to whom God has given wife and children is in condition to vow and to build a house unto the Lord out of living stones. I and my house will serve the Lord (Josh. xxiv. 15).—Ver. 5. STARKE: One man needs another; on this account one should always serve and be amiable towards another, ministering to his good (1 Pet. iv. 10).—The superfluity of one must minister to the need of the others, in order that hereafter, also, the superfluity of the latter may serve for the wants of the former (2 Cor. viii. 14).—Israel knew not how to plan great buildings, especially works of art, but they did know how to serve the living God. Better to live without art than without God in the world.

Vers. 21–25. The heathen king Hiram: (1) His rejoicing over Solomon and his undertaking; (2) his praise of the God of Israel; (3) his willingness to help. How far stands this heathen above so many who call themselves Christians!—Ver. 6. WÜRT. SUMM.: When we see that it goes well with our neighbor, we should not envy him such prosperity, but rather rejoice with him and wish him good-luck. Since Hiram, although a heathen king, has done this, how much more does it befit Christians to act thus towards each other? It proves a noble heart when a man, free from envy and jealousy, sincerely praises and thanks God for the gifts and blessings which He grants to others.—STARKE: When God wishes well to a nation He bestows upon it godly rulers; but when He wills to chastise it he removes them. Hiram praises God that He bestows upon another people a wise monarch; how much more should that people itself thank God since He bestowed upon it a wise, viz., a pious king?—Ver. 9. How pleasing it is when the assistance of those who can help is not wrung from them, but offered in friendship, and they are ready and heart-willing to do what lies in their power (2 Cor. ix. 7).—WÜRT. SUMM.: No house, even though it be the church and temple of God, should be built to the hurt and oppression of one's fellow-creatures.—Ver. 12. The league between Solomon and Hiram: (1) Its object: a good, God-pleasing work begun in the service of God. Like kings and nations, even so individual men should unite only for such purposes. (2) The conditions of the league: each gave to the other according to his desire; neither sought to overreach the other; the compact was based upon honesty and fairness, not upon cunning and selfishness: only upon such compacts does the blessing of God rest, for unjust possessions do not prosper.

Vers. 13–18. The workmen at the temple-building: (1) Israelites. Solomon acted not like unto Pharaoh (Ex. ii. 23), he laid no insupportable burdens upon his people, but permits variety in the work, and Israel itself undertakes it without murmurs or complaints. How high do these Israelites stand above so many Christian communities, who constantly object or murmur when they are about to undertake any labor for their temple, or must needs bring a sacrifice of money or time. (2) Heathen (Ps. xxii. 29; vide *Historical and Ethical*). Jew and heathen together must build the temple of God, according to divine decree—a prophetic anticipation of fact as set forth Eph. ii. 14, 19–22; iii. 4–6.—SEILER: The great preparations of Solomon must naturally remind us of the far greater preparations and arrangements which God has made for the building of the spiritual temple of the New Testament. How many thousand faithful laborers, how many wise and good men, has he placed in every known part of the world; how has he furnished them with wisdom and many other gifts of the Spirit, so that the great work of the glorious building may be completed! . . . O God! do thou still prosper thy work! Help the faithful workers in thy Church, that they may enlighten many men to thy glorification, &c.—RICHTER: Well for us if we serve the true Solomon in the preparations for His eternal temple. But still better is it if we are ourselves prepared as living stones to shine forever in the living temple (1 Pet. ii. 45).

B.—*The accomplishment of the building of the Temple.*

Chap. VI. 1–38.

1 And it came to pass in the four hundred and eightieth[1] year after the child-
ren of Israel were come out of the land of Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon's
reign over Israel, in the month Zif, which *is* the second month, that[2] he began to
2 build the house of the Lord [Jehovah]. And the house which king Solomon
built for the Lord [Jehovah] the length thereof *was* threescore cubits, and the
3 breadth thereof twenty *cubits*,[3] and the height thereof thirty cubits. And the
porch before the temple of the house, twenty cubits *was* the length thereof,
4 according to the breadth of the house; *and* ten cubits *was* the breadth thereof
before the house. And for the house he made windows of narrow lights [with
fixed lattices[4]].
5 And against the wall of the house he built chambers[5] round about, *against*
the walls of the house round about, *both* of the temple and of the oracle: and
6 he made chambers round about. The nethermost chamber *was* five cubits
broad, and the middle *was* six cubits broad, and the third *was* seven cubits
broad: for without *in the wall* of the house he made narrowed rests round
7 about, that *the beams* should not be fastened in the walls of the house. And
the house, when it was in building, was built of stone made ready before it was
brought thither:[6] so that there was neither hammer nor axe *nor* any tool of
8 iron heard in the house, while it was in building. The door for the middle[7]
chamber *was* in the right side of the house: and they went up with winding
9 stairs into the middle *chamber*, and out of the middle into the third. So he built
the house, and finished it; and covered the house with beams and boards of
10 cedar. And *then* he built chambers against all the house, five cubits high: and
they rested on the house with timber of cedar.
11,[8] 12 And the word of the Lord [Jehovah] came to Solomon, saying, *Concerning*
this house which thou art in building, if thou wilt walk in my statutes, and exe-
cute my judgments, and keep all my commandments to walk in them; then will I
13 perform my word with thee, which I spake unto David thy father: And I will
dwell among the children of Israel, and will not forsake my people Israel.
14, 15 So Solomon built the house, and finished it. And he built the walls of the
house within with boards of cedar, both [from] the floor of the house, and [unto]
the walls[9] of the ceiling: *and* he covered *them* on the inside with wood, and cov-
16 ered the floor of the house with planks of fir. And he built twenty cubits on the
sides of the house, both [from] the floor and [unto] the walls with boards of
cedar: he even built *them* for it within, *even* for the oracle, *even* for the most
17 holy *place*. And the house, that *is*, the temple before[10] it, was forty cubits *long*.
18 And the cedar of the house within *was* carved with knops and open flowers: all
19 *was* cedar; there was no stone seen.[11] And the oracle he prepared in the house
20 within, to set there the ark of the covenant of the Lord [Jehovah]. And the ora-
cle in the forepart *was* twenty cubits in length, and twenty cubits in breadth, and
twenty cubits in the height thereof: and he overlaid it with pure gold; and *so*
21 covered the altar *which was of* cedar [overlaid the altar with cedar.[12]] So Solo-
mon overlaid the house within with pure gold: and he made a partition by the
22 chains of gold before the oracle; and he overlaid it with gold. And the whole
house he overlaid with gold, until he had finished all the house: also the whole
altar that *was* by the oracle he overlaid with gold.[13]
23 And within the oracle he made two cherubims *of* olive tree, *each* ten cubits
24 high. And five cubits *was* the one wing of the cherub, and five cubits the other
wing of the cherub: from the uttermost part of the one wing unto the uttermost
25 part of the other *were* ten cubits. And the other cherub *was* ten cubits: both
26 the cherubims *were* of one measure and one size [form]. The height of the one

27 cherub *was* ten cubits, and so *was it* of the other cherub. And he set the
cherubims within the inner house: and they stretched forth the wings of the
cherubims, so that the wing of the one touched the *one* wall, and the wing of the
other cherub touched the other wall; and their wings touched one another in
28, 29 the midst of the house. And he overlaid the cherubims with gold. And he
carved all the walls of the house round about with carved figures of cherubims
30 and palm trees and open flowers, within and without.[14] And the floor of the
house he overlaid with gold, within and without.[14]
31 And for the entering of the oracle he made doors *of* olive tree: the lintel *and*
32 side-posts *were* a fifth part *of the wall*. The two doors also *were of* olive tree; and
he carved upon them carvings of cherubims and palm trees and open flowers,
and overlaid *them* with gold, and spread gold upon the cherubims, and upon the
33 palm trees.[15] So also made he for the door of the temple posts *of* olive tree, a
34 fourth part *of the wall*. And the two doors *were of* fir tree: the two leaves of
the one door *were* folding, and the two leaves[16] of the other door *were* folding.
35 And he carved *thereon* cherubims and palm trees and open flowers: and cov-
ered [overlaid] *them* with gold fitted upon the carved work.
36 And he built the inner court with three rows of hewed stone, and a row of
cedar beams.
37 In the fourth year was the foundation of the house of the Lord [Jehovah]
38 laid, in the month Zif: and in the eleventh year, in the month Bul, which *is* the
eighth month, was the house finished throughout all the parts thereof, and accord-
ing to all the fashion of it. So was he seven years in building it.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

[1] Ver. 1.—[The Sept. here read *fortieth* instead of eightieth—for which there is no authority whatever. In the comparison of this date with Acts xiii. 20 it is to be remembered that the best critical editors, following the MSS. ℵ, A, B, C, etc., adopt the reading which places the words *καὶ μετὰ ταῦτα* after, instead of before, the clause *ὡς ἔτεσιν τετρακοσίοις καὶ πεντήκοντα*, so that the passage has no longer any chronological bearing upon the statement of the text.

[2] Ver. 1.—[The Vat. Sept. here interposes the omitted verses 17, 18 of the last chapter, and immediately subjoins verses 37, 38 of the present chapter. In the former verses both recensions have transformed בֹּנֵי, *builders*, into בְּנֵי, *sons*.

[3] Ver. 2.—[The missing אַמָּה *cubit* is supplied in five MSS., the Sept., and Vulg. The Vat. Sept. changes the last dimension to 25 instead of 30 cubits. The Alex. follows the Heb., which must be right, since all the dimensions are exactly double those of the tabernacle, the proportions being carefully preserved.

[4] Ver. 4.—[חַלּוֹנֵי שְׁקֻפִים אֲטֻמִים. The VV. have been much at a loss in translating this expression. The Chald., Vulg. (*fenestras obliquas*), and Syr., apparently intended to convey the idea of windows like those in the thick wall of a Gothic structure, or the loop-holes of a fortification, narrow on the outside and spreading within. Such may be the sense of the A. V. But the meaning given in the Exeg. Com. must be the true one. שְׁקֻפִים means only beams, cross-pieces; and אֲטֻמִים, from אָטַם, to shut close, means closed, and so fixed.

[5] Ver. 5.—For the k'tib יָצוּעַ the k'ri has in each case יָצִיעַ, which is doubtless right, since the word has here another than the usual sense (Thenius).—Bähr. [Keil considers that the *masc.* form denotes the whole wing of these stories; the *fem.* the single story of this wing.

[6] Ver. 7.—[אֶבֶן שְׁלֵמָה מַסָּע נִבְנָה] was built of "all unviolated stones of the quarry." Keil.

[7] Ver. 8.—In place of הַתִּיכֹנָה must necessarily be read (*cf.* ver. 6) הַתַּחְתֹּנָה, as Ezek. xli. 7 stands, and the Targum and the Sept. have read (Böttcher, Ewald, Merz., Thenius).—Bähr. [There is no various reading of the Heb. MSS., and the construction indicated by the text as it stands is sufficiently clear: the lower tier of chambers being easily provided for by doors, nothing is said of the entrance to them; but there was a winding stairway from the ground, with a door at its foot, leading to the middle chambers, and thence to the third story. Ezek. xli. 7 can hardly be considered as bearing on the point in question.

[8] Ver. 11.—[The Vat. Sept. omits here verses 11–14.

[9] Ver. 15.—The true reading, according to 2 Chron. iii. 7, is here as in ver. 16 קֹורוֹת [beams] not קִירוֹת [walls] (Thenius, Keil).—Bähr. [Accordingly our author translates by Balken, supported in this by the Sept. The emendation of the text (for which there is no manuscript authority) is required by the author's conception of the construction of the הֵיכָל as 30 cubits high in the interior. Against this is the fact that the height of the cedar wainscoting in ver. 16 is expressly said to have been 20 cubits, and yet no stone was seen (ver. 18). If now a chamber above is supposed, no emendation is necessary here, and verses 16 and 18 become consistent. The wainscoting was carried up 20 cubits to where the ceiling met the walls, and above this the "walls of the ceiling" or of the room above were left bare. A space of two cubits is thus left for the windows, and access to the "upper room" may have been had from the porch. 2 Chron. iii. 7 does not decide this point. In ver. 16 the words "from the ceiling," are to be supplied from the previous verse. In any case the A. V. is certainly wrong in covering the *floor* (which was of fir, ver. 15) with cedar.

[10] Ver. 17.—The לִפְנַי at the end of ver. 17 is to be understood either adverbially, *before* (De Wette), or adjectivially

anterior (Ewald, Keil), unless with Thenius, upon the authority of the Sept., we suppose that דְּבִיר has fallen out "That is the (so-called) *Hechal* before the Debir." Upon the figures upon the cedar, ver. 18 *sq*., see on ver. 29. In ver 19 בְּתוֹךְ is hence to be understood that the Debir was between the Hechal and the side structure. The difficult words וְלִפְנֵי הַדְּבִיר, ver. 20, Thenius will have removed from the text peremptorily, as a gloss placed here from ver. 17, although they are in all MSS. and ancient VV. Keil explains לִפְנֵי, with Kimchi, for the noun לִפְנִים, occurring also in ver. 29=the inner, inward. With סָגוּר, the same gold is designated which in Ex. xxv. 11 *sq*. is called טָהוֹר, and in 2 Chron. iii. 8 טוֹב (Vulg.: *purissimum*).—Bähr.

[11] Ver. 18.—[The Vat. Sept. omits ver. 18.

[12] Ver. 20.—[See *Exeg*. com.

[13] Ver. 22.—[The Sept. omit the last clause of this verse, and throughout this whole description omit many clauses and modify others.

[14] Ver. 29.—[That is in the Holy of Holies, and in the holy place, as the author notes in his translation.

[15] Ver. 32.—[The author, in his translation, adds: "and over the open flowers." The Vulg. has *et cætera*.—F. G.]

[16] Ver. 34.—Instead of קְלָעִים must here necessarily be read, with the Sept., צְלָעִים, which stands immediately before.—Bähr.

PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS.

The account of Solomon's temple, before us, together with the continuation in chap. vii. 13–51, is the oldest, and, at the same time, the most complete in our possession. Hence all knowledge of this world-historical building must adhere to it and found itself upon it. Next to it is the parallel account in 2 Chron. iii., iv., which agrees with it in all essential particulars, and, as indeed the most recent criticism acknowledges, comes from an ancient source, perhaps from the same with our own here. Although *significantly* briefer, it gives, nevertheless, some supplementary details the accuracy of which is undoubted, and which deserve all consideration. In addition to these two historical accounts, there is also the delineation in "vision" of the prophet Ezekiel (chap. xl. *sq*.), which indeed is very explicit in respect of the ground-plan and its measurement. In an earlier period this delineation was regarded as an essential completion and explanation of the historical accounts; later this was abandoned, because the prophet himself repeatedly explains it as "a vision" (chap. xl. 2; xliii. 2, 3); but most recently it has again been claimed that "it is a description which, upon the whole, differs only slightly and immaterially from the temple before the exile" (Thenius). And the reason assigned is twofold: the one is the style of the description, "thoroughly jejune, deficient in all taste, giving single measurements even to the width of the doors and the strength of the walls,"—the other is the object of it, which was, according to chap. xliii. 10, 11, that "the temple (then destroyed) should be rebuilt according to Ezekiel's model." To this, however, it must be objected, (*a*) That the statement of the numbers and the measure of the foundation, extending itself to the minutest particulars, instead of taking away from the description the character of a vision, rather confirms it. The exact measuring off and bounding according to definite numbers and measurements is, as has been fully shown in my *Symbolik des Mosaischen Kultus* (i. *s*. 127 *sq*.), the first requisite for every space and structure which has an higher, divine destination, and imparts thereto the impress of the divine. Hence, in the description of all holy places and buildings mentioned in Scripture, the measurement and numbers are so carefully given, and especially in the visions which concern the one divine edifice, ever first a heavenly being, a "man with a measuring-chain appears, who measures off everything" (Ezek. xl. 3, 5; xlvii. 3; Zech. ii. 5; Rev. xi. 1; xxi. 15). The more the measuring goes into detail, so much the more is the whole pronounced to be out and out divine. (*b*) In general it contradicts the being and nature of a vision to be nothing more than a pure building-description or an architectonic direction. But here, it must be added that it contains phases which do not admit of execution in reality, as, *e. g*., the great stream flowing from the temple emptying itself into the Dead Sea (Ezek. xlvii. 1–12). If the purpose of the entire delineation had been to serve as a building-direction for the reconstruction of the temple after the return from the captivity, it would be inexplicable that it should have been disregarded as well by Zerubbabel as later by Herod. (*c*) As little as the delineation is purely historical, just as little also is it, as many have supposed, a mere picture of the fancy. Rather, "as Ezekiel elsewhere loves the finishing out of long allegories (see chap. xvi. 23), so also we have here a very extended symbolical representation prophetically delivered by him" (Hävernick, *Commentar*, *s*. 623; *cf*. Umbreit, *Commentar*, *s*. 257). Certainly it rests upon an historical basis, yet not upon the temple as originally built by Solomon, but upon it after many additions and alterations, as it existed just before the captivity. Yet it is and must remain a vision, and, as such, it has an ideal character, from which every effort to separate with certainty the historical basis is futile (comp. Winer, *R.-W.-B*., ii. *s*. 570). It is abundantly clear that in the inquiry upon the temple of Solomon, only the most cautious use of Ezekiel's description should be made, and in no case is a *votum decessivum* due it.

Besides the biblical accounts, we have from antiquity only that of Josephus (*Antiq*. viii. 3), of which, however, Le Clerc properly says: *templum ædificat, quale animo conceperat, non quale legerat a Salomone conditum*. As he is not wholly trustworthy about the transactions of his own time, he is still less in matters of antiquity; particularly "when he enters upon special descriptions, and claims to communicate detailed incidents, and measurements of heights and size, we are fully justified in doubting the accuracy of his statements" (Robinson's *Palestine*, vol. i. p. 277). In no instance does he deserve confidence when he does not agree with the biblical accounts, and that which he adds, as, *e. g*., the levelling of Moriah and the surrounding it with a wall, he did not derive from good ancient sources. Just as untrustworthy are the statements of the later *rabbins* (comp. *Talmudischen Traktat Middoth*, *i. e*., Measure, Maimonides, Jak. Jehuda Leo, and others), since they

almost exclusively refer to the temple of Herod, which was very different from that of Solomon, and mingle both together, as also with that of Ezekiel.

The Christian literature respecting our temple is not insignificant. The older essays, from the middle of the sixteenth to the middle of the eighteenth century, like those of Villalpando, Lundius, B. Lamy, and others, embrace the Ezekilian and Herodian temples, without distinguishing sharply what belongs to the one or to the other. From the designs adduced by them, executed in Greco-Roman style, it is clear that their results are totally untenable. While, up to a given time, men believed that they must represent the temple to have been as grand and splendid as possible, in the period of the "illumination" (*Aufklärung*), they fell into the opposite extreme, and made it as small, unsightly, and insignificant as possible (J. D. Michaelis, Jahn, and others). But subsequently there has been a return to the historical, biblical account, and a simple adherence to it (Warnekros, Bauer, and others). The treatise composed by Hirt, simply in the interests of archæology and art-history (*Der Tempel Salomo's mit drei Kupfertafeln*, Berlin, 1809), gave occasion to later and more exact researches, in pure archæological and historico-æsthetic interests. Hereupon followed the *Inquiries* by J. Fr. Von Meyer (*Bibeldeutungen*, 1812, and *Blätter für höhere Wahrheit*, IX. and XI.); Stieglitz (*Geschichte der Baukunst*. Nürnberg, 1827); Grüneisen (*Revision d. jungsten Forschungen üb. den Salom. Tempel*. Kunstbl. 1831); Kopp (*Der Tempel Salomo's*, Stuttgart, 1839, *mit Abbild.*); Keil (*Der Tempel Salomo's*. Dorpat, 1839); Kugler (*Kunstgesch.*, Berlin, 1841); Schnaase (*Antiq. Bemerk. über den Salom. Tempel in der Gesch. der bild. Künste I.*, Düsseld. 1843); Romberg and Steeger (*Gesch. der Baukunst*. Leipzig, 1844); Merz (*Bemerk. über den Tempel Salomo's*. Kunstbl. 1844); my treatise: *Der Salom. Tempel mit Berücksicht. seines Verhältn. zur heil. Architektur überhaupt*. Karlsruhe, 1848); Thenius (*das vorexilische Jerusalem u. dessen Tempel, mit Abbild.*, *im Commentar zu den Büchern der Könige*. Leipzig, 1849); Winer (*R.-W.-B. Tempel zu Jerusalem*. Leipzig, 1848); Ewald (*die heiligen und königlichen Bauten Salomo's in der Gesch. Israels III*. Göttingen, 1853); Unruh (*das alte Jerusalem und seine Bauwerke*. Langensalza, 1861); Merz (*Tempel zu Jerusalem in Herzogs R. Encyclopädie XV*. Gotha, 1862).

[For the archæology and topography of the subject, see also Robinson's *Palestine*, vol. i. p. 280–300. Barclay, J. T., *The City of the Great King*. Philadelphia, 1858. Walter Merriam Editor, *The Recovery of Jerusalem*, &c., by Capt. Wilson, R. E., and Capt. Warren, R. E. New York, Appleton & Co., 1871. Part I. iii.–viii. and xii., also Part II. —E. H.]

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

Ver. 1. **And it came to pass in the four hundred and eightieth year**, &c. This chronological statement, the first which occurs in Scripture for the determination of an entire period, has given much occupation to the older chronologists, because it does not agree with the statements of the book of the Judges and with Acts xiii. 20. The Septuagint also has 440 instead of 480. If one add together the chronological figures of the book of the Judges, the result is, for the period of the judges alone 410 years, to which must be added 65 for Moses and Joshua, 60 for Saul and David, and 4 for Solomon, so that there are 539 years in all. According to Acts xiii., the period of the judges embraced about 450 years; 65 for Moses and Joshua, 40 for Saul (ver. 21), 40 for David, and 4 for Solomon reckoned in, would give in all 599 years. Still farther, Josephus, when he speaks of the building of the temple (*Antiq.* viii. 3, 1), instead of 480 gives 592 years; and in two other places (*Antiq.* xx. 10; *Contra Apion.* ii. 2) 612 years. Most recently Lepsius and Bunsen have used the Egyptian and Assyrian chronology against the number 480, and have sought to prove at length, that it is to be reduced to some three hundred and odd years. Finally, Bertheau and Böttcher maintain, with reference to 1 Chron. vi. 35 *sq.*, where the generations of the high-priests from Aaron to Ahimaz, a contemporary of David, are given, the number 480 is the sum-total of twelve generations, 40 years to the generation (40 × 12=480); consequently there is no chronologically exact, but rather a probable, round number. Uncertain and doubtful, all things considered, as the statement of the text may seem, we must nevertheless, with Ewald (*Gesch. Israels*, ii. *s.* 462 *sq.*), Winer (*R.-W.-B.* ii. *s.* 327), Thenius (*Commentar*, *s.* 56–58), and Rösch (*das Datum des Tempelbaues im Ersten Buche der Könige. Studien u. Kritiken*, 1863, iv. *s.* 712–742) adhere to it because, (*a*) the precision of the statement is a voucher for its accuracy. Not only is the whole number of the years given, but also the year of the reign of the king, even the month itself; and since after the captivity the months had other names, in order that the month itself might not be mistaken for any other, to the name Zif (זִו) it is expressly added, "which is the second month." In all Scripture there is no chronological statement more carefully prepared; and hence, if any one can claim authority, it is this. It is unnecessary, therefore, to correct it by others more or less vaguely and generally acknowledged, but we are justified, on the contrary, in considering it as the standard for the rest. This holds especially (*b*) in reference to the chronological figures of the period of the judges, which are not critically and historically above all suspicion, and cannot be added together simply, but must be understood as contemporaneous in part, and standing side by side, even if it be not demonstrably clear in how far, and with what particular numbers, this must be done. Compare the different attempts at a proof by Keil (*Dörptische Beiträge*, ii. *s.* 303 *sq.*, and on Judges iii. 7), Tiele (*Chronologie des A. T.* *s.* 54), Werner (*Rudelbach's Zeitschrift*, 1844, iii. and 1845, i.), and Cassel (*Das Buch der Richter im Bibelwerk*, *Einl.* *s.* xvi.). (*c*) The number 450 (Acts xiii. 20) is not given as chronologically precise, but only as approximate (ὡς), and nothing can be determined by it.* The numbers of the period of the judges appear simply to be added together in it, and the 40 years of Eli also (1 Sam. iv. 18) are computed with it. (*d*) The statements of Josephus can all the less be taken into account, since he contradicts himself, and gives at one time 592, and

* [See on this verse Lachmann's text on the authority of A, B, C, which removes the chronological difficulty. Cf *Textual and Grammatical* on ver. 1.—E. H.]

at the other 612. The first number, adopted also by the Chinese Jews, rests doubtless upon the rabbinic notion that in the 480 years those only are to be reckoned in which Israel was under Israelitish judges, and that those on the other hand are to be thrown out (amounting in all to 111), when the nation was subject to foreign heathen rulers—480+111=591. This conception of the matter is destitute of all proof. The reason for the number 612 is unknown. (*e*) The calling in question of the number 480 upon the ground of the Egyptian or of the Assyrian chronology, proceeds upon the assumption that this chronology is assured, which, it is known, is by no means the case, and which can only be restored through a series of combinations and of unproved hypotheses. How feebly the definite statement of our text can be attacked by it, has been thoroughly and completely shown by Rösch on the place. (*f*) The reading of the Sept. (440 instead of 480) is not supported by any ancient version or MS., and rests either upon the confounding of the sign פ=80 with מ=40, or upon some peculiar and even arbitrary reckoning. (*g*) The view that 480 is the product of 12×40, is inadmissible, because in that event the four years of Solomon's reign are not in the estimate, and must be added to the 480 years, while in fact they are included within them. Had the reckoning been made according to generations, the author would have written 484. Apart from this, twelve generations are supplied us from 1 Chron. vi. only when Aaron himself, who, according to Exod. vii. 7; Numb. xxxiii. 38 *sq.*, was eighty-three years old at the time of the departure from Egypt, is taken into the account. Besides, there is no proof that in the computation of long periods of time human age is regularly set down at forty years. As Moses was 120 years, Aaron 123, Joshua 110, Eli 98, &c., and generally, a great age was then usual, the average of human life must certainly be placed higher than at forty years. Comp. Thenius.

Ver. 2. **And the house which king Solomon, &c.** The place where the temple was built, was, according to 2 Chron. iii. 1, Mount Moriah (comp. 2 Sam. xxiv. 18 *sq.*), which our author presupposes as sufficiently known. [The uneven rock of Moriah had to be levelled, and the inequalities filled by immense substructions of "great stones," "costly stones," "hewed stones." Stanley, *Jewish Church.*—E. H.] In vers. 2–10 the measurement and single portions of the structure are given. The measurements are determined according to the *cubit*, and indeed the older (2 Chron. iii. 3), which Thenius reckons at one foot six inches Rhenish, and one foot four inches Paris, measure [= 1 foot six inches Eng. measure]. Here, and in all the subsequent statements, they refer to the interior spaces. The component parts of the structure are the *house*, the *porch*, and the "*chambers round about*" (Umbau). The first is the building proper, to which both others are attached as additional and subsidiary. The whole was situated according to the points of the compass. The front, or entrance-side, was towards the east, the rear wall was towards the west, the two sides towards the south and north (1 Kings vii. 39; Ezek. viii. 16), which also was the position of the tabernacle (Ex. xxvi. 18 *sq.*; xxxvi. 33 *sq.*). The main building, the *house* (הַבַּיִת), was built of thick stone walls (vers. 6, 7, and had within *two compartments*: the front is called in ver. 3 "the temple of the house" (הֵיכַל הַבַּיִת), and the rear, in ver. 5, "the oracle" (הַדְּבִיר). The word הֵיכָל comes from the Arabic, to be large, high (2 Chron. iii. 5), hence the front compartment was "the great house" (הַבַּיִת הַגָּדוֹל) in contradistinction with the rear, which was the shorter half, and also lower. The Vulg., after Jerome, translates the word דְּבִיר by *oraculum*, *i. e.*, *oraculi sedes*, and the *Lex. Cyrilli* explains the δαβίρ of the Sept. by *χρηματιστήριον*. It is, however, not derived from דִּבֵּר = to speak, but from דָּבַר in its primary signification = to adjoin, to follow after (comp. Dietrich in Gesen.), and signifies, also, simply the compartment in the rear, following upon the large room. The *windows* which the house had (ver. 4), were certainly placed high, where it overtopped the "chambers round about" (Umbau) with their three stories. How many windows there were, whether upon all the four sides of the house, or only upon three, or only upon the two length-walls, we do not gather from the text. The designs of Thenius and Keil place them all around the house, with the exception of the façade, where the porch was. Nor is the size of the windows given, but it is added שְׁקֻפִים אֲטֻמִים, *i. e.*, not "wide within, narrow without" (Luther, after the Chald.), but "windows with closed beams, *i. e.*, windows the lattice of which could not be opened and shut at pleasure as in ordinary dwelling-houses, 2 Kings xiii. 17; Dan. vi. 11" (Keil). The lattice consisted of strong cross-pieces, and not of wickerwork. The window-opening may have been, certainly, according to the account of the Chaldee and of the rabbins, inasmuch as the walls were very thick, wider on the inside than on the outside, as is the case in the windows of Egyptian buildings, and answers for the purposes of admitting light and air, and of letting off smoke, only there is nothing of it in the words of the text.

Vers. 3–4. **And the porch before the temple of the house, &c.** As the word אולם comes from אול, *i. e.*, to go before, it signifies also a projection: but we are not, as in 1 Kings vii. 6, where הָעַמּוּדִים (pillars) is expressly added, to represent it as a portico or a colonnade. It stretched across the entire façade of the house, and its length was equal to the breadth of the house, viz., 20 cubits. Its breadth, *i. e.*, its depth, measured 10 cubits. The text does not mention the height, but 2 Chron. iii. 4 gives it at 120 cubits, which is certainly incorrect; for, as Thenius properly remarks, (1) "a structure of this sort could not have been designated as an אולם, but must have been called a מִגְדָּל (tower); (2) the chimney-like proportions: 20, 10, 120, are not only inconsistent with (the notion of) the pylon of a temple, but are also statically impossible. [If it were but 10 cubits (15 feet) deep, it seems impossible that it could have been 120 cubits (180 feet) high: and the theory of Mr. Ferguson that the height refers to a "superstructure on the temple," would make the temple itself a very grotesque building. See the art., however, on the TEMPLE in Smith's *Dictionary of the Bible*, vol. iv. New York, 1870.—E. H.] From

these considerations we cannot, with justice, suppose the chronicler to be guilty of arbitrary exaggeration, but we must rather suspect the text of corruption, which is all the more probable, since the verse in question bears even elsewhere marks of corruption." According to v. Meyer's probable conjecture, instead of מֵאָה וְעֶשְׂרִים, we should read: אַמּוֹת עֶשְׂרִים, *i. e.*, 20 cubits (in Ezek. xlii. 16 also, whether the reading be אמות or מאית is uncertain). The latter is adopted by the Syr., the Arab., and the Sept. (Cod. Alexand.). Thenius and Bertheau maintain, on the other hand, that as the house was 30 cubits high, the sign ל=30 was originally in the text, but that through the obliteration of the upper portion of the letter it became כ=20. And certainly, in behalf of the supposition that it was 30 cubits high, we may urge, in part, the absence of any statement of the height in our text, which is the more easily explicable if the height of the "porch" and of the temple were the same, and, in part, the circumstance that the side-building was 20 cubits high on the outside, consequently the "porch" would not have been especially distinctive or prominent had it been of the same height (Keil). That the "porch" had thick stone enclosure-walls with a wide entrance (Thenius), cannot be concluded from the obscure passage of Ezek. xli. 26; still less is the view established that each side-wall had a window. To me it seems that the "porch" had only side-walls and a ceiling, but to have been entirely open in front, so that windows were unnecessary. The extremely inadequate description of the "porch," contrasted with the very careful description of the house and of both its compartments, can only be founded in the fact that it did not belong especially, or as an integral part, to the sanctuary, but was only a subordinate addition thereto.

Ver. 5. **And against the wall of the house he built**, &c. The word יָצִיעַ comes from יָצַע *sternere*, to spread or strew something for a bed, and means literally *stratum*, a bed (Ps. lxiii. 6; Job xvii. 13). Symmachus renders it by *κατάστρωμα*. So this building was very properly called, because it spread itself out against the lower half of the house 30 cubits high, and, as it were, lay upon it. יָצִיעַ is gen. com. and stands as collective masculine in vers. 5 and 10, of the whole of the side-structure ("chambers"), but it is feminine in ver. 6, when the single, or three stories of the same, one over the other, are mentioned (see Gesen. on the word). The אֶת before קִירוֹת is scarcely the sign of the accus., "reaching to the walls" (Keil), but a preposition, and defines more particularly the preceding עַל—קִיר, as indeed both prepositions elsewhere are synonymous (comp. Ps. iv. 7 with lxvii. 2). If it can mean simply "in connection with the walls" (Thenius), then the statement is that (Umbau) "the chambers round about" were affixed to the walls. It went round the entire house, so that the two side-walls of the porch above stood free, and caused the latter to appear all the more distinctive. The three *stories* one above the other of this side-structure (ver. 5), had each צְלָעוֹת, *i. e.*, literally "ribs" [joists, so Bp. Horsley or the place.—E. H.], which can mean nothing else than that they were "divided by partitions into distinct compartments" (Merz). It comes to the same thing when Keil, who rejects "ribs" as the meaning, translates nevertheless "side-chambers." According to Ezek. xli. 6, where, however, the reading is not entirely certain, the number of these chambers was 33: according to Josephus, with whom the moderns agree, there were 30—viz., 12 upon each side-wall of the house, and 6 upon the rear-wall.—Ver. 6 states how the entire side-structure ("chambers round about") were built into the chief-structure, the house itself. The wall of the latter had, upon the outside, *rests* (מִגְרָעוֹת, literally contractions, lessenings ["for he placed stays with retractions against the house." Bp. Horsley.—E. H.]). It was thickest at the ground, and kept this thickness to the height of five cubits; then succeeded a *rest* (like a settle), which was one cubit broad. Then again, after an elevation of five cubits, there was another *rest*, one cubit broad; there was also another *rest* of like height and breadth. Upon these *rests* the ends of the beams, which served for the ceiling of each story, were laid, and had in them their support. The outer wall of the side-structure had no rests, but was built perpendicularly; hence, as our verse states, the uppermost story was one cubit broader (deeper) than the middle, and the middle again was one cubit broader than the lowermost. The wall also of the house must have been very thick below—at least four cubits, for its thickness above the side-structure, bearing in mind the rests, amounted certainly to one cubit. Thenius and Keil place the thickness at six cubits, but this seems unnecessary. The reason given for this mode of construction is, "*that the beams should not be fastened into the walls of the house*," *i. e.*, that the large, costly stones should remain whole and uninjured (שְׁלֵמָה), that no holes should be cut into them for the purpose of inserting the ends of the ceiling-beams. Ver. 7, which is a parenthesis, refers to this, and means that "all the stone-work had been so prepared in advance, that in the actual putting up of the building, stone-cutting was no longer necessary" (Thenius). According to ver. 8, the entire side-structure had but one *door*, which was placed on the south side: whether in the middle (Thenius) or at the foremost apartment near the porch (Ewald, Merz) is uncertain; probably the latter. That a door within the house opened into the side-structure, has been erroneously concluded from Ezek. xli. 5. The walls of the house were nowhere broken through, and certainly the historical account knows nothing of such a door. The winding stairway obviously was within the side-structure. The word צֵלָע in ver. 8, and in Ezek. xli. 5, 9, 11, is like יָצִיעַ in vers. 5 and 10, in the singular, and stands collectively for the whole of the side-chambers.—The text says nothing of the perpendicular outside wall of the side-structure. Thenius appeals to Ezek. xli. 9 for the supposition that this was a stone-wall five cubits thick. In that case it would have been as thick as the side-chambers of the lower story were broad (ver. 6): and why should the wall of these have been so thick? Then, too, the ceiling-beams of these chambers would, of necessity, have been inserted into these walls, which is inconsistent with ver. 7. Hence

it seems to me much more probable that this exterior wall, as indeed the entire side-structure, which was only subordinate in any event, was built of cedar.—The text does not state the purpose or design of these "chambers round about." They served for the preservation of temple utensils and temple stores (Keil), perhaps also of consecrated gifts (Ewald); but they were scarcely "expensively furnished bedrooms" (Thenius).

Vers. 9–10. **And so he built the house, &c.** In roofing, the building of the house was ended. But we must not, as many formerly, and even Hirt himself now, fancy a gable-roof. The silence of the text respecting its form allows us to presuppose that it was, as with all oriental buildings, a flat roof furnished with a parapet (comp. Deut. xxii. 8). וַיִּסְפֹּן is not, with Merz, to be understood of the wainscoting, but, with Keil, of the roofing, for the account of the former begins first at ver. 15. גֵּבִים are not planks, as the word for the most part is translated, but beams, as such were certainly indispensable for roofing. שְׂדֵרֹת are scarcely "hewn cedar-timbers" (Thenius), but boards which were laid upon the beams. The בָּאֲרָזִים refer to both the preceding. Without doubt this cedar covering was overlaid with firm flooring, perhaps even with stone slabs. Thenius very unnecessarily wishes גַּבִּים to be read for גֵּבִים, and then suggests "a flat roof vaulting" but in the ancient Orient there were never any arched roofs. In ver. 10 הַיָּצִיעַ is again collective, for, according to it, not the whole side-structure, but each of its three stories, was five cubits high inside. The mention of the side-structure here is in reference to the roofing. While ver. 9 speaks of the roofing of the house, ver. 10 states how it is related to that of the side-structure. Therefore the height is again mentioned, with the observation, "and he fastened the house with timber of cedar." If Solomon be the subject with the preceding וַיִּבֶן (Thenius), or יָצִיעַ (Keil), the sense is: the roofing of the three stories (five cubits high each) of the side-structure was done with cedar timbers, which, with their ends, lay upon the rests of the walls of the temple, and likewise united the side-structure with the house, thus making it a complete whole. Entirely false is the translation: he covered the house with cedar-wood (Gesenius), as if the stone-walls were overlaid, upon the inside, with cedar, of which there is nowhere the slightest trace. That the roof of the side-structure, moreover, was horizontal, level, like that of the house itself, scarcely requires mention.

Vers. 11–19. **And the word of the Lord came to Solomon, &c.** The interruption of the description of the temple, by these verses, shows plainly that what is therein stated took place during the progress of the building. From chap. ix. 2, comp. with iii. 5, it is clear that we have to think not of a revelation of Jehovah, but of a divine promise communicated through a prophet (perhaps Nathan), such as happened to David (2 Sam. vii. 12 *sq.* and 1 Chron. xxii. 10), to which reference is made in ver. 12. Solomon thereby obtained the promise that Jehovah, as He had formerly dwelt among the people in a "tabernacle," for the sign and pledge of the covenant established with Israel, would dwell in the house about to be built, and that the covenant-relation also should continue, if the king upon his part should keep the covenant, and walk in the ordinances of Jehovah. Such a promise necessarily encouraged and strengthened Solomon in his great and difficult undertaking, as it reminded and urged him to the performance of his sacred obligations.

Vers. 14–19. **So Solomon built the house, &c.** Ver. 14 resumes the description of the building, which had been interrupted by vers. 11–13, and which from ver. 15 is applied to its interior. The overlaying of walls with wood, which again was covered with metal, and gold in particular, is an old Oriental custom, extending from Phœnicia to Judea (comp. Müller, *Archæology*, translated by John Leitch, p. 214 *sq.*; Schnaase, *Gesch. der bild. Künste*, i. *s.* 160; Weiss, *Kostümkunde*, i. *s.* 365). The covering with gold was not mere gilding, but consisted of thin gold plates (*Symb. des Mos. Kultus*, i. *s.* 60). According to 2 Chron. iii. 6, the walls also were adorned with precious stones, which is credible enough since these were expressly named amongst the objects which Solomon obtained in abundance from Ophir (chap. x. 11), and it was the custom in the Orient to make use of them in buildings and utensils (comp. the same, *s.* 280, 294, 297).—Ver. 16 says explicitly and distinctly that the main space was separated from the *Debir* by a cedar wall; hence surely it is an error upon the part of Thenius when, by an appeal to Ezek. xli. 3, he supposes, in place of this wall, a stone-wall two cubits thick covered with wood and gold. Even in the tabernacle of the covenant it was not a plank-wall (Ex. xxvi. 15), but a curtain merely (ver. 33) which separated its two divisions from each other. Even the massively-constructed Herodian temple had no such wall, of which besides, the Rabbins, according to Josephus (*Bell. Jud.* i., 5, 5, 5), knew nothing (Lightfoot, *Descrip. temp. Hieros.*, chap. xv. 1). The cedar wall, for the rest, since it reached from the ground to the beams of the ceiling, must have been thirty cubits high. The addition "לְקֹדֶשׁ הַקֳּ to לִדְבִיר shows the design of the latter, and proves that the דְּבִיר does not mean *oraculum* or *locutorium*, for had it this signification, its object would have been denoted by the word itself, and no explanatory addition would have been necessary.—According to vers. 16–20 the two divisions of the house were of the following dimensions: the room at the farthest end took off from the entire length of the building (which was 60 cubits), twenty, and from its height (30 cubits), twenty. It was also, as is expressly stated in ver. 20, twenty cubits long, broad, and high, and consequently was a complete cube in shape. The front compartment was forty cubits long, twenty broad, and thirty high. For since its breadth and height are not given here (ver. 17), it must have had the breadth and height of the house mentioned above (ver. 2), otherwise, as in the case of the rear compartment, it would have been expressly noticed. That the front compartment was not only longer, but higher also, larger generally than the rear, its name even proves הֵיכָל (see above on ver. 2). It is hence decidedly incorrect when Kurtz and Merz

suppose that the front compartment was only twenty cubits high, that over the entire house there was an upper room ten cubits high fitted up for the conservation of the reliques of the tabernacle of the covenant, and that this room is designated by what 2 Chron. iii. 9 names הָעֲלִיּוֹת, and which the Sept. renders by τὸ ὑπερῷον. The following considerations make against this view: (1) How could one have reached this supposed upper chamber? Not from the side-structure, for the ceiling of its uppermost story did not reach to the floor of the supposed "upper room:" the thick walls of the house, moreover, had no door above the level of the side-structure. Just as little could one have reached it from the interior of the house, for in neither compartment was there a stairway which led thither: there was no opening in the ceiling. (2) The windows of the house (ver. 4) were above the side-structure, which (the ceilings of the three stories being taken into the account) was certainly eighteen cubits high: there remained, therefore, the house being thirty cubits high, but twelve cubits for the windows. If now from these twelve cubits, ten are allowed for the upper room, what space remains for the windows, which certainly were not very small, and which were necessary to admit light and air into the house? (3) From the extremely abrupt words of the Chronicles, "And the alioth he covered with gold," it follows only that alioth (upper chambers) were somewhere, but not where they were; and since the Chronicles in its abbreviated description says nothing of the entire side-structure with its stories and chambers, we have at least as much right, with Grüneisen, to suppose the alioth to be the chambers of the side-structure, as an upper room extending the length of the whole building, and which is nowhere else mentioned. The reliques of the tabernacle could easily have been preserved in the several chambers of the side-structure. [For the other view, see Art. *Temple*, above cited. But our author seems to me to have fully disposed of this doubtful matter. It would seem impossible from our author's reasoning that there should have been a large upper chamber over the "holy place."—E. H.] If now we must, according to all the accounts, regard the front compartment as thirty cubits high, the question still remains respecting its relation to the rear, which was but twenty cubits high. Stieglitz and Grüneisen are of the opinion that the rear compartment, viewed externally, was ten cubits lower than the front, which was the case also with Egyptian temples [and like the chancel in the so-called Gothic church.—E. H.]. But ver. 2 conflicts with this: it gives the height of the entire house at thirty cubits, and does not limit it to the front compartment. Apart from all other considerations, we cannot appeal to the adytum of the Egyptian temples, because it was not connected with the fore-temple, but was separated from it by chambers and passages, and was an independent structure (Müller, *Archæology*, p. 190 *sq.*; Leitch (German edit.) *s.* 258; Schnaase, *Gesch. der bild. Künste*, i. *s.* 392). We must certainly assume that there was a room over the rear compartment ten cubits high. Böttcher thinks this was open in front and only having chains hanging as its partition (ver. 21); in itself, "very improbable" this (Winer), and besides it is against ver. 16, according to which the cedar wall before the holy of holies went from the floor to the beams of the ceiling. Besides, ver. 20 does not say that the cedar wall was only twenty cubits high, but only brings into prominence the fact that on all its sides the holy of holies measured twenty cubits. As the room in question was inaccessible, Ewald rightly observes that it "had been left apparently entirely empty." It had no especial design, and was what it was simply that the holy of holies might be a perfect cube. Upon this point more will be remarked farther on, in respect of the significance of the temple. For particular words on vers. 17–20, see above, *Textual and Gram.*

Vers. 20–22. **And covered the altar,** &c. And he overlaid the altar with cedar. Thus only should we translate the concluding words of the 20th verse, and not, with Le Clerc, J. D. Michaelis, and others—he overlaid the altar of cedar, namely, with gold like the rest. Apart from the fact that מִזְבֵּחַ is without the article, and not in the construct, the "gold" is first mentioned in the concluding words of the 22d verse. There the altar is more specifically referred to by אֲשֶׁר־לַדְּבִיר, which cannot mean "which belonged to the Debir," in the sense that it stood within it; for the holy of holies was designed only as the receptacle of the ark of the covenant (ver. 19), and never had an altar. The altar of incense in the holy place is meant. Its position was "in front of the curtain" (לִפְנֵי) (Exod. xl. 26), *i. e.*, "before the ark of the testimony" (Exod. xl. 5), and therewith also "before Jehovah" (Lev. xvi. 12, 18), enthroned above the ark. It stood also in special relation to the Debir. If now this altar were "overlaid" with cedar, we are shut up to the supposition that "the body of it was of stone" (Keil). But this was the peculiar, distinguishing feature of the altar of burnt-offering, which was required to be composed of earth or of stones (Exod. xx. 24, 25), and the frame of which, consequently, was filled with the same material (comp. *Symbol. des Mos. Kult.*, i. *s.* 481, 488). The much smaller altar of incense was a simple frame with a covering, which was wanting in the altar of burnt-offering (Exod. xxx. 1–3). In distinction with the latter, it is named in Ezek. xli. 22, "the altar of wood." The body of it could not have been of stone. These difficulties disappear only through the translation of the Sept.: *καὶ ἐποίησε θυσιαστήριον κέδρον.* It read also וַיַּעַשׂ instead of וַיְצַף, which Thenius holds to be genuine. In that case the absence of the article in מִזְבֵּחַ is explained, as well also as the concluding observation in ver. 22: And the whole altar [of cedar] before the Debir, he overlaid with gold.

The words in ver. 21 are obscure and difficult: וַיְעַבֵּר (**and he made a partition**) **by the chains of gold before the oracle** (Debir). Thenius is of opinion that the subject here, viz., אֶת־הַפָּרֹכֶת is omitted, and then translates, "he hung the curtain before the Debir with gold chains." This curtain was before the door of the latter, and was hung in such a manner that it could be moved this way and that, "by means of golden chainlets each provided with an end-ring, upon a round stick

upon which these rings were made to slide." But this mysterious chain-work, as Winer names it, is by no means "forever explained and done with," by this suggestion. For, according to it, the chief thing in the text, the mention of the curtain, is wanting. But no MS. nor any ancient version names this supposed missing object. And if any one wish to insert it, then must the words "and he overlaid it with gold" refer to the curtain; and this is impossible. Besides, the text says only "with chains," and does not know anything either of end-rings or of round sticks, both of which are essential, and far more necessary than the "chainlet" for the sliding, this way and that, of the curtain. With De Wette, Gesenius, Ewald, and Merz, יעבר is to be translated, he bolted, as in Chaldaic עברא means a bolt, and for בְּרִיחִם, *i. e.*, bolt (Exod. xxvi. 26), the Chaldee has עַבְרִין. But then the question is, what was bolted? According to Calmet and others, it was only the door of the Debir, which had two leaves. But in that case it would have been necessary to take away the chains on the day of Atonement—a thing nowhere hinted at, and in itself highly improbable. Obviously the bolting chains were not a movable but a fixed contrivance running across the entire wall. They held together the parts of the wall made of cedar, like the bolts on the planks of the tabernacle (Exod. xxvi. 26), and likewise represented the Debir as a barred, closed room. A further argument for this: רתוקות comes from רתק, which means to bind, to chain together, and in Arabic to shut up, and the expression צָפוּן the concealed, the closed, is used by Ezek. (vii. 22) of the holy of holies. The supposition of v. Meyer and Grüneisen, that there was in the cedar wall an opening above the door, which like the capitals of the two brazen columns was covered (chap. vii. 15 *sq.*; 2 Chron. iii. 16) with a net or lattice-work, is just as untenable as that the chains served the purpose of decoration only (Jahn).—In ver. 22 all that had been said hitherto about the gilding, [done with thin plates and not with gold-leaf.—E. H.] is again brought together and emphasized. It is by no means declared by the expression "the whole house," that the interior of the porch was gilt (Thenius): it refers only to the holy place and to the holy of holies, since the porch is explicitly distinguished from the house (Keil).

Vers. 23-28.—**And within the oracle** (Debir) **he made two chambers, &c.** The reason why olive-wood was used in the construction of these figures was owing to its firmness and durability. In Greece it was employed to make images of the gods (Winer, *R.-W.-B.*, ii. *s.* 172). The etymology of the word כְּרוּב is to this day so variously stated, that nothing reliable can be gathered from it respecting the form and shape of the cherubim. From Exod. xxv. 18 *sq.* and xxxvii. 7 *sq.*, we gather only thus much—that the cherubim over the ark had two wings, and that their faces were opposite each other and directed towards the ark. Nor do we learn anything more from our text and from 2 Chron. iii. 10–13. It is only said that each was ten cubits high, and that each of the wings measured five cubits; that they stood upon their feet, and that their faces were turned towards the house, *i. e.*, towards the large compartment, and also how that those upon the ark of the covenant could have had but one face.

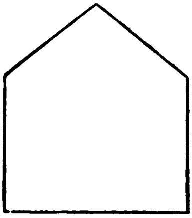
Ezekiel, on the other hand, in his vision of the throne of God and of the temple, gives something more definite. According to the first and tenth chapters the cherubim were חַיּוֹת, *i. e.*, ζῶα, living creatures (not θῆρες, wild beasts) with four wings and four faces. On the right side the faces were those of a man and of a lion, on the left those of a bull and of an eagle. The human element seems to have preponderated in their form (ver. 5). But according to chap. xli. 18, the cherubim represented upon the walls and doors of the temple, between palm-trees, had but two faces, the one of a man and the other of a lion. The former were on the right side and the latter on the left. The apocalyptic vision of the throne, Rev. iv. 7, in which the four types of creatures composing the cherub are separated and stand round the throne, having six wings each, rests upon that of Ezekiel. From everything we have, it appears that the cherub was not a simple but a complex or collective being; and when he has now one, then two, then again four faces, or two, or four, or six wings; when, too, the four types of which he is composed are separated side by side, so we gather still farther that he had no unalterable, fixed form, but that one element or another was prominent or subordinate according to circumstances. In fact, one element might even disappear without any change in the fundamental idea attaching to the cherub. This has been questioned warmly by Riehm recently (*De Natura et notione symbolica Cheruborum*. Basil, 1864). He maintains that before the exile the cherub had a fixed form, viz., that of a man standing upright, with wings. The later description in Ezekiel's vision is a departure from this characteristic and original form, and, for the sake of the "throne, chariot" moving towards the four quarters of the world, gives to the cherubim with it four faces, yet not four component parts. The three faces added to the original one human face by Ezekiel are borrowed from the grandest and strongest of creatures whether living on the earth or in the air. He was induced to do this probably by the Babylonian grouping together of animals which he had learned during the captivity. We remark against this: If any person, on the one hand, knew well enough the forms of the cherubim both in the tabernacle and in the temple, and would, on the other hand, adhere firmly to ancestral institutions and to priestly traditions, that person was Ezekiel, the son of a priest. How is it possible that this prophet, who was emphatically warned by the sight of the "images of the Chaldeans," doubtless mythological (Ezek. xxiii. 14), portrayed on the walls, should himself have been induced, by means of these, to alter completely the sacred cherub-form, and to have made to it arbitrary and self-appointed additions? Umbreit (*Hesekiel*, *s.* xii.) rightly says: "So far as the form of the cherubim is concerned, the prophet has certainly copied the original type of the temple, the ark of the covenant and the tabernacle floating in his imagination, with conscientious fidelity; but in particular instances he has enriched the idea by the addition of more complete features, without changing anything essentially." The assertion that he gives to the cherub not a fourfold composition, but only four faces, is a mis-

take, for he gives to him the feet of a bull, the wings of an eagle, and the hands of a man (Ezek. i. 6–9); and in the passage chap. x. 14, which, indeed, in a critical respect is not free from suspicion, the word כְּרוּב stands for bull, so that many interpreters think that the bull is the prevailing element in the composition of the cherub. Besides, in every living creature the face is the chief thing, by which in fact it is recognized; and when Ezekiel gives to the cherub four faces, he signifies thereby that those four types of being unite therein. To delineate cherubim is consequently a hazardous business, because the form is not fixed; nor as yet is there anything perfectly satisfactory. The latest, by Thenius (tab. 3, fig. 7), is borrowed, almost painfully, from Egyptian sculptures. It is remarkable that the archæologists are forever finding the original of the cherub in Egypt, while neither the sphinx nor any other Egyptian complex creature presents the four types united in the cherub. On the other hand, Asiatic, and particularly Assyrian, images, exhibit all four together (comp. Neumann, *die Stiftshütte*, *s.* 68 *sq.*). Nevertheless the cherub is not a copy of these, but is the pure and specific product of Hebrew contemplation. Upon this, more, farther on.—The words of ver. 24 state that the four horizontally outstretched wings took in the entire breadth of the Debir (twenty cubits); that they also touched on the right and left, the north and south wall, and each other in the centre, while it presupposes that they (*i. e.*, the wings) stood close to each other at the shoulder-blades. Under the outspread wings the ark of the covenant was placed, as chap. viii. 6 plainly says; and it is hence an error when Ewald asserts that the cover of the ark was renewed, and in place of the old cherubim, those massive wooden and gilt were fastened upon it—a thing impossible, for they stood 10 cubits apart (ver. 27), while the ark was 3½ cubits long (Exod. xxv. 10).

Vers. 29–30.—**And he carved all the walls of the house, &c.** Comp. ver. 18. Keil and others understand by מִקְלַעַת "basso-relievo," Vulgate *cœlaturæ eminentes*, which, however, cannot be established by the word itself. For although קָלַע means to set in motion, to sling (1 Sam. xvii. 40; xxv. 29; Jer. x. 18), this signification is not available here. But it becomes clear through the following פִּתּוּחֵי from פָּתַח to break open, to open, then to furrow, to plough (Is. xxviii. 24); פִּתּוּחִים in Exod. xxviii. 11; xxxix. 6, is used for the work of the graver in stone, and in Exod. xxviii. 36; xxxix. 30 of engraving in metal. The figures, moreover, were not in basso relievo, but were sunken. 1 Kings vii. 31 cannot avail, for with reference to the figures upon the flat surface of the "bases," it is said in ver. 36 וַיְפַתַּח, and this agrees with קָלַע, which means in Arabic, *loco dimovit*. Most of the figurative representations upon the old Egyptian monuments were wrought after this fashion (Thenius). The forms of the cherubim upon the walls were different from the colossal figures under which the ark in the Debir rested. According to Ezek. xli. 19, "a lion-face was towards a palm-tree upon one side, and a man's face towards the palm-tree on the other side," so that there was always a cherub between two palm-trees. These had not four faces, but assuredly the wings of the eagle and the feet of the bull were not wanting. We are not to think of palm-branches (Ewald), nor of palm-leaves (Luther), but of palm-trees, such as we see upon ancient coins, and such as Titus caused to be struck off, out of the booty from Jerusalem, with the inscription *Judæa capta* (Lamy, *de Tabernaculo*, p. 783; Winer, *R.-W.-B.*, i. *s.* 252). We may, with the Arabic version, understand by "open flowers," lilies, for these certainly belonged to the emblems of the sanctuary (chap. vii. 19, 22, 26). Ver. 18 names, besides the flowers, פְּקָעִים also, which is regarded generally as synonymous with פַּקֻּעֹת, 2 Kings iv. 39, and is translated "*coloquinths*" (*i. e.*, wild or spring gerkins which burst at the touch). We should then understand by it: "egg-shaped decorations like that of our architectonics." (Thenius, Keil). But the intimate connection with graven figures in the highest degree significant, such as cherubim, palm-trees, and lilies, makes against a wholly meaningless, empty decoration, a thing not known to oriental sacred architecture. Add to this that in another passage the פַּקֻּעֹת are described as deadly, a fruit so dangerous and unwholesome would have suggested just the opposite of that which was represented by the other symbolical figures. If it were employed simply on account of its egg-shape, why these "coloquinths," since they were not alone round, why not eggs simply? The stem פָּקַע does not mean simply to burst, but also *circumire*, in hiphil *conglomerare*, *circumagere*, and פקעת *involucrum*, *glomus*, *globus*, so also פקעא *glomus*, *fasciculus convolutus vel colligatus* (Buxtorf, *Lex. Chald. et Talm.*, p. 1790). In its intimate connection with פְּטוּרֵי צִצִּים, will פְּקָעִים be taken to mean flower-bundles, *i. e.*, buds; and so the translation is, budding and blown flowers (flower-work). Possibly this flower-work had the form of wreaths, only we can scarcely, with Thenius, translate פטורי = "festoons, garlands of flowers." Whether the three kinds of graven figures were distributed in single panels, and such panels were in two or three rows, one over the other, after the analogy of Egyptian temples, must be left undecided, owing to the silence of the text.—Thenius wishes the "without" of vers. 29 and 30 to be understood of the porch; but nothing has been said of the porch from ver. 3, and it would have been necessary therefore to designate it by a word. According to ver. 20 מִלִּפְנִים can be referred only to the Debir, and not to the interior of the whole house, consequently by לַחִיצוֹן the large compartment must be meant.

Vers. 31–35. **And for the entering of the oracle, &c.** The rabbins, whom many interpreters, even to v. Meyer and Stier, follow, translate the difficult words הָאַיִל מְזֻזוֹת חֲמִשִׁית: "the lintel (entablature) of the (or with the) posts, a pentagon." The sense would then be: the lintel of the doors supported two posts abutting one against

the other, at an angle which, with it, formed a triangle, and together with the door, a pentagon. [Thus:



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But this is decisively contradicted by that which follows in ver. 33 of the door of the larger compartment, the corresponding מֵאֵת רְבִעִית, which cannot possibly be translated "out or of a four-cornered, *i. e.*, a square," but only "out of a fourth." Besides this, a pentagonal door is without an example in the ancient East. Böttcher and Thenius translate, "the entrance-wall with posts of a fifth thickness." But this is founded upon the wholly erroneous supposition that the wall before the holy of holies was two cubits thick (see above, on ver. 16); of which two cubits, then, the door-posts must have taken in a fifth. Suppose that אַיִל here means the entrance-wall, still חֲמִשִׁית can never be translated "fifth thickness." "It is in the highest degree surprising that when the thickness of the entrance-wall door-posts is stated, nothing is said of the size of the doors themselves" (Keil). Manifestly the text states just this, but still does not say that from each wall there were five cubits to the door: for the doors midway, there were ten cubits remaining (Lightfoot), but the entrance to the Debir took in, with the posts, a fifth of the wall, *i. e.*, was four cubits broad.* The entrance to the chief compartment, on the other hand (ver. 33), measured one fourth of the wall, was consequently five cubits broad, and larger than that which opened into the Debir, which was appropriate enough for the main entrance. The height of the two entrances is not given. According to ver. 34 the two wings of the door of entrance into the holy place were *folding leaves*, *i. e.*, either they were longitudinally like leaves bound together, which could be so folded that it would not be necessary always to open the whole door-wing (Thenius); or the two leaves were the upper and lower halves of each door-wing (Keil, Mertz, Ewald); probably the latter.—From the words of ver. 32: "and spread gold upon the cherubim," as well as "fitted upon the carved work" (ver. 35), Thenius concludes that the figures only, both upon the doors and also the walls of the temple, were overlaid, so that "they must have contrasted splendidly with the brown-red cedar." But this contradicts vers. 20, 30, and especially ver. 22, where עַד־תֹּם is expressly added to the "whole house," which does not say merely that such gold-overlaying was partial throughout the house, but that the interior was completely so overlaid. The very floor, upon which no figures were carved, was overlaid with gold; surely the walls and doors were not partially so only. The problematical addition in both verses renders conspicuous the fact that the overlaying with gold did not cover up the figures carved upon the wood, but that it was impressed upon all the elevations and the depressions alike, and that they could be distinctly seen (Keil).—The Chronicles mentions, besides the doors (2 Chron. iii. 7), the *veil* also (iii. 14), the presence of which is not to be doubted (after Ewald), since the object of it was not to divide the two compartments, but rather to cover the ark with the throne (Exod. xl. 3, 21), and was an essential feature of the sanctuary. If even the Herodian temple, which did not contain the ark of the covenant, had nevertheless "the veil of the covering" (Exod. xxxix. 34; xxxv. 12; Matt. xxvii. 51), how much less would Solomon have dispensed with it. The non-mention of it in the account now before us has no more significance than when, in the following verses, the inner court alone is described, and the fact of the "outer" court is entirely passed by.

Vers. 36–38. **And he built the inner court,** &c. This designation presupposes a larger court, which is mentioned expressly in the Chronicles (2 Chron. iv. 9), and, in distinction from that of "the priests," is described as "the great court." The inner court is called, in Jer. xxxvi. 10, the "higher," because it lay somewhat above the level of the court intended for the people. The statements about the structure of both are singularly meagre. No one doubts that they were square-shaped (comp. Exod. xxvii. 9 *sq.*; Ez. xl. 47). The words, "*three rows of hewed stones*," &c., can refer only to the enclosing walls. There were three rows of squared stones, one over the other, and a layer of cedar. כְּרֻתֹת are certainly not beams properly, but planks, thick boards, for of what use would beams have been here? The opinion that upright cedar beams, resting upon the uppermost row of stones, formed a low palisade, is erroneous (Merz). The people in the outer court, by such an arrangement, would have been deprived of a view of the sanctuary and of the holy offices in the inner court. It was manifestly but a low enclosure, over which those outside of it could look (2 Chron. vii. 3). The outer court doubtless had stone walls surrounding it because, according to 2 Chron. iv. 9, doors overlaid with brass led into it. Our account mentions nothing of *cells* or chambers in the forecourt spoken of in 2 Kings xxiii. 11; Jer. xxxv. 2; xxxvi. 10. But perhaps Solomon built some of them; at least they were, according to 1 Chron. xxviii. 12, originally intended.—We can but offer conjectures about the dimensions of the courts. "Following the analogy of the tabernacle, by doubling the spaces we may estimate the court of the priests at 200 cubits long from east to west, and 100 cubits wide from north to south. . . The outer or great court must have been at least as large" (Keil). In the temple of Ezekiel, whose measurements and definitions, especially in the matter of the courts, are to be regarded as least of all purely historical, both of them are perfect squares (Ezek. xlii. 15–20; Thenius).—The very carefully stated length of time for the building of the temple, given in vers. 37, 38, was reasonably

* [Mr. T. O. Paine (*Solomon's Temple*, &c., Boston, Geo. Phinney, 1861) makes the "posts, the door-posts," to be meant, and says that they were one-fifth of twenty cubits, the width of the wall. Each door-post was, according to this author, six feet wide. Bp. Patrick says: "a fifth" . . . "may be understood to signify that they held the proportion of a fifth part of the doors" (on the place). But our author's exposition is the better.—E. H.]

short and shows with what zeal the work was carried on, especially when we consider that, according to Pliny (*Hist. Nat.*, xxxvi. 12), all Asia was 200 years building the temple of Diana at Ephesus. As the month Zif was the second, and the month Bul the eighth, the time occupied in the building was about seven and a half years. Whether in this the time also is to be reckoned for the substructions* which Josephus mentions, and also for the cutting of the wood, and the hewing of the stones, is an idle question. If now we cast a glance over the *whole of the description* of the temple, full and explicit as it is in details, it is not sufficient to enable us to delineate a complete, well-assured drawing of it, because, as Winer very properly remarks, many points which must be clear in a drawing are passed over without a word, and others remain more or less uncertain. This is especially true in respect of outward forms and architectural style, which, in a drawing, are matters of supreme importance. Upon this point scarcely anything more can be said than that the building on the whole was "rectilinear, and of box-form" (Merz). It is certain that the builders, artists, and workmen who executed it, were all Phœnicians (chap. v. 6; vii. 14), whence it follows that the style of the building, in so far as the preserved ground-plan and design of the tabernacle was not required by Solomon, was Phœnician. But since all adequate descriptions of Phœnician buildings, and all memorials, such as are still extant in Egypt, are wanting, we know nothing of the distinguishing peculiarity of Phœnician architecture, which certainly, since the material employed was chiefly wood, must have differed essentially from the much later Græco-Roman, and especially from the Egyptian, which made use exclusively of hard stone (Schnaase, *Gesch. der bild. Künste*, i. *s.* 238, 249). The older drawings, therefore, in Græco-Roman style, by Villalpand, Lundy, &c., as also the later, in Egyptian style, by Hirt and Kopp, are wholly unsatisfactory. Had Solomon wished to build in the Egyptian style, he would not have summoned Phœnician workmen, but Egyptian, whom he could have easily procured from his royal father-in-law. The most recent drawings by Thenius and Keil (*bibl. Archæologie*) rest upon a careful study of the text, and are therefore much to be preferred to all the earlier ones; but even they, from the considerations already adduced, cannot lay claim in all respects to truth. Strong but not unfounded is the view of Romberg and Steger (*Gesch. der Baukunst*, i. *s.* 26): "It is just as easy to portray a living man from a tolerably well preserved skeleton, as to succeed in copying a building which shall correspond to its reality, when but few and uncertain remains of its style of architecture are in our possession." Many as are the gaps of the biblical account in respect of architecture, it nevertheless contains all which can contribute to the knowledge of the religious ideas upon which the temple was founded; it serves also to our understanding of its significance, and this is the chief concern here.

THE SOTERIO-HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THE TEMPLE.

1. The unusually careful chronological date about the building of the temple (vers. 1 and 37, 38) manifestly places it high above the series of ordinary events, and proclaims it as an especially weighty, epoch-making occurrence in the theocratic history (*Heilsgeschichte*). Comp. Introd. § 3. This would not have been the case if an architectonic work, or a building giving evidence of power and wealth simply, were concerned. It is its thoroughly religious character which causes it to appear as such a momentous transaction, and for the sake of which it is so circumstantially described. The product of theocratic ideas, it is likewise the expression of them. If the entire cultus were no idle ceremony, still less could the structure, where this cultus became concentrated, be an empty, meaningless piece of architectural splendor. All the ancients so founded, arranged, and adorned their temples that they were the expression and the representation of their specific religious contemplation (comp. *Symb. des Mos. Kult.*, i. *s.* 91 *sq.*). The temple of Solomon would have been an exception to all the sacred buildings of high antiquity, had it not been the expression of the specifically Israelitish, Old Testament ideas of religion. Weighty as an inquiry into its outward material may be, the need of investigation and information respecting its religious meaning is much greater.

2. *The significance of the temple as a whole and in general* is sufficiently stated by the builder himself in the discourse delivered at its solemn consecration, and in the longer prayer connected with it (chap. viii. 10–53).

(*a*) Solomon begins the discourse with the words, "I have built thee an house to dwell in (זְבֻל), a settled place for thee to abide in forever" (1 Kings viii. 13; 2 Chron. vi. 2). The first and most general destination of the temple was, to be a *dwelling-place of Jehovah*. But that this dwelling was not in the remotest degree connected with the heathenish superstition, that God stood in need of a shelter, like a man, and could be confined within a given space, the words which soon follow demonstrate (ver. 27): "behold the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain thee: how much less this house that I have builded." The dwelling of Jehovah with or in the midst of Israel is rather the immediate result of the choice of them to be His peculiar and covenant people, and in a measure coincides with it. As, according to the Hebrew use of speech in general, dwelling with any one is as much as to be bound to, to be in fellowship with (comp. *e. g.* Ps. i. 1; v. 5; cxx. 5), and even the marriage relation is expressed by "dwelling with" (Gen. xxx. 20; Ezra x. 2, 10; Neh. xiii. 23, 27), so also Jehovah's dwelling with Israel denotes His connection and fellowship with this people, and stands in the closest relation to the "covenant." Comp. Exod. xxix. 45, 46: "And they shall know that I am the Lord their God that brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, that I may dwell among them." Lev. xxvi. 12 *sq.*: "And I will walk among you, and will be your God, and ye shall be my people." So also Ezek. xxxvii. 27. Immediately upon the "election," and the conclusion of the covenant, follows the command, Exod. xxv. 8: "And let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them." But inasmuch as the Old Testament covenant relation moves in the sphere of bodily, visible forms, so also is Jehovah's dwelling

[* Upon these substructions, see Robinson and "The Recovery of Jerusalem," as above.—E. H.]

local, visible, and requires consequently a dwelling-*place*, which can be a tent as well as a temple. As little as Jehovah, by the choice of Israel from among all peoples, has ceased to be the God of the whole earth (Exod. xix. 5), just so little has He, by His dwelling-place in the midst of His people, ceased to be everywhere in heaven and upon earth. This dwelling-place does not contain Him; He is not banished to a particular place, but in the place where Israel dwells there He is, and dwells also in their midst, for "He has not chosen the people for the sake of the dwelling-place, but the dwelling-place for the sake of the people" (2 Maccab. v. 19). So His dwelling-place is the *visible sign and pledge of the covenant relation*. The "dwelling-house" is, as such, the *house of the covenant*. To this first signification of the house another immediately attaches itself. The dwelling of Jehovah in a specific place, includes within itself the conception of witnessing, and of revealing himself, in so far as God, where He makes and declares himself to be known, is and remains, and so dwells. Hence the conceptions of dwelling and of revealing himself coincide. Jacob named the place where a revelation was made to him *the house of God*, though there was no house or dwelling-place there. Subsequently he built an altar and called the place Beth-el, for "there had God revealed himself to him" (Gen. xxviii. 12–19; xxxv. 7). By שְׁכִינָה from שָׁכַן to dwell, the Rabbins, as is known, express the highest form of revelation. Christ says of him to whom He and the Father reveal themselves, we will "make our abode with him" (John xiv. 21–23). The place of the dwelling of Jehovah is *eo ipso* the *place of divine attestation and revelation*, the place where He will speak with Israel, and declare himself to him (Exod. xxix. 42 *sq.*): in the innermost portion of the dwelling, hence, is the testimonial of the covenant הָעֵדוּת, which means simply the witness, and the dwelling itself consequently is named "the dwelling (tent) of the testimony" (Numb. ix. 15; xvii. 23; xviii. 2).

(*b*) Solomon repeatedly refers to the design of the house, according to the word of Jehovah Himself—"*that my name might be therein*," &c., "*my name shall be there*" (1 Kings viii. 16, 29; comp. 2 Chron. vi. 5; 2 Kings xxiii. 27). In other places it is expressed thus: "to put my name there forever" (1 Kings ix. 3; 2 Kings xxi. 7; comp. 1 Kings xi. 36; xiv. 21; 2 Kings xxi. 4), or "that my name may dwell there" (Deut. xii. 11; xiv. 23; xvi. 11; xxvi. 2; Neh. i. 9), or in an abbreviated form, "to (for the) name of Jehovah" (1 Kings viii. 17–20, 48; iii. 2; v. 17, 19; 2 Sam. vii. 13; 1 Chron. xxii. 7, 19; xxviii. 3, &c.). That the "name of Jehovah" has the same sense here as in Exod. xxiii. 21, "for my name is in him"—the angel who leads Israel, that the formula does not say simply that the house is built to the glory of God, or that here God will be called upon and honored, scarcely needs mention. The name of God is God himself in so far as He makes himself known, declares and reveals himself. But in His relation to Israel, Jehovah declares himself essentially as the One who is holy and who will make holy; that He may be known as such, is the aim and object of the covenant, the sign and pledge of which is His dwelling in the midst of Israel (Exod. xxix. 43–46; Liv. xi. 45). The name of Jehovah is hence essentially the "*name of His holiness*" (Lev. xx. 3; Ps. xxxiii. 21; ciii. 1; cv. 3; cvi. 47; cxlv. 21; Is. lvii. 15; Ezek. xxxix. 7, 25), and that the house was to be built to *this* name, David announced solemnly before all Israel (1 Chron. xxix. 16), "to build to thee an house for thy holy name." With this end in view, the house is called in the Psalms "the temple of thy holiness" (Ps. v. 8; lxxix. 1; cxxxviii. 2); its two divisions are named simply "holy" and "holy of holies" (Exod. xxvi. 33; 1 Kings viii. 6, 8), and the whole, usually, מִקְדָּשׁ (Exod. xxv. 8; Lev. xii. 4; Ps. lxxiv. 7; 1 Chron. xxviii. 10; Isa. lxiii. 18; Ezek. viii. 6; ix. 6, &c.)—all of which presupposes that He who is and dwells here, is before all things and essentially, holy. So then the house of the dwelling is not so much in general the dwelling-place of the divine witnessing and revelation, as of the divine holiness revealing itself in particular. *It is an abode of holiness and of sanctification.* Here will Jehovah be known and understood by Israel as the Holy One and as Sanctifier, and thereby will be hallowed (Exod. xxix. 43–46; Liv. xx. 3, 7; Ezek. xxxvii. 26–28).

(*c*) In his prayer Solomon says, "hearken thou to the supplication of thy servant and of thy people Israel when they shall pray *toward this place:* and hear thou *in heaven thy dwelling-place* (1 Kings viii. 30). So also in the following verses "heaven thy dwelling-place" is placed repeatedly over-against "this house" (comp. vers. 34, 39, 43, 49). This parallelizing of the temple and of heaven extends through the whole Scripture. Both are named alike, so that often we can scarcely decide whether the temple or heaven be meant. זבול stands for the temple in 1 Kings viii. 13; 2 Chron. vi. 2: for heaven in Isai. lxiii. 15. מכון שבת is applied to the temple in 1 Kings viii. 13; Exod. xv. 17, to heaven in 1 Kings viii. 30, 39, 43, 49; 2 Chron. vi. 30, 33; Ps. xxxiii. 14. מעון=temple in Ps. lxxvi. 9; = heaven in 2 Chron. xxx. 27; Deut. xxvi. 15; Jer. xxv. 30; Ps. lxviii. 6. קדש היכל = temple in Ps. v. 8; lxxix. 1; cxxxviii. 2: = heaven in Mich. i. 2 *sq.;* Hab. ii. 20; Ps. xi. 4; (cii. 20; xviii. 7; Isai. lvii. 15). The Epistle to the Hebrews (chap. ix. 24) names the sanctuary "made with hands," "the figure (antitype) of the true," viz., of heaven, and the whole comparison between the high-priesthood of Christ and the Levitical is based upon this antitypical relation between heaven and the earthly, Old Testament sanctuary (chap. iv. 14; vi. 19, 20; viii. 1, 2; x. 21), so that v. Gerlach on the place says, with propriety, "the earthly sanctuary is also an image of heaven itself." When Solomon also at first designates the house he had built as "a settled place" (for thee to abide in), and then declares heaven to be the peculiar "place of thy dwelling," he regards the temple itself as a *heavenly dwelling-place.* As Jacob named the place where God had declared and revealed himself to him, "the house of God" and the "gates of heaven" (Gen. xxviii. 17), so the place where Jehovah dwells and is enthroned must needs appear as a counterpart of heaven. Not, however, as if the temple were a copy of the visible heaven, it is rather a symbolical representation which, by its symbols, points to the peculiar and true dwelling-place of God,

heaven itself. The Jewish theology takes cognizance of an upper and a lower dwelling (מִשְׁכָּן) of God, and lays down this proposition: "The house of the sanctuary which is below (מטן) is built after the house of the sanctuary which is above (מעלן)" (comp. the places in Schöttgen, *Hor. Hebr.*, p. 1213). The apocalyptic *σκηνὴ τοῦ θεοῦ μετὰ τῶν ἀνθρώπων*, which are His people and whose God He is, comes down from heaven, and has the cube form (four-square) of the holy of holies of the temple (Rev. xxi. 3, 16).

(*d*) The widely-spread notion that the temple (tabernacle) is on the whole and generally "*a representation of the theocracy of the kingdom of God in Israel*" (Hengstenberg, Kurtz, Keil, and others) is decidedly erroneous. The "house of dwelling for Jehovah" is like heaven, before all, a place (1 Kings viii. 13, 29, 35); but the theocracy, the kingdom of God, is not a place, but a divine-human relation. The dwelling of Jehovah in a house, in the midst of Israel, is, indeed, the outward sign and pledge of this relation, but not a figurative representation of it, and the conception of "the dwelling of Jehovah," which expresses the fundamental idea of the temple, is in itself in no way identical with the theocracy or the kingdom of God. While temple and heaven have the same names, which would not be possible were there no parallel relation between them, temple and kingdom of God, or theocracy, have no one name in common. The very definite expression in Heb. ix. 24 comes especially into notice here: according to it the earthly sanctuary made by hands is by no means a "copy of the kingdom of God," but is the antitype of the true sanctuary, *i. e.*, of heaven. Just as little as Christ, the high-priest, by His ascension went into the New Testament kingdom of God, but into heaven itself, there to appear before God for us, even so little did the Levitical high-priest, on the day of atonement, go into the kingdom of God, the theocracy, but into the earthly sanctuary, which represented the dwelling-place of God in heaven. There is no propriety in the appeal to the pattern of the tabernacle which was shown to Moses "on the mount" (Exod. xxv. 9, 40), as if it were heavenly indeed, but not a figure of heaven itself. For this pattern was itself only תַּבְנִית (*ὑπόδειγμα* and *σκιὰ τῶν ἐπουρανίων*, Heb. viii. 5), and showed to Moses how he must make and arrange the earthly sanctuary (*τὸ ἅγιον κοσμικόν*, Heb. ix. 1) in order that it might be a figure of the *σκηνὴ ἡ ἀληθινὴ οὐ χειροποίητος*, *i. e.*, of heaven, Heb. ix. 11, 24). Christ did not enter into the "pattern" of the tabernacle, but into that which this pattern itself represented (comp. Delitzsch, *Comm. zum Hebr. Br.*, *s.* 327, 336–338).

3. ***The significance of the temple in detail*** depends necessarily upon its significance in general, which is more fully defined and carried out by means of it. Here especially, above everything else, the *ground-plan*, *i. e.*, the formal arrangement, is brought into consideration. This is like that of the tabernacle, the place of which was occupied by the temple, yet in so far forth modified and enlarged as the difference between the "house" and the "tent" carried with it. The component parts singly are as follows.

(*a*) *The house*, by its strongly enclosed walls, is represented as a whole, complete and independent in itself: and this must be well considered. This whole in the interior is divided into a front and rear compartment, which are not separated by a stone wall equally strong, but only by a board partition, and they are thereby designated as divisions of the one "dwelling." The object and meaning of these two divisions, as well as their relation to each other, are shown by their names. The whole house is called מִקְדָּשׁ, the front division "holy," the rear division "holy of holies." Consequently the one dwelling of Jehovah, which essentially is the place of revelation and attestation of the holy and sanctifying God of Israel, has, as such, two divisions, which, since each bears the impress of the whole, cannot be two diverse dwellings, one by the other; but only divisions distinct from each other by way of grade. Divine revelation, in its nature and being, is a matter of degree—it is gradual, progressive. God is everywhere and always, but He does not make himself known everywhere and always, in the same manner. The heaven is his throne and the earth his footstool (Matt. v. 34); He has revealed himself of old through His servants the prophets, but at last through His Son—the brightness of His glory (Heb. i. 1 *sq.*). But especially is the revelation and attestation of the divine holiness over-against human depravity, gradual, in so far as the greater spread and extension of sin demands a higher attestation and confirmation of divine holiness, *i. e.*, of the sanctifying power of God atoning for sin. Since now the dwelling of Jehovah amongst His people was especially the dwelling-place of a self-revealing holiness, and the entire cultus which was there concentrated had for its object and aim the sanctification of the nation (see above, 2. *b*), so by means of its two distinct compartments did it present itself as a complete holy dwelling-place which was fitted to bring to and to keep in the consciousness of the people both the sinfulness of man and the holiness of God. The act of expiation and of purifying to be consummated in the front compartment, concerned the particular transgressions of individual persons; the act to be consummated in the rear and nobler compartment, on the other hand, concerned the entire nation, and the transgressions during the entire year. Ordinary priests could attend to the former, the high-priest alone could perform the latter (Lev. i–v. and xvi.).—From all this it is clear to satisfaction how untenable the position of recent writers is when, with Hengstenberg, they understand the two compartments as two distinct dwelling-places, namely, the holy place as the "abode of the people," and the holy of holies as "the dwelling-place of God," and then explain this "combined dwelling-place" as a figurative representation of the communion and fellowship of God with His people, and so that the "entire sanctuary is a symbol of the kingdom of God under the old covenant." Nothing can be more clearly and distinctly stated than that the whole house is one dwelling-place—the dwelling-place of Jehovah. Jehovah dwells indeed amongst His people, but of a dwelling, side by side, of God and the people under one roof, there is nowhere a syllable. As the whole house, so also each compartment, the holy place and the holy of holies, are called "the dwelling-place," but not the former as the dwelling-place of the

people and the latter the dwelling-place of God. Further, in 1 Kings vi. 5, the holy place, in contradistinction with the holy of holies, is called הֵיכָל. If now the holy place were the abode of the people over-against the abode of God, the entire sanctuary, comprehending both compartments, could not be called הֵיכַל יְהוָה, or simply הֵיכָל, as in 1 Sam. i. 9; iii. 3; 2 Kings xxiv. 13; 2 Chron. iii. 17; Ps. v. 8; still less could this expression be used of heaven, which is specially the abode of God and not of the people (Ps. xi. 4; xviii. 7; xxix. 9; Mich. i. 2; Hab. ii. 20).

(*b*) *The porch and the side-structure* (Umbau) *with the stories* are, as has been already shown, structures in front and by the sides of the house, which are recognized as such in that, unlike the house, they did not serve for the performance of any religious office. They do not therefore belong essentially to the ground-plan of the sanctuary, consequently are wanting in the tabernacle, and have no further religious significance than that they give to what was hitherto a "tent," the character of a "house," and indeed of a great, firm, and strong house, of a palace, in fact. Porches were never used for tents, but only in the case of large, conspicuous buildings like palaces, as, *e. g.*, Solomon's (1 Kings vii. 6 *sq.*). If now the house of a human sovereign had its porch, much less should one be missing in the house of Jehovah, the God-King, to distinguish it rightly as an הֵיכָל, *i. e.*, a king's palace (Prov. xxx. 28; Is. xxxix, 7). We observe the same in respect of the side-structure, which, as is expressly remarked, was not to be included within the house, the main building, did not belong, as an integrating part, to the dwelling of Jehovah, but which served only for purely external purposes, the preservation of the vessels, &c. But like the porch in front, it served, around the sides of the house, which rose above it, to impart the appearance of a grand, richly surrounded, and lasting building—an הֵיכָל.

(*c*) *The fore courts* constituted the second essential element of the entire sanctuary. "The dwelling of Jehovah" is, as observed above, the place where He "meets" the people, attests himself unto them, speaks with them, has intercourse with them. It is called, consequently, also אֹהֶל־מוֹעֵד (Exod. xxix. 42, 44; xxvii. 21; xl. 22), or מוֹעֵד simply (Lam. ii. 6; Ps. lxxiv. 3), *i. e.*, the tent of assembly, the "tabernacle of the congregation" (not the time of assembling). The dwelling of Jehovah in a given place makes also a space necessary for the people to meet their Lord and God. Hence the command: "thou shalt make the court of the tabernacle" (Exod. xxvii. 9; Sept.: καὶ ποιήσεις αὐλὴν τῇ σκηνῇ). The fore court moreover was not a dwelling-place of the people in contrast with that of Jehovah, but only a *court*, *i. e.*, a fixed space around the dwelling, "an enclosed gathering-place for the people drawing nigh to their God" (Merz). As Jehovah had one dwelling-place only, the people could meet Him only here, and only here attend to the covenant relation with Him. All offices in connection with the covenant could be performed, hence, only here, not in other favorite spots, not upon the so-called "heights" (high places) (Numb. xvii. 1–9). And in order that this might be the case with the entire people, it was ordered that all Israelites, certainly three times in the year, should appear before the dwelling of Jehovah (Exod. xxiii. 17; Deut. xvi. 16). This and nothing more is the object and significance of the fore court. Hengstenberg is altogether wrong in maintaining that "the house or dwelling of the people was properly the holy place," that they occupied this, "their peculiar dwelling, only through the medium of their representatives and middle-men, the priests, and that some actual place of their own, over and above this ideal place, was necessary. This the fore court was." Keil, too, is in error when he explains the fore court as "an image of the dwelling of Israel in the kingdom of their God." The holy place was, as already noticed, a compartment in the dwelling-place of Jehovah, the forepart thereof, but not the dwelling of the people, and the fore court was not a dwelling-place at all, neither of the people nor of Jehovah, was never named such, but was only the assembling-place outside of Jehovah's dwelling, a mere "court" by way of distinction, and in contrast with "the house." In that the temple had two forecourts instead of one originally designed, is no proof of an alteration of the ground-plan, but is only an enlargement of it, which had its reason in this: that great buildings, especially royal palaces in the Orient, were distinguished from ordinary houses by more forecourts (comp. 1 Kings vii. 1–12, and *Symb. des Mos. Kult.*, i. *s.* 241 *sq.*). Thence it happened especially that, near the tabernacle of the testimony, which stood in the centre of the Israelitish camp, was appointed the place for the priestly tribe (Numb. ii. and iii.). This continued a fixed custom when the "camp" ceased to exist; it was the tribe especially, which stood "nigh unto" Jehovah, which effected the intercourse between Him and the people (Exod. xix. 22; Ezek. xlii. 13; Numb. xvi. 5). A fixed limit to the appointed space was judicious, and even necessary, since by the ordinances of David individual worship had greatly increased, and this greatly expanded worship was confined to this one place; by these means it became possible to observe correctly the ordinance, and duly to watch over the appointed performance of the holy services.

4. *The significance of the form and measurements of the temple*, which stand in the closest relation to the ground-plan, requires us to conclude therefrom that they can be explained neither upon the grounds of outward need and propriety, nor of architectonic beauty. If the portion which constitutes the core and centre of the entire structure, the peculiar dwelling of Jehovah, the holy of holies, have the form of a perfect cube, as ver. 20 expressly states, a form characteristic not only of the tabernacle, but also of Ezekiel's temple, and of the apocalyptic σκηνὴ τοῦ θεοῦ (Ezek. xli. 4; Rev. xxi. 16), a form which appears neither necessary nor convenient, nor architecturally beautiful, while at the same time it was unmistakably intentional and not accidental, it must certainly have some meaning. And if the form of one and that the most important division of the building were significant, it is inconsequent and wilful to explain the equally striking forms and measurements of the remaining compartments as devoid of meaning. To this we must add that, although the forms and measurements of a house, especially of a palace, are not

those of a tent, Solomon nevertheless adhered as far as possible to the forms and measurements of the tabernacle, not only in respect of the holy of holies, but also of the other portions of the temple; and he felt himself obliged thereto, while he simply doubled them—a sufficient proof that they were to him corresponding, necessary as well as significant for the sanctuary. Besides, in the description of nearly all buildings and spaces which, in a narrower or wider sense, were God's dwelling-places, when apparently weightier matters are passed over, the measure and disposition, according to size and number, are presented, and oftentimes when one least expects it, as, *e. g.*, in the visions of Ezekiel and of the apocalyptic seer, as we have already noticed. Vitringa rightly explains the measuring of a space or of a building as the γνώρισμα, that it is κατοικτήριον τοῦ θεοῦ. This especially follows from Rev. xi. 1, 2, where the seer holds a measuring-rod, and is commanded: "measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein; but the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not; for it is given unto the Gentiles," &c. That which is not measured is ungodly and profane.—If we turn now to particular forms and measurements of the temple, we find them like those of the tabernacle and of the temple of Ezekiel.

(*a*) *The form of the square*, which is adhered to with palpable rigor, and dominates everything. It is the form of the forecourts, of the house in whole and in its parts, also of both altars. Nowhere is there the form of the triangle (pyramidal) or of the pentagon, nowhere the form of the circle or of the half-circle. Even the porch and the side-structure with its flat roof preserve this square form. In Ezekiel it is given even to the great circuit around the temple, and to the holy city and its domain (Ezek. xlviii. 8–35); so also in John, in respect of the heavenly Jerusalem (Rev. xxi.). From this it follows indisputably that the square was considered as the appropriate form of every dwelling-place of Jehovah, and generally of every sacred space and place, whether tent or house, altar or city. It is well to bear in mind, also, that this square appears always to have been adjusted (oriented) to the points of the compass, and thereby (inasmuch as this constant arrangement was neither necessary nor especially convenient), referred to the proper and original dwelling- and revelation-place of Jehovah, while the square shape of the earthly dwelling corresponded with "the four corners of heaven"—the upper dwelling (Jer. xlix. 36; Matt. xxiv. 31; comp. Zech. ii. 10; vi. 5; Ps. xix. 6; Job ix. 9). In conformity with this view, the space which had the throne in the midst thereof and was the highest place of Jehovah—dwelling and self-revealing, the holy of holies—had the most complete form of the square; it was a cube. The holy place, on the other hand, was not a cube but an extended square, but its length was not wilfully or indefinitely arranged; it was double that of the holy of holies, since it served as vestibule to this latter and with it formed the entire dwelling. The square, as the ground-form of the temple, has often been explained as the symbol of regularity, and especially of firmness and immobility, appeal being made to Suidas, who says: τετράγωνος; εὐσταθὴς ἑδραῖος (Grotius, Vitringa, Hävernick). This is contradicted from the consideration that not only the temple, but the tabernacle also, the movable, wandering sanctuary, had a similar form. It is impossible that the latter, the direct opposite of the former, should set forth the distinguishing characteristics of the tabernacle over against those of the temple; the movable can never be the sign of immobility and permanence. Still less can we adopt the view of Kurtz and Keil, who regard the square as "the symbolical form or signature of the kingdom of God," and its adjustment to the four points of the compass as an intimation that this kingdom was designed to comprehend and include within itself the entire world. The "dwelling of Jehovah," which is square in its ground-form, is not the kingdom of God itself, but a plan to which the form is given which corresponds with heaven, the peculiar dwelling-place of God, with its "four corners." Supposing, moreover, that the temple were "an image of the kingdom of God under the *old* covenant," this covenant was designed only to embrace the people Israel and not the entire world. This is the scope of the new covenant. Witsius, to whom one appeals besides, rightly remarks that the *atrium* signifies *separationem Israelitarum a reliquis gentibus.* It is impossible that the same symbol should signify opposites—the separation of one nation from all others, and also the comprehending of all nations.

(*b*) In *measurements* the number *ten* dominates. It marks the entire building, as well as its parts, be it simply ten or its half, be it doubled or trebled. This was the case with the tabernacle; but since the temple, as house or palace, necessarily required larger dimensions than the tent, so in place of a simple ten the double-ten or twenty was employed, and this is the clearest proof of purpose in respect of the number ten. The dwelling instead of ten cubits is twenty wide, and instead of thrice ten cubits long is thrice twenty. The holy of holies measures twice ten cubits upon all sides, the holy place twice ten cubits doubled in length, and as the great apartment, three times ten cubits in height. The porch is twice ten cubits broad and ten deep. The side-structure, *i. e.*, each of its three stories, is in height half ten, that is, five, and is thereby designated as something merely subordinate. The cherubim in the holy of holies are ten cubits high, each of the wings measures five cubits, "so that there were ten cubits from the end of one wing to that of the other" (ver. 24). The high altar in the forecourt is ten cubits high, and twice ten cubits long and broad (2 Chron. iv. 1): "the bases" [gestühle, seats] which belong to it are ten (1 Kings vii. 27). The brazen sea is ten cubits wide and five high (1 Kings vii. 23). In the holy place are ten candlesticks and also ten tables, five on the right hand and five on the left (2 Chron. iv. 7, 8). In the holy of holies the "ten words" (Exod. xxxiv. 28; Deut. iv. 13), which are named absolutely "the witness" and "the covenant," and which form the root and heart of the sanctuary, are preserved in the ark (Exod. xxv. 16, 21; xxxiv. 28). Since the dwelling of Jehovah amongst His people is the result, as also the sign and pledge of the covenant (see above, 1, *a*) without doubt the number in the covenant [ten commandments] dominates the number of the dwelling-place. That the covenant consists of ten words has its reason, not, as Grotius supposes, in the ten fingers of the hands (to be able to count

them more easily), but in the significance of the number ten, which comprises all the cardinal numbers and completes them, so that thereby the covenant is designated as a perfect whole, comprising all the chief words or commandments of God.—Besides ten, the number *three* is everywhere conspicuous in the building. It is divided into three sacred spaces (*Heiligungs-stätte*), which differ from each other by way of degree—forecourt, holy place, holy of holies, with three expiatory objects which are related to each other, the altar of burnt-offering, the altar of incense, and the kapporeth (mercy-seat). The dwelling itself is measured and divided according to the number three; three times the doubled ten, *i. e.*, three times its width, is the measure of its length—the holy of holies being one-third, and the holy place two-thirds. The latter, as the large compartment, is three times ten cubits high, and has three articles of furniture—candlesticks, the altar of incense, and the table for shewbread. The forecourt also has three kinds of articles for use, viz., the altar of burnt-offering, the stools, and the brazen sea. The side-structure, finally, has three stories. The reason for this prominence of the number three is not to be sought for directly in the divine Trinity, for the revelation of the Trinity belongs to the New Testament. But in the Old Testament, the number three is the signature of every true unit complete in itself, and so, closely resembles ten, with which it is here frequently connected. What happens thrice is the genuine once: what is divided into three is a true unity. The one dwelling, by its division into three parts, is designated as one complete whole, and the three kinds of articles of use which are in the three parts, or in one of them, again form a complete whole, and belong under it to the one or the other relation. While the number ten gives the impress of finishing and completing to multiplicity, the number three is the signature of perfect unity, and thus also of the divine being. (Comp. *Symb. des Mos. Kult.*, i. *s.* 175 *sq.*).

5. *The significance of the building material*, since the choice and use of it is determined by necessity, convenience, greater or lesser artistic skill, and other outward conditions, is not immediate and direct, but must be recognized in so far as the material employed in any structure imparts to it a certain definite character. In the tabernacle, wood was employed; its ceilings were of leather and hair, it had woven hangings such as the nature of a "tent" required. But when the period of the tent was passed, and in the place of a movable, wandering dwelling, a firm, immovable dwelling, a "house," was to be built, in the construction of it everything must be excluded which could be a reminder of a mere tent. In the place of wooden walls consisting of planks arranged side by side, there were thick stone walls; in place of the ceilings and hangings and the like, there were beams, wainscotings, and doors. The *stones* which were used for the walls were not dried or burned, such as were used in ordinary houses, but large, sound, costly stones, cube-shaped (chap. v. 31), such as were used in palaces only (comp. Winer, *R.-W.-B.*, i. *s.* 466)—and Jehovah's dwelling should be a palace. The *wood* was in the highest degree durable, and not liable to decay and corruption, which with the Hebrews was a sign of impurity, and were, therefore, especially appropriate for the sanctuary, the pattern of the heavenly. The three kinds of wood, cedar, cypress, and olive, before others have the quality of durability and hardness (comp. Winer, i. *s.* 215, 238; ii. *s.* 172). Cypress, the least valuable (Ezek. xxvii. 5, and Hävernick on the place), was used for the floor, the more valuable cedar was used for the beams and wainscotings, the olive, the noblest and firmest, was used for the entrances, and in such way that the entrance to the holy place had only door-posts, that into the holy of holies, in addition to such posts, doors also. In the *gold*, more than in stone and wood, there is a more direct reference to the significance of the building. It was used exclusively only in the interior of the dwelling. In the forecourt there was no gold: repeatedly and as emphatically as possible it is stated that "the whole house" was overlaid with gold (vers. 21, 22). The vessels of the dwelling were wholly either of gold or covered with it, while those of the forecourt were all of brass. The interior of the dwelling also was golden. This was not for the sake of mere ostentatious parade, for this gilding could not be seen from the outside. The people were not allowed to enter within the dwelling, this was the prerogative of the priests; but into the darkened yet wholly golden holy of holies, the high-priest alone could enter once a year. That in the ancient East a symbolical use was made of the noble metals, and especially of gold, is a well-known fact (comp. *Symbol. des Mos. Kult.*, i. *s.* 272, 282, 295). In the primitive documents of the persic light religion, "golden" stands for heavenly, divine. To the Hebrews, also, gold is the image of the highest light, of the light of the sun and the heavens (Job xxxvii. 21, 22). The apocalyptic σκηνὴ τοῦ θεοῦ which descends from heaven, is of "pure gold" (Rev. xxi. 18, 21). God "dwelleth in light" (1 Tim. vi. 16; comp. Ps. civ. 2) is equivalent in meaning to God dwelleth in heaven; and if now His earthly dwelling were all golden, it is thereby designated as *a heaven- and light-dwelling*. The conception of purity in the moral sense of the word is associated likewise with gold (Job xxiii. 10; Mal. iii. 3); the golden dwelling is hence also a pure, *i. e.*, holy, sanctuary (Ps. xxiv. 3, 4).

6. *The significance of the carvings* is explained at once by their form. Upon all the walls of the dwelling, and even upon the doors, there are three kinds of carved figures which are always associated together—cherubim, palms, and flowers. Diverse as they may seem, one and the same religious idea nevertheless lies at the bottom of them, namely, the idea of *life*, which is only expressed in them in differing ways.

(*a*) *The cherubim* are not actual, but, as is evident from their component parts, imaginary beings, and this requires no further proof that they are significant. A Jewish proverb says of their composition, "four are the highest things in the world: the lion amongst the wild beasts, the bull amongst cattle, the eagle amongst birds, the man is over all, but God is supreme." (Comp. Spencer, *De Leg. Hebr. Rit.*, ii. p. 242; Schöttgen, *Hor. Hebr.*, p. 1108.) God, on the other hand, is common to these four, and the life uniting them, which they have not of themselves, but from Him who is the source of all life, the Creator, and hence stands and is enthroned above them all. Creaturely being reaches its highest stage in those which have an *anima*, and amongst these animated creatures

with souls, the four above named again are the highest and most complete, the most living as it were. By their combination in the cherub, he appears as *anima animantium*, as the complex and representative of the highest creaturely life. Upon this account, and this alone, could Ezekiel name the cherubim absolutely הַחַיּוֹת, *i. e.*, the living beings (Ezek. i. 5, 13, 15, 19, 22). He employs, in fact, the collective-singular הַחַיָּה, *i. e.*, the living, to denote the unit-life of the four (chap. x. 14, 15, 17, 20. "This is the living creature that I saw under the God of Israel, by the river of Chebar;" comp. chap. i. 20, 21.) So, also, John names the four τὰ ζῶα over-against God τῷ ζῶντι εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας, to whom, as such, they ascribe praise, honor, and thanks, because He has made all things, and all things are and have been created by His will (Rev. iv. 9–11). In so far as all creaturely life is individualized in them, they are the most direct, immediate evidences of the creative power and glory, the definite, highest praise thereof, and they surround the throne of God. In the fact that they are represented upon all the walls of the house, does it first rightly acquire the character of the dwelling of Jehovah, and especially that of a *life-residence* testifying to His power and glory. Hence it is apparent how unsatisfactory the view of Riehm is, that the cherubim are merely witnesses of the divine presence, and that they have no other purpose beyond that of overshadowing or covering holy places and things. Certainly this latter was not their design upon the walls of the dwelling, and if they did nothing more than bear witness to the presence of God, how could Ezekiel have ever named them simply "the living creatures?" The underlying idea of the cherub is specifically wholly Israelitish, and is rooted in the cardinal dogma of God, the creator of all things, which separates it sharply from all other pre-christian religions. This idea is completely destroyed, if, with Riehm, we tear apart the four types which together constitute the cherub, and make the cherub simply a man with wings, and regard the bull and the lion as an arbitrary addition upon the part of Ezekiel, occasioned by his observation of the Babylonian-heathen combinations of beasts.

(*b*) *The palms* to the right and left of the cherubim have a relation to vegetable life, like that of the cherubim to animal life. The palm-tree unites in itself whatsoever there is of great and glorious in the vegetable kingdom. The tree, first of all, surpasses all other plants; but amongst trees there is none so lofty and towering, none of such beautiful majestic growth, so constantly in its verdure, casting, by its luxuriant foliage, such deep shadows,—while its fruit is said to be the food of the blessed in Paradise,—as the palm. Its attributes are so manifold, that men used to number them by the days in the year. Linnæus named the palms "the princes of the vegetable kingdom," and Humboldt "the noblest of plants to which the nations have accorded the meed of beauty." The land, moreover, in which Jehovah had His dwelling, the land of promise, was the true and proper habitat of the palm. Hence, subsequently, the palm, as the symbol of Palestine, appears upon coins (comp. Celsius, *Hierobotanicon*, ii. p. 444–579; my treatise, *Der Salom. Temp.*, *s.* 120 *sq.*). The law required that at the feast of tabernacles branches of palm-trees should be at the booths (Lev. xxiii. 40). They are the known symbols of salvation, of joy, of peace after victory (Rev. vii 9; 1 Maccab. xiii. 51; 2 Macc. x. 7; John xii. 13).

(*c*) *The flower-work* finally, in its connection with the significant representations of cherubim and of palm-trees, can by no means be regarded as destitute of meaning, as a mere affair of ornamentation. High antiquity knows nothing in general of empty decorations, like our so-called egg fillets and arabesques. In the ancient temples in particular, there were no kinds of forms which had not a religious meaning. From that time down to our own, flowers and blossoms have been the usual symbols of life-fulness, and in all languages the age of the greatest life-fulness has been called its bloom. So then by the flower-work, as by the cherubim and the palm-trees, by which on all sides the dwelling of Jehovah was decorated, was it designated as an abode of life. It should not be left out of mind here, that the Israelitish religion did not conceive of "life," after the heathen natural religions, as physical, but essentially as moral. The Creator of the world, who as such is the source of all life, and is the absolutely living, is to it also the all-holy (Is xliii. 15), who dwells in the midst of Israel to sanctify the people and by them to be hallowed (Exod. xxix. 43–46; Ezek. xxxvii. 26–28). All true divine life is in its nature an holy life, and hence the symbols of life in the sanctuary are *eo ipso* symbols of an *holy* life. The cherubim are not merely upon the walls of the dwelling, but above all in the holy of holies, they form the throne of the "holy One of Israel," and they are inseparable from the kapporeth (Exod. xxv. 19), *i. e.*, from the article of furniture where the highest and most embracing expiatory or sanctification rite is consummated. In the apocalyptic vision, the four living beings stand around the throne, and day and night they say, "Holy, holy, holy Lord God Almighty" (Rev. iv. 8), like the seraphim in Isai. vi. 2 *sq.* As the righteous who lead an holy life are compared generally with trees which perpetually flourish and bring forth fruit (Ps. i. 3; Jer. xvii. 8; Isa. lxi. 3), so especially with palm-trees, with an unmistakable reference to the palms "which are planted in the house of the Lord" (Ps. xcii. 12–15; comp. Ezek. xlvii. 12; Rev. xxii. 2; Ps. lii. 8). So also are blossoms and flowers, especially lilies, symbols of righteousness and holiness (Eccl. xxxix. 13). So also the plate worn upon the forehead of the high-priest, with the inscription, "Holiness unto the Lord," was called simply צִיץ, *i. e.*, flower (Exod. xxviii. 36). The budding of Aaron's rod was the sign of an holy estate (Numb. xvii. 10). The crown of life (Rev. ii. 10) is likewise the crown of righteousness (2 Tim. iv. 8). If now the three kinds of figures are represented upon the gold with which the dwelling was overlaid, the two conceptions of light and life, the correlatives of the conception of revelation (Ps. xxxvi. 9; John i. 4; viii. 12), are symbolically united. But the conception of revelation recurs with that of the dwelling (see above, under 2. a). The seat of the dwelling and of revelation is necessarily, in its nature, a seat of light and life.

(*d*) *The statues of the cherubim* in the holy of holies were not in the tabernacle, and we are authorized to suppose that the reason of this is to be

found in the relation of the temple to the tabernacle. Their design is stated in 1 Kings viii. 6, 7: "And the priests brought in the ark of the covenant of the Lord unto his place, into the oracle of the house, to the most holy place, even under the wings of the cherubims. For the cherubims spread forth their two wings over the place of the ark, and the cherubims covered the ark and the staves thereof above." It is also remarked in 2 Chron. iii. 13: "and they stood on their feet," which would have been in the highest degree superfluous, if it were not meant by this expression that they were firm and immovable, like עַמּוּדִים, *i. e.*, pillars. The ark of the covenant with the kapporeth and the cherubim then placed there, like its "staves,"—the evidences of mobility and transport show,—was a movable, wandering throne, just as the entire dwelling was a transportable tent. As the peculiar original pledge of the covenant, it was not, when the house was built, made anew, but it was taken from the tent and lodged within the house, that it might forever have its abiding-place and cease to be transportable. To this end it was placed under the fixed, immovable cherubim, whose wings completely covered it, covering the "staves," the very witnesses of its movableness, and with it one entire whole was formed. As the cherubim in general, in their being and meaning, belonged to the throne (see above), so the firm fixing of the throne was represented by means of the permanent, large cherubim-statues. It is entirely wide of the mark to explain, as Thenius does, on the pretended analogy of cherubim with the guardian griffins and dragons of heathen religions, our cherubim in the holy of holies, as the watchmen and guardians of the throne of Jehovah. For, apart from every other consideration, nothing is more contradictory to the Israelitish idea of God than that Jehovah stands in need of guardians of His throne. The cherubim indeed are the supporters and vehicle of His throne, but never as the watchmen thereof (comp. Ezek. i. and x.); they belong rather to the throne itself, and are, as such, witnesses and representatives of the glory of God, but they do not guard Him. When in our text here, we think especially of their wings spread over the holy of holies (from wall to wall), and that with them they overshadow the ark, the reason for this is in the fact that He who is here enthroned in His glory (כָּבוֹד) is invisible, or rather is unapproachable and removed, for He dwells in an unapproachable splendor; no man can "see" Him and live (1 Tim. vi. 16; Lev. xvi. 2; Judg. xiii. 23). But it does not follow from this, as Riehm would have it, that the design of the cherubim consisted only in veiling and covering the present God, and that their significance was like that of the "enwrapping" clouds (Ps. xcvii. 2; xviii. 11, 12; Exod. xix. 9, 16; xxiv. 16); for the cherubim upon the walls between the palm-trees had nothing to cover or veil. This was only their special duty in the holy of holies, by the throne. When it is expressly added that they did not turn their faces like those already upon the kapporeth, and towards it, but towards the house, *i. e.*, towards the holy place, we can find a reason for it in their special functions: as the heralds, messengers of that which is not to be approached, they should direct their gaze towards the outer world

7. To show the significance of the temple in its relation to the history of redemption, the question presents itself finally: *as to the manner in which it was related to the temples of heathen antiquity, whether it was more or less a copy, or an original.* K. O. Müller (*Archæologie der K.*, i. *s.* 372, Eng. trans. p. 276) remarks strikingly of the heathen temple that it was "at first nothing more than the place where an image, the object of worship, could be securely set up and protected." Every place enclosing the image of a god, if only set off with stakes, was called a temple (Servius defines *templum* by *locus, palis aut hastis clausus, modo sit sacer*). Without the image of the divinity, heathen antiquity could not conceive of a temple. Half in wonder and half in derision, Tacitus exclaims over the temple at Jerusalem (*Hist.*, 5. 9), *Nulla intus Deum effigies, vacua sedes et inania arcana!* and Spencer (*De Leg. Hebr. Rit.*, iii. 5, 6) rightly says: *Seculi fide receptum erat, templa ἀξόανα Numine et religione vacua et plane nulla esse.* A temple was not first built, and then an image of the god made to erect within it, but a temple was built for the already existing image, which then became, in a proper sense, the house or dwelling of the represented deity. Forth from the image the heathen temple proceeds. This is its principle. And as the gods of heathenism are nothing more than cosmical powers, their temples in plan and contrivance refer only to cosmical relations (see examples in *Der Salomonische Tempel*, *s.* 276 *sq.* and *Symb. des Mos. Kult.*, i. *s.* 97 *sq.*). But the principle of the Israelitish temple is the reverse, in so far as the chief and great commandment of the religion declares: "Thou shalt not make unto thyself any graven image," &c. The erection of a "dwelling of Jehovah" did not proceed from any need of enclosing and preserving an image of God, but only from out the covenant of Jehovah with His chosen people (see above, under 2. *a*). The tables of the law, which are called simply "the covenant" (1 Kings viii. 20), and as the proclamation of the covenant were preserved in the ark, represented, first of all, this invisible covenant relation. Hence this ark was the central point of the covenant. There was concentrated the indwelling of Jehovah; there, too, was His throne. But since Jehovah dwelt within Israel to sanctify the people and by them to be hallowed (Exod. xxix. 43 *sq.*; Ezek. xxxvii. 26 *sq.*), His dwelling-place was essentially a sanctuary, and forth from this its supreme and final design, its entire plan, division, and arrangement proceeded (see above, under 2, *b*, and 3, *a*). The entire temple rests, consequently, upon ethico-religious ideas, which are specifically Israelitish, and which do not recur in any other of the ancient religions. It is as unique as the Israelitish religion itself; its original is the tabernacle, from which it differs only because there is necessarily some difference between an house and a tent. Its originality outwardly is shown in the fact that no ancient people possessed a temple like it in plan, arrangement, and contrivance. Men still refer to the Egyptian temples, only these are "aggregates which admit of indefinite increase" (K. O. Müller, *Archæ.*, *s.* 257, Eng. trans. p. 191), and the common feature of their arrangement was that "they were not completed, but were constantly undergoing enlargement," and "they had no given measurements." The "single portions are in themselves finished, and can last, but other portions can be added, and

others yet again. The band which holds these single, different parts together is slight" (Schnaase, *Gesch. der bild. Künste*, i. *s.* 393, 424). Quite the reverse holds in respect of the dwelling of Jehovah, the plan of which is in the highest degree simple—an house consisting of two divisions surrounded by a court. An indefinite extension is just as impossible as a contraction, without the destruction of the whole, and precisely in this respect the Israelitish sanctuary is more like all other ancient temples than those of Egypt. Besides this, the style of architecture in the Egyptian temples, to which the truncated pyramidal form essentially belongs, is entirely diverse in that of Solomon, as also the stone ceilings and pillars, while on the other hand they do not have wooden wainscotings and overlaying of metals. As Solomon availed himself of Phœnician workmen, occasion has been found to institute a comparison with Phœnician temples (Schnaase, *s.* 238). But the accounts respecting these temples are so scanty and general, that the attempt has been made, upon the supposition that the temple of Solomon was a copy of the Phœnician, to fill out and complete the defective descriptions of them from the scriptural delineation of our temple (comp. Vatke, *Relig. des Alt. Test.*, *s.* 323 *sq.*; Müller, *Archæol.*, Eng. trans. p. 214). The little that we know of the Phœnician temples of a later date, does not exhibit the remotest likeness to that of Solomon (comp. my treatise, *s.* 250 *sq.*). In this matter modern criticism pursues a very partisan course. It is compelled to acknowledge that each ancient people had their own peculiar religious ideas, which were expressed in their sacred structures, but that the people Israel alone built their only temple, not according to what was peculiar to themselves, but according to foreign, heathenish ideas. Originality is conceded to all other temples rather than to the temple of Solomon.

[The justness of our author's observations here is indisputable. We cannot reconstruct the temple as we can reconstruct any building, essential features of which are remaining. Doubtless as its architect was a Phœnician, it bore the impress of the Phœnician genius. The "originality" of the temple was in its arrangements and its design and its significance; but in its outward form, as it struck the eye of the beholder, we fancy it *must* have had Phœnician features. The Jews were singularly deficient in their conceptions of beauty of form. The cherubim may be cited in proof; and the temple, architecturally, probably was left to the Phœnician artist under the conditions which the exigencies of the building itself required. The reader may consult Dean Stanley, *Jewish Church*, second series, New York, Chas. Scribner & Co., 1870, p. 225–236. There is no evidence, however, that it suggested in the least degree an Egyptian temple.—E. H.]

8. *The typical significance of the temple*, which, like that of the tabernacle, is distinctly expressed in the New Testament, rests upon those symbolical features which they have in common. Both are "a dwelling of Jehovah," and in this respect the place of the revelation and presence of the holy and sanctifying God, an abode of light and life, forth from which all well-being for Israel proceeds. But the entire Old Testament economy, especially its cultus, bears the impress of the bodily and of the outward, and consequently of the imperfect, and in this the dwelling of Jehovah necessarily participates. As the people Israel, the people of Jehovah, is limited by natural descent (Ἰσραὴλ κατὰ σάρκα, 1 Cor. x. 18), so the dwelling of Jehovah therein is conditioned by the corporeal and outward, especially in the way of the local and the visible. But therefore, as imperfect, it looks forward to the perfect which is to come, and hence upon this account is called a σκιὰ τῶν μελλόντων or τῶν ἐπουρανίων (Heb. viii. 5; x. 1). The perfect first appeared, when the time was fulfilled, in Him who was the σῶμα in contrast with the σκιᾷ, *i. e.*, *in Christ* (Col. ii. 17). What the dwelling typifies, that He is, in reality and truth. In Him "dwells" the whole fulness of the Godhead, σωματικῶς (Col. ii. 9). He is the λόγος, the true revelation of God, and in Him is life and light: He dwelt among us (ἐσκήνωσε), and we beheld His glory, (δόξα, *i. e.*, כָּבוֹד) full of grace and truth (John i. 1, 4, 14). He named himself the "temple" of God (John ii. 19), and the chief complaint against Him was, that "He said, I can destroy the temple of God, and build it again in three days" (Matt. xxvi. 61). With this real temple came consequently the end of the merely typical, outward, and local temple. With Him, the dwelling of God hitherto amongst the Ἰσραὴλ κατὰ σάρκα ceased, and proceeding from Him, who with one sacrifice "hath perfected forever them that are sanctified" (Heb. x. 14), the true "abode" of God now is here (John xiv. 23). Through Him indeed God dwells now in the collective believers in Him, in the congregation, which is His body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all (Eph. i. 23; Col. ii. 9, 10). Now is the declaration, "I will dwell in their midst," realized, for the first time, in its full truth. The congregation which is filled by Him, is the true temple of the living God, the habitation of God in the spirit (2 Cor. vi. 16; 1 Cor. iii. 16; Eph. ii. 21, 22; 1 Pet. ii. 5). But if Christ appear also as the antitype of details even of the sanctuary, such as the veil before the holy of holies (Heb. x. 20), and the "throne of grace" (Rom. iii. 25), the ground of this is not, as the old typology supposed, in the circumstance that these objects were immediate types of Christ, but in that through these, truths and divine-human relations were signified, which, like "the dwelling" itself, first in Christ and through Him reached its full realization (comp. my treatise: *Der Salom. Tempel*, *s.* 81 *sq.*). In so far now, in the New Testament economy, as the congregation of the faithful is itself the dwelling of God, it no more needs a temple; and if Christendom still build houses of God, it is not with the notion that God dwells within them. The Christian church-building is not a temple, but the congregation-house, and God's house only in this respect. It is not, however, only that, protected from wind and weather, men can worship God undisturbed, but that the faithful may assemble as one body, and exercise their fellowship as members of the body of Christ, and build themselves up as individual stones into a spiritual house, in Jesus Christ the chief cornerstone. Thence it follows that it is a great perversion to regard the temple of Solomon as the model for a Christian church, and to plan one like it. It was not the design of this temple to gather the congregation within itself. They stood in the forecourt. The church, on the other hand,

embraces them in, and must have the arrangement and contrivance which corresponds with the being and the needs of the congregation as the communion of the faithful.

[If we keep in mind the various portions of the temple—porch, holy place, holy of holies, and the side-structure—it would seem that the vision of the completed so-called Gothic-Church, must have dawned upon the mind of some cloistered architect after he had familiarized his mind with the constituent parts and divisions of the temple. Each has a porch: the nave corresponds with the holy place, the aisles with the side-structure, the sanctuary and choir with the holy of holies. In the temple, partition walls separated these portions from each other; in the Christian church-building, all partition walls disappear, and the parts are connected by the use of the pointed arch, and other devices of architectural skill.—E. H.]

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

Vers. 1 and 38. Why was the time for the building of the temple so exactly specified? (1) Because it was a most important event for Israel. It points to the final aim of the leading out of Egypt, the land of bondage. The time of the wandering, of unrest, and of battle, is over. Israel is in possession of the whole of the promised land; the time of the kingdom of peace is come. The temple is a memorial of the truth and mercy of God, who ever fulfils His promises, albeit after many long years (Ex. iii. 17), supplies all wants, and governs all things excellently. The word of the Lord is sure. After long wandering, after many a cross, many a tribulation and trouble, comes the promised time of peace; the Lord helps His people, even as he preserves every single being unto his heavenly kingdom (2 Tim. iv. 18). (2) Because it is a world-historical event. The temple of Solomon is the first and only one, in the whole ancient world, which was erected to the one, true, and living God. Darkness covers the earth and gross darkness the people (Is. lx. 2). Heathendom had here and there greater temples, but they were the abodes of darkness; this temple is the abode of light and life; from it, light breaks forth over all nations (Is. ii. 3; Jer. iii. 17; Mic. iv. 2). What avails the greatest, most glorious temple, if darkness instead of light proceeds from it, and, amid all the prayers and praises, the knowledge of the living God is wanting?

Ver. 2. The exceeding glory and pomp of the temple. (1) The idea, to which it bore witness. No house, no palace in Israel compared, for splendor and glory, with the house of God. Everything in the shape of costly material and treasure which the age permitted, all toil and all art, were lavished upon it. To the Most High were given the noblest and dearest of men's possessions. How many princes, how many nations, how many cities, build gorgeous palaces, and adorn with gold and all treasures the buildings designed to minister to the pride of the eyes, the lust of the flesh, and to a haughty manner of life, but yet have no money, no sacrifice, for the temples which either are entirely wanting, or are poor and miserable in appearance! (2) The purpose which it served. Its magnificence was no empty, dead show, to dazzle and intoxicate the senses; everything was full of meaning, and referred to higher, divine things; it was not meant to render sensual man still more sensual, but to draw him nearer to the supersensuous, and thus to elevate him. Empty parade is unseemly for any house of God; rather must everything which wealth and art can accomplish serve to raise the heart and mind to God, so that each one shall say: This is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven (Gen. xxviii. 17)!—The temple of Solomon shows what the house of God should ever be: (*a*) a place of testimony: the testimony or word of God forms its heart and centre; (*b*) a sanctuary, where we hallow God, and he sanctifies us through Christ (Heb. x. 14; Sacrament); (*c*) an heavenly place where, far from all worldly cares, peace and rest reign, and all are united in prayer, in the praise and glory of God (see *Historical and Ethical*).—(2) The dwelling of God in the midst of his people (*a*) in the old, (*b*) in the new covenant (2 Cor. vi. 16).—The temple of God a prophecy of Christ and of His church (see *Historical and Ethical*), or, the typical and the true temple of God (1 Pet. ii. 5). The former is built by men's hands, the latter out of living stones, whose foundation and corner-stone is Christ; there were brought gifts and sacrifices, which could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience (Heb. ix. 9, 10); here are offered spiritual sacrifices, pleasing to God through Christ; the former is an house of external sanctity and purity, the latter an indwelling of God in the soul, a temple of the Holy Ghost, who purifies the conscience from dead works; there God speaks through the law, here through the gospel. —Vers. 11–13. OSIANDER: We ever need, especially in high affairs, divine consolation and help, so that thereby we may be animated to more activity in the performance of our duties. He who has begun and undertaken a work according to the will of God, and for His glory, may rest assured of divine support, may build upon God's promises, and will not suffer himself to shrink from, or tire of, the obstacles which meet him by the way (Matt. xxiv. 13).—Ver. 13. I will not leave my people: a glorious word of consolation, but also a solemn word of warning.—Ver. 14. STARKE: When the word of God is received with faith, it gives new strength to the heart, and urges us on to all goodness (Jas. i. 21).—Vers. 15–22. All the adorning of the house was within; there was the light and the brightness of gold, there also the *symbols of life*. Ye are the temple of God (1 Cor. iii. 17). The adorning of the faithful shall not be outward, but inward; the "hidden man of the heart" is manifest only to the Lord, and not to the eyes of the world; the gold of faith, and the life hidden with Christ in God, is the glory of the man.—Vers. 23–28. STARKE: To make and set up symbols is not, in itself, idolatry, nor against the first commandment, and images are also allowable in churches, if they are not made objects of worship. If, indeed, in the holy of holies, the greatest and noblest carvings are placed, we cannot, in the wish to see all works of art removed from the churches, and merely seats and benches remaining, appeal to Scripture, and least of all to the man to whom God gave a wise and understanding heart (chap. iii. 12).

C.—The accomplishment of the building of the palace, and the preparation of the vessels of the temple.

CHAPTER VII. 1-51.

1 But [1] Solomon was building his own house thirteen years, and he finished all
2 his house. He built also the house of the forest of Lebanon; the length thereof
was a hundred cubits, and the breadth thereof fifty cubits, and the height
thereof thirty cubits, upon four [2] rows of cedar pillars, with cedar beams upon
3 the pillars. And *it was* covered with cedar above upon the beams [side cham-
4 bers [3]], that *lay* on forty-five pillars, fifteen [*i. e.*, chambers] *in* a row. And *there*
were windows [beams [4]] *in* three rows, and light [front [5]] *was* against light [front]
5 *in* three ranks. And all the doors [6] and posts *were* square with the windows
6 [beams [5]]: and light [front] *was* against light [front] *in* three ranks. And he
made a porch of pillars; the length thereof *was* fifty cubits, and the breadth
thereof thirty cubits: and the porch *was* before them: and the *other* pillars
7 and the thick beam [threshold [7]] *were* before them. Then he made a porch for
the throne where he might judge, *even* the porch of judgment: and *it was* cov-
ered with cedar from one side of the floor to the other [from the floor to the
8 floor [8]]. And his house where he dwelt *had* another court within the porch,
which was of the like work. Solomon made also a house for Pharaoh's daugh-
9 ter, whom he had taken *to wife*, like unto this porch. All these *were of* costly
stones, according to the measures of hewed stones, sawed with saws, within and
without, even from the foundation unto the coping, and *so* on the outside toward
10 [from the outside even to [9]] the great court. And the foundation *was of* costly
11 stones, even great stones, stones of ten cubits, and stones of eight cubits. And
12 above *were* costly stones, after the measures of hewed stones, and cedars. And
the great court round about *was* with three rows of hewed stones, and a row of
cedar beams, both for the inner court of the house of the Lord [Jehovah], and
for the porch of the house.
13, 14 And king Solomon sent and fetched Hiram out of Tyre. He *was* a widow's
son of the tribe of Naphtali, and his father *was* a man of Tyre, a worker in brass:
and he was filled with wisdom, and understanding, and cunning to work all
works in brass. And he came to king Solomon, and wrought all his work.
15 For he cast two pillars of brass, of eighteen cubits high apiece; [10] and a line of
16 twelve cubits did compass either [10] of them about. And he made two chapiters
of molten brass, to set upon the tops of the pillars: the height of the one chapi-
17 ter *was* five cubits, [11] and the height of the other chapiter *was* five cubits: *and*
nets of checker work [lace-work], and wreaths of chain-work, for the chapiters
which *were* upon the top of the pillars; seven [11] for the one chapiter, and seven [11]
18 for the other chapiter. And he made the pillars [pomegranates [12]], and two rows
round about upon the one network, to cover the chapiters that *were* upon the top
with pomegranates [top of the pillars]: and so did he for the other chapiter.
19 And the chapiters that *were* upon the top of the pillars *were* of lily-work in the
20 porch, four cubits. And the chapiters upon the two pillars *had pomegranates* [13]
also above, over against the belly which *was* by the network: and the pome-
21 granates *were* two hundred in rows round about upon the other chapiter. And
he set up the pillars in the porch of the temple: and he set up the right pillar,
and called the name thereof Jachin: and he set up the left pillar, and called the
22 name thereof Boaz. And upon the top of the pillars *was* lily-work: so was the
work of the pillars finished.
23 And he made a molten sea, ten cubits from the one brim to the other [from
lip to lip]: *it was* round all about, and his height *was* five cubits: and a line
24 of thirty cubits did compass it round about. And under the brim of it round
about *there were* knops [14] compassing it, ten in a cubit, compassing the sea round

25 about: the knops *were* cast in two rows, when it was cast. It stood upon twelve
oxen, three looking toward the north, and three looking toward the west, and
three looking toward the south, and three looking toward the east: and the sea
26 *was set* above upon them, and all their hinder parts *were* inward. And it *was* an
handbreadth thick, and the brim thereof was wrought like the brim of a cup,
with [15] flowers of lilies: it contained two [16] thousand baths.
27 And he made ten bases of brass: four [17] cubits *was* the length of one base,
28 and four cubits the breadth thereof, and three [17] cubits the height of it. And
the work of the bases *was* on this *manner:* they had borders [panels [18]], and
29 the borders [panels] *were* between the ledges: and on the borders [panels] that
were between the ledges *were* lions, oxen, and cherubims: and upon the ledges
there was a base above: [19] and beneath the lions and oxen *were* certain additions
30 made of thin work [*were* wreaths of hanging work [20]]. And every base had four
brazen wheels, and plates [axletrees] of brass: and the four corners thereof
had undersetters [four feet thereof had shoulders]: under the laver *were* under-
31 setters [the shoulders] molten, at the side of every addition [wreath]. And the
mouth of it [21] within the chapiter and above *was* a cubit: [22] but the mouth
thereof *was* round *after* the work of the base, a cubit and a half: [23] and also
upon the mouth of it *were* gravings with their borders [panels], foursquare, not
32 round. And under the borders [panels] *were* four wheels; [24] and the axletrees
[holders] of the wheels *were joined* to [*were* in the base] the base: and the height of
33 a wheel *was* a cubit and half a cubit. And the work of the wheels *was* like the
work of a chariot wheel: their axletrees, and their naves, and their felloes, and
34 their spokes, *were* all molten. And *there were* four undersetters [shoulders] to
the four corners of one base: *and* the undersetters [shoulders] *were* of the very
35 base itself. And in the top of the base *was there* a round compass of half a
cubit high: [25] and on the top of the base [26] the ledges [holders] thereof and the
36 borders [panels] thereof *were* of the same. For [And] on the plates of the ledges
[holders] thereof, and on the borders [panels] thereof, he graved cherubims, lions,
and palm-trees, according to the proportion [room] of every one, and additions
37 [wreaths] round about. After this *manner* he made the ten bases: all of them
38 had one casting, one measure, *and* one size [form]. Then made he ten lavers of
brass: one laver contained forty baths: *and* every laver was four cubits: [27] *and*
39 upon every one of the ten bases one laver. And he put five bases on the right
side of the house, and five on the left side of the house: and he set the sea on
40 the right side of the house eastward over against the south. And Hiram made
the lavers [pots [28]], and the shovels, and the basins.
So Hiram made an end of doing all the work that he made king [29] Solomon
41 for the house of the Lord [Jehovah]: the two pillars, and the *two* bowls of the
chapiters that *were* on the top of the two pillars; and the two networks, to cover
42 the two bowls of the chapiters which *were* upon the top of the pillars; and four
hundred pomegranates for the two networks, *even* two rows of pomegranates for
one network, to cover the two bowls of the chapiters that *were* upon the [30] pil-
43, 44 lars; and the ten bases, and ten lavers on the bases; and one sea, and twelve
45 oxen under the sea; and the pots, and the shovels, and the basins: and all these [31]
vessels, which Hiram made to king Solomon for the house of the Lord [Jehovah],
46 *were of* bright [burnished [32]] brass. In the plain of Jordan did the king cast them,
47 in the clay ground [compact soil] between Succoth and Zarthan. And Solomon
left all the vessels *unweighed*, because they were exceeding many: neither was
the weight of the brass found out.
48 And Solomon made all the vessels that *pertained* unto the house of the Lord
[Jehovah]: the altar of gold, and the table of gold, whereupon the shewbread
49 *was*, and the candlesticks of pure gold, five on the right *side*, and five on the
left, before the oracle, with the flowers, and the lamps, and the tongs *of* gold,
50 and the bowls, and the snuffers, and the basins, and the spoons, and the censers
of pure gold; and the hinges *of* gold, *both* for the doors of the inner house, the
51 most holy *place*, *and* for the doors of the house, *to wit*, of the temple. So was
ended all the work that king Solomon made for the house of the Lord [Jehovah].

And Solomon brought in the things which David his father had dedicated; *even* the silver, and the gold, and the vessels, did he put among the treasures of the house of the Lord [Jehovah].

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

[1] Ver. 1.—[The twelve verses at the beginning are transferred to the end of this chapter in the Sept.
[2] Ver. 2.—[The Sept. read *three rows;* the Arab. in ver. 3, *sixty pillars.*

[3] Ver. 3.—[So the author translates צְלָעֹת, and so also Keil. This translation is undoubtedly correct; but the VV. are in much confusion over these architectural details.

[4] Ver. 4.—[So the author correctly translates שְׁקֻפִים supported by the Sept., and adds in parenthesis] *i. e.*, over each of the three rows of chambers roof-beams were laid.

[5] Ver. 4.—*I. e.*, so that the chambers stood over against one another, *vis-à-vis.*—Bähr. [The Heb. word מֶחֱזָה occurs only here, and is of very doubtful signification. None of the old versions give the meaning window, nor can that sense be derived with any certainty from the etymology-root חָזָה. Our author concurs with Keil in giving the meaning as *aspectus* or *prospectus*, "view to or from" (Keil). The English expression "front to front" conveys the idea.
[6] Ver. 5.—Viz., of the chambers.—Bähr.
[7] Ver. 6.—[So our author translates, *Schwelle*, following the Chald. סְקוּפְתָּא.

[8] Ver. 7.—מֵהַקַּרְקַע עַד־הַקַּרְקַע. This expression has much puzzled expositors. Notwithstanding the explanations of the author and of Keil, the best sense seems to be the simplest and most literal, from the floor to the floor, *i. e.*, from the floor on one side all over the walls, ceiling, and opposite walls, to the floor on the other side.
[9] Ver. 9.—[So the author and Keil, sustained by all the VV.
[10] Ver. 15.—[Lit. the height of one pillar, . . . compass the other. The A. V. expresses the sense. 2 Chron. iii. 15 gives the height as 35 cubits—a manifest error. *Cf.* 2 Kings xxv. 17; Jer. lii. 21.
[11] Ver. 16.—[There is here no *Var. lect.*, so that the height given in 2 Kings xxv. 17—three cubits—must have been an error of transcription, as indeed sufficiently appears from Jer. lii. 22.
[11] Ver. 17.—[The Sept. have τῷ ἐπιθέματι, doubtless from reading שְׂבָכָה instead of שִׁבְעָה.

[12] Ver. 18.—Instead of הָעַמּוּדִים [pillars], must be read הָרִמֹּנִים [pomegranates] here, just as afterwards הָרִמֹּנִים is transposed for הָעַמֻּדִים, as also some MSS. have it, and as the connection absolutely demands.—Bähr. [So also the Sept., while the Chald. and Syr. follow the text as we now have it.
[13] Ver. 20.—[The words in italics in the A. V. are unnecessary. Our author translates thus:] And the chapiters upon the two pillars *were* also above, close (*i. e.*, immediately) on the belly (belly-like swelling) which was beyond (*i. e.*, behind) the net-work, and the two hundred pomegranates in *two* rows round about (as on the one so) on the second chapiter.—Bähr.
[14] Ver. 24.—[פְּקָעִים here (as in vi. 18), is an architectural ornament in the form of the wild gourd, which bursts open on ripening. 2 Chron. iv. 3 has דְּמוּת בְּקָרִים, the likeness of cattle. This is evidently an error.

[15] Ver. 26.—[Our author translates: in the form of a lily-flower. The Heb. is open to either interpretation, and the reasons for preferring this are given in the *Exeg. Com.*

[16] Ver. 26.—[2 Chron. iv. 5 has שְׁלֹשֶׁת אֲלָפִים, thus adding one-half to the contents, and this number is adopted by Josephus. The VV. retain here the number 2000, but the Alex. Sept. (the Vat. Sept. omits the verse) makes them 2000 χοεῖς, thus giving a capacity as much too small for a hemisphere of the given dimensions as the Heb. measure is too large.
[17] Ver. 27.—[The Sept. make the length five, and the height six cubits; thus making all the dimensions unlike.
[18] Ver. 28.—[The Heb. מִסְגְּרוֹת from סָגַר to enclose, admits either this sense or that of the A. V., but both the connection and the amount of ornament upon the panels require the former.
[19] Ver. 29.—[Our author translates "and upon the ledges as well above as below," which certainly gives an intelligible sense, but it is at least doubtful if the Heb. will bear it, and certainly it is entirely forbidden by the masoretic punctuation, וְעַל־הַשְּׁלַבִּים בֵּן מִמַּעַל וּמִתַּחַת וגו׳. The Chald. renders בֵּן as a noun בִּנְתָא, a base. Our author rejects this, which is however adopted by Keil, and has been followed by the A. V. Above the ledges was a base or rest for the laver described afterwards.

[20] Ver. 29.—לֹיוֹת מַעֲשֵׂה מוֹרָד. The author's translation, given in the brackets, unquestionably expresses the true sense.
[21] Ver. 31.—*I. e.*, of the laver; or as our author interprets, of the base.
[22] Ver. 31.—[*I. e.*, was a cubit within the edge—there was a cubit on each side of the opening of the basin. The author expresses it:] from the opening outwards was a cubit.
[23] Ver. 31.—In diameter.
[24] Ver. 32.—So that the whole base could be seen, and nothing of its panels was covered by the wheels.
[25] Ver. 35.—*I. e.*, the cover of the base was arched.
[26] Ver. 35.—*I. e.*, of this arched upper part.
[27] Ver. 38.—In diameter at the top.

[28] Ver. 40.—Instead of הַכִּיֹּרוֹת [lavers] it is necessary to read here הַסִּירוֹת [pots] according to ver. 45; 2 Chron. iv. 11; 2 Kings xxv. 14; Jer. lii. 18.—Bähr. [Add, such is the reading also of many MSS. and editions, and apparently of the Sept. and Vulg., although כִּיּוֹר sometimes bears so nearly the same meaning (1 Sam. ii. 14) that the inference is not certain.
[29] Ver. 40.—[Many MSS. have הַמֶּלֶךְ in the nom. So also the Syr. and Arab.

[30] Ver. 42.—Upon the two pillars. Instead of פְּנֵי is here to be read with the Sept. שְׁנֵי.—Bähr. [But many MSS. with the Syr. and Vulg. read here עַל־רֹאשׁ *upon the top of*, and there is no MS. authority for the Sept. reading.

[31] Ver. 45.—That the k'ri הָאֵלֶּה deserves the preference over the k'tib הָאֹהֶל requires no proof.—Bähr. [It is also the reading of many MSS. and the VV.

[32] Ver. 45.—[The Sept., before "burnished brass," inserts καὶ οἱ στῦλοι τεσσαράκοντα καὶ ὀκτὼ τοῦ οἴκου τοῦ βασιλέως καὶ τοῦ οἴκου κυρίου.—F. G.]

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

Ver. 1. **But Solomon was building his own house**, &c. Ver. 1 forms a heading to the section concluding at ver. 12. The palace consisted of several buildings following upon one another, all of which, *i. e.*, his "*whole*" house, Solomon finished in thirteen years; but he only required seven years to complete the temple, because, perhaps, there were more buildings in the former, or fewer workmen were employed on them. The place where the palace was built cannot be, according to Ewald, the so-called Ophel, *i. e.*, the continuation of the temple-mount (Moriah), which diminished gradually as it stretched towards the south, but Mount Zion, which was divided from Moriah by the valley of Tyropæon. It is clear from 2 Kings xi. 19, that the way from the temple led immediately "down" to the palace. When Josephus says (*Antiq.*, 8, 5, 2), that the palace stood opposite to the temple (ἀντικρύς), it could only have been built on the northeast side of Zion. The palace of the Asmoneans stood there too, from which a bridge led over the valley to the temple on Moriah (see Keil on the place). As to the entire building, the dim intimations of the text do not give us a perfect idea of it. The descriptions of Josephus and those of the Rabbins, especially Judah Leo, contradict the text in many points, and are only arbitrary, unfounded additions. The earlier interpreters of the text could throw no light on it, and archæologists have hitherto been altogether silent, or have attempted no exact description. Thenius alone has succeeded in throwing the greatest light on the subject. The most recent description by Unruh (*das Alte Jerusalem und seine Bauwerke*, *s.* 95 *sq.*) is deserving of no notice.

[In this matter, Ewald (*Gesch.* iii. *s.* 339) expresses himself with some hesitation. He says that the palace was built probably upon the southerly continuation of the temple-mount, usually called Ophel, *i. e.*, hill, hillock, or knob. In the recently published work, *The Recovery of Jerusalem*, the same view is urged upon pp. 222–3, and also upon p. 240 *sq.* The English and American explorers would seem at least to favor this supposition, and in the work just referred to, on p. 233 there is a plan showing approximately the rock on Mount Moriah, and there the palace is placed to the south of the temple, with the Tyropæon on one side, and the vale of Kedron on the other,—this being quite remote from the position assigned the palace by our author. Nor do I think that our author's reasons for supposing it to have been built upon the northeast corner of Mount Zion sufficent to overthrow the general opinion.—E. H.]

Ver. 2. **He built also the house of the forest of Lebanon**, &c. This was the first of the various buildings composing the palace, therefore by no means a separate summer residence apart on Mount Lebanon (Dathe, Michaelis, and others). It was only given the name of Lebanon on account of the multitude of cedars standing alongside of each other. According to 1 Kings x. 16 *sq.*, and Isai. xxii. 8, it seems to have served chiefly, if not altogether, as an armory; the Arabic says, "A house for his weapons." The space, 100 cubits long and 50 broad, enclosed, as appears ver. 9, a thick stone wall thirty cubits high, but probably only upon three sides, as we shall presently show. The expression **Upon four rows of cedar pillars** is to be connected with words at the beginning: he built. The four rows of pillars stood along the surrounding wall, thus forming a peristyle which enclosed a court-yard. The expression טוּר says this plainly; for it cannot be understood differently, here, from vers. 4, 18, 20, 24; chap. vi. 36; Ezek. xlvi. 23, where it everywhere means a row enclosing and running round a space. The text does not at all justify Keil's supposition "that four rows of pillars stood on the longest sides of the building, but divided, so that but two rows were on each side;" there is no mention of the longest sides in the text. Weiss' view is just as incorrect (*Kostüm-kunde*, i. *s.* 357), that is, that there was a row on each of the four sides of the building, four rows of pillars standing together. The number of the pillars is not given, but they could not have been few, as their appearance was that of a forest. It is not necessary, however, to suppose, with Thenius, that there were 400. They must have stood close together, and could not have been very thick, for the breadth of the peristyle did not exceed ten cubits, and enough room must have been left to pass comfortably between the pillars. The Vulgate translates explanatorily: *quatuor deambulacra inter columnas cedrinas.*—**Beams of cedar** were placed on the rows of pillars, and formed the foundation for the three-storied superstructure of cedar-wood, which rested against the stone wall, and was probably so joined to it that the beams which formed at the same time the ceiling of the lower part and the floor of the upper part of the building were inserted in it. Each of the three stories had צְלָעוֹת, *i. e.* (chap. vi. 5, 8; Ezek. xli. 6) *side-chambers.* The numbers, **forty-five, fifteen each row**, have been supposed to refer to the immediately preceding עַמּוּדִים by nearly all the commentators, who have been misled by the masoretic punctuation; but they were quite wrong. It is impossible that the pillars on which the three-storied structure rested could only have numbered forty-five, divided into three rows. They could not have supported a structure 100 cubits long and 50 broad. Neither could the building have been named "forest of Lebanon" from forty-five scattered pillars. Thenius, with whom Keil agrees, rightly refers the numbers to the הַצְּלָעוֹת as the principal matter, which is further defined by the עַל־הָעַמּוּדִים, and translated, "and the chambers, forty-five in number, which were built upon the pillars, fifteen in each course, had also coverings of cedar-wood." But if the forty-five rooms were so divided that each of the three surrounding rows of the story had fifteen, we are obliged to admit that the stories only covered three sides of the square space, since forty-five cannot be so divided into four parts as to make twice as many rooms on the two long sides

of 100 cubits as on the two other sides of fifty cubits. On the other hand, the fifteen rooms of each of the three rows are very naturally and simply divided, if we imagine six on each long side and three on the rear side. In that case, either the colonnade and the three-storied structure that rested on it would not have continued over the front short side of the wall that surrounded the square space, and it must have been provided only with entrance-gates, or else this wall only enclosed three sides of the square, so that the building stood quite open in the front. The last is not admissible, because ver. 12 says that the whole palace was surrounded by a great court, which had a stone wall running around it, and also doubtless doors that could be shut.—The text itself says of the side-chambers, **and light was against light in three ranks.** The word מֶחֱזָה occurs only here, and does not mean the same as חַלּוֹן windows, but *aspectus, prospectus.* Towards the interior of the building the chambers stood open (Sept.: καὶ χώρα ἐπὶ χώραν τρισσῶς), so that the view from each of the chambers in the rows over one another opened on the opposite one. This rather resembled a gallery, which was divided off by board partitions into single chambers. [Like boxes at the theatre.] The doors, which led from one room to another, were square (ver. 5); where הַמְּזוּזוֹת is subjoined, we must either translate, with the posts, or, what seems better, read as Thenius הַמֶּחֱזוֹת, which also suits the repeated "light against light." The entrances, as well as the front openings which stood opposite each other, were square; so says the Sept.: τὰ θυρώματα καὶ αἱ χῶραι τετράγωνοι. By שָׁקֶף we are to think, after the שְׁקֻפִים in ver. 4, of the beams over the openings and doors. There is nothing decisive about the height of the rooms. Of the height of thirty cubits for the whole edifice, eight may have been for the colonnade, eighteen for the three stories, and four for the different ceilings (Then. and Keil). The entire arrangement of the building is still frequently met with in the East; a court surrounded by colonnade and galleries (Winer, *R.-W.-B.*, i. *s.* 466). Since, as already remarked, costly armor and weapons were preserved or displayed here, the inner space was used no doubt for assemblies of warriors, for the body-guard, &c.

Vers. 6–7. **And he made a porch of pillars, &c.** Vers. 6 and 7 contain the account of the *second* building that belonged to the entire palace. It stood inward from the armory, and had two divisions, viz., the porch of pillars and the throne or hall of judgment. The measures, 60 cubits long and thirty broad, are generally thought to belong only to the porch of pillars, and older commentators have believed, from analogy with chap. vi. 3, that because fifty cubits are the measure of the breadth of the armory, the length was to be understood as the breadth, and the breadth as the depth, as in the temple-porch; so that the porch of pillars must have immediately adjoined the armory. But the name אוּלָם contradicts this; its etymology does not signify (see on chap. vi. 3) an adjoined rear part, but can only mean a fore-building. Besides, the porch of pillars itself had again a porch, so that it cannot have been immediately joined to the armory. The fifty cubits are to be wholly understood of the length. So we may describe the porch of pillars as "a colonnade," running from the front to the rear, "probably roofed in, but open at the sides (Porticus), and leading to the porch of judgment" (Thenius, Keil). But the width of thirty cubits does not suit the length of fifty cubits, if it was only a passage to a building; it suits an independent structure alone. The armory, that was not in the least like a passage, resembled the fore-space of the temple, and other buildings; it was twice as long as it was broad. How, then, could a building, the breadth of which was three-fifths of its length, be a mere passage? If the porch of pillars were only a passage to the hall of judgment, it is inexplicable why the text gives only the size of the subordinate part, and says not a word about those of the main portion. All this forces us to the conclusion that the measure is that of the whole building, including, therefore, both divisions, the porch of pillars and porch of judgment. The latter must have been, then, the rear division, in which, like the *debir* of Jehovah's house, the throne described (chap. x. 18, *sq.*) stood; the former the front, a building of pillars in fact, where they who were admitted to the king's audience assembled, or over whom he sat in judgment. This view explains why the porch of pillars had also a fore-porch and an entrance-space, such as a mere passage never has, but which is appropriate only to buildings. This fore-porch was no doubt an entrance-space, the roof of which was supported by two or four pillars, as the Targumists explain the word עָב, a threshold space, a "perron with steps" (Keil). If both divisions of the building are called אוּלָם, it is because it was the entrance building of the king's peculiar residence. The concluding words of ver. 7: **covered with cedar from one side of the floor to the other,** can mean only this: that the floor of the porch of pillars, as well as the floor of the porch of judgment, was covered with cedar. Keil explains: "from the lower floor to the upper, in so far, namely, over the porch of judgment as there were rooms built;" the floor of the latter being the ceiling of the hall of judgment. The existence of an upper structure is not, however, hinted at, and how could the text, instead of simply saying from the floor to the ceiling, speak of a floor without saying of what it was the floor. The Vulgate translates: *a pavimento usque ad summitatem;* the reading must have been different therefore, and as the Syriac has it thus also, Thenius supposes that instead of הַקַּרְקַע it originally stood הַקּוֹרוֹת in the text, which is to be understood, as in chap. vi. 15 and 16, of the beams of the roof. In this case the words might bear the meaning, which seems very admissible, that the porch walls were lined with cedar from the floor to the roof-beams.

Ver. 8. **And his house where he dwelt, &c.** Solomon's dwelling-house and that of his wife were indeed separate houses, but formed together the *third* building in connection with the palace. This building had another *court within the porch,* *i. e.*, behind the porch of judgment. Both dwellings were *like unto this work,* that is, they had walls of cedar-wood like the porch of judgment, and were splendidly and gorgeously made. The

queen's house was behind that of the king, according to the universal Eastern custom (Winer, *R.-W.-B.*, i. *s.* 468); it is not only here, but also in chap. ix. 24, expressly said, that it was built **for Pharaoh's daughter,** not therefore for a harem (Thenius). The 700 wives and 300 concubines afterwards mentioned (chap. xi. 3) could scarcely have lived in the queen's own house. Thenius gives the reason why the king's and queen's dwellings are not more accurately described: "because in most cases there was only access to the porch of judgment, and because audience of the king, even in the court of his residence, had probably become very difficult to obtain in Solomon's reign." But the reason was more likely that, whilst the armory and the porches of pillars and of judgment were uncommon buildings, the dwelling-house did not differ from ordinary dwellings in its architecture and furnishing, except in being more costly. It required, therefore, no minute description.

Vers. 9–12. **All these were of costly stones, &c.** What vers. 9 and 10 state, must be taken to refer to all three buildings that formed the palace. [Mr. T. O. Paine is of opinion that vers. 9–12 "are concerning the temple again—because the pillars are stone. In the house of the king they are cedar, ver. 2." But this writer, after much pains-taking labor, does not satisfy.—E. H.] They could have been no mere wooden erections, but had walls of square stones, cut inside and outside (see on chap. v. 31) **even unto the coping,** *i. e.*, "to the corner-stones on which the beams of the roof rested" (Keil). The Sept. has ἕως τῶν γείσων, but γεῖσον is the roof projection. Thenius thinks this was "the pinnacle-like protection of the flat roofs;" this edge, however, is nowhere called טְפָחוֹת, but מַעֲקֶה (Deut. xxii. 8). The words: **on the outside toward the great court,** mean, according to Thenius, "from the outside (front) to the great (rear) court." But this מִחוּץ cannot mean something entirely different from the immediately preceding word. An "outer" court presupposes an "inner" one (chap. vi. 36), but not a rear one, and the inner could never be called "great," in distinction from the outer one. The great court was evidently that which surrounded all the palace buildings (Ewald); and we must suppose that there was such an one even if not named here. All the buildings were formed of square stones from top to bottom, and the same even used outside too, even to the outer great court. Even the foundations, which were not seen outside, were made of these larger stones (ver. 10). Lastly (ver. 11), it is added that this great court had the same surrounding as the inner temple court, namely, three rows of stones and one of cedar (see on chap. vi. 36). Keil and Le Clerc think the **porch of the house** to be (ver. 12) the "columned- and throne-hall" of the palace, which had the same surrounding as the great court had. The text, however, mentions, besides the latter, only one court of the dwelling (ver. 8), but says nothing about a third court around that porch. The words immediately preceding suggest scarcely anything else than the porch of Jehovah's house; but as this had no court, the meaning must be, as with the court, which was within or before the porch. [So Bp. Horsley, after Houbigant, suggests that perhaps for ולחצר, we should read כחצר, like the inner court.—E. H.] Calmet only finds the similarity there in *ut parietes mixtam lapidibus cedrum exhiberent.*

Vers. 13–14. **And the king . . . . and fetched Hiram.** Ver. 13. Comp 2 Chron. ii. 13. According to this, Hiram was the son of a Tyrian, and of an Israelitish woman from the neighboring Dan, in the tribe of Naphtali, not, as the Rabbins say, an adopted son. His skill is described in the same words as that of Bezaleel in Ex. xxxi. 3 *sq.*, only the addition, "filled with the spirit of God" is wanting. The art of casting brass is very ancient; the making of this metal, which "has a peculiar red color and strong lustre, and is of considerable hardness" (Rosenmüller, *Alterthumsk.*, IV., i. *s.* 156), was much earlier understood than that of iron (Winer, *R.-W.-B.*, ii. *s.* 90). In what now follows we have only a description of the vessels that were added to those of the tabernacle; the others are merely named. The Chronicles alone mention the altar of burnt-offering (II. iv. 1).

Vers. 15–20. **And he cast two pillars of brass.** Vers. 15–22. Comp. 2 Chron. iii. 15–17; iv. 12 *sq.*; 2 Kings xxv. 17; Jer. lii. 21 *sq.* Each of these pillars,* *i. e.*, the shafts, was eighteen cubits high and twelve in circumference, was four fingers thick, and hollow within (Jer. lii. 21). As the Chronicles alone, differently from all other passages, gives thirty-five cubits as the height, this number is "evidently formed by changing the sign יח = 18, into לה = 35" (Keil). [The conjecture of Abarbinel, that the chronicler gives the sum-total of the height of the two pillars, is gravely adopted by Bp. Patrick on the place.—E. H.] The chapiters were cast separately, and then placed on the shafts; each of the former was five cubits high (ver. 16), and had, as 2 Chron. iv. 12 relates, an upper and lower part. כֹּתֶרֶת sometimes denotes the entire capital (ver. 16), sometimes the upper (ver. 19) and sometimes the lower part (vers. 17, 18, 20). The *upper* part was *lily-work* (vers. 19, 22), *i. e.*, in the form of a full-blown lily-cup. As שׁוּשַׁן means only lily, Thenius has no grounds for supposing it to be the lotus, because there were pillar capitals in Egyptian buildings which had the form of the lotus-flower. The lotus-flower does not once occur in the entire Old Testament, but the lily very often, for it was common in Palestine, and grows without cultivation (Winer, *R.-W.-B.*, ii. *s.* 28). The molten sea had also the same form (ver. 26). The four cubits (ver. 19) are not the measure of the diameter of the lily-work (Thenius), but of its height, which was much more important for the form of the entire capital, than the diameter, which was easily discoverable from the given circumference of the pillar. [Bp. Horsley takes the view which Thenius has adopted. He translates, "and the chapiters that were upon the top of the pillars (were) *in a socket* (באולם) of the shape of a lily of four cubits," and adds, the four cubits are to be understood, I think, of the general breadth of the lily, &c.—E. H.] And it is the more impossible to doubt that this upper part of the capital was the

* If we should follow K. O. Müller's phraseology and that of other writers upon ancient art, we should use the word "columns" here instead of "pillars." *Archæology*, &c., p. 265-268.—E. H.

largest and principal part, as ver. 22 expressly repeats at the close of the whole description: "and upon the top of the pillars was lily-work." Some think it should be three instead of four cubits high as in ver. 19, but they have no grounds but the uncertain passage 2 Kings xxv. 17, where there was very probably a change of ה = 5 into ג = 3. The *lower* part of the capital, which was only one cubit, is not very clearly described. It was made of checker or net-work (ver. 17), pomegranates (ver. 18), and a belly (ver. 20). Instead of the last (בֶּטֶן) in vers. 41, 42; and in 2 Chron. iv. 12, 13, גֻּלָּה occurs, *i. e.*, *arch*, swelling (see Gesenius, W. B., an גָּלַל). This arching was לְעֻבַּר, *i. e.*, on the other side of the net-work (ver. 20), therefore not on it or over it, but behind or under it. In so far as the net-work lay over or upon it, it could, as seen from outside, be described as lying beyond it (Keil). The *net-work* consisted of seven wires (גְּדִלִים); it was chain-work, the wires being plaited like a chain, woven crosswise together, thus forming a lattice-work or net. It is not that they hung down like chains (Gesenius). Possibly the text in ver. 17 may not be wholly above suspicion, but Thenius undertakes a daring and unjustifiable critical operation when he blots out chain-work, chiefly because the Sept. does, and reads שְׂבָכָה for שִׁבְעָה twice, and then translates: "and he made two lattices or trellis-wires to cover the capitals that (were) on the tops of the pillars, one for one and one for the other capital." Lastly, the *pomegranates*, of which there were 200, 100 in a row (ver. 20), were, no doubt, in a row above, and a row below the net-work, and thus served for a border to the latter. According to Jer. lii. 23, 96 of the 100 pomegranates were רוּחָה, which means neither "open to the air," *i. e.*, uncovered (Böttcher, Thenius), nor *dependentia* (Vulgate), or "hanging free" (Ewald), but only "windwards" (Hitzig), *i. e.*, turned to the four quarters of the heavens, as רוּחַ in Ezek. xlii. 16–18 (comp. xxxvii. 9); four pomegranates marked the places where each two quarters of the heavens met. The text says nothing of pedestals for the pillars; but it would scarcely have passed over so important a part of the pillars had they existed.

Ver. 21. **And he set up the pillars**, &c. There have been, and still are to this day, two opinions in sharp contrast one with the other as to the precise place where the two pillars were erected. According to one, they supported the roof of the porch, which stood quite open at the front (see Meyer, Merz), or the projection of the entrance leading to it (Ewald, Thenius); according to the other, they stood alone, before the porch, and without supporting anything (Stieglitz, Kugler, Schnaase, Winer, Keil). After repeated investigation of the subject, I find it impossible to subscribe to either opinion. Against the first there are the following objections: (*a*) The pillars were brazen, and begin the list of all the metal articles, which were first finished by the peculiarly skilful artisan Hiram, after the building of the temple was completed (chap. vi. 14, 37, 38). If they had been designed to bear up the roof of the porch or the projection of its entrance, they could not have been vessels, but necessary integral parts of the building; but as this was "finished" without them, and as supporting pillars of brass are never found in stone and wooden buildings; these pillars, which were works of art, could not have had an architectural but only a monumental character, and this is shown by the names attached to them. Stieglitz truly says: "It was their separate position alone which gave these pillars the impressive aspect they were designed to wear, and the significant dignity with which they increased the grandeur of the whole, while they shed light upon its purpose." (*b*) The entire height of the pillars was (with their capitals) twenty-three cubits; but that of the porch was either twenty or thirty cubits (see on chap. vi. 3). In the first case the pillars must have been too high, in the latter too low, to bear up the porch-roof; for even if they had pedestals, these could not have been seven cubits high. (*c*) As the text does not mention any portal to the porch, still less does it say anything of any "projection" over the same, which was borne up by the pillars (Thenius), or of any "beam" joining the pillars above, on which there was another structure, or "decoration" (Ewald). The appeal to Amos ix. 1: "Smite the lintel of the door, that the posts may shake," is quite out of place, for סִפִּים never mean the projections of buildings, but the thresholds (Judges xix. 27; 2 Kings xii. 10; Isa. vi. 4). Neither can anything be proved from Ezekiel's vision (chap. xl. 48), for the two pillars are not once named in it. The Sept. indeed mentions a μέλαθρον ἐπ' ἀμφοτέρων τῶν στύλων, in ver. 20, but this was quite gratuitous; they do not translate ver. 20 at all, but give a completely different one, a mere gloss, of which the Hebrew text does not contain a word. We must conclude, then, that they stood separately. But in respect now of the other opinion, that they were placed *in front* of the porch, the בְּאֻלָם in ver. 19 contradicts that, as does also לְאֻלָם in ver. 21. However we may understand ver. 19, which is certainly obscure, בָּאוּלָם cannot be translated, "in that manner, or according to the porch" (Keil), which would be equivalent to כָּאוּלָם, which Raschi accepts, and which means "that the lily-work was on the pillar-capitals as well as on the porch." Now there is not one word about the lily-work on the porch. Still less can בָּאוּלָם mean לִפְנֵי הָאוּלָם, but only *in* the porch. Further, לְאֻלָם cannot be translated: "before the porch" (Luther), or "at the porch" (Keil), *i. e.*, in front, but only, *for* the porch. As the molten sea and the bases were for the outer court, the golden altar, candlestick, and shewbread for the house, so the two pillars were for the porch, and stood in it as the former stood in the court and the house. The Sept. give in ver. 15: καὶ ἐχώνευσε τοὺς δύο στύλους τῷ αἰλὰμ τοῦ οἴκου, and translate, ver. 21: καὶ ἔστησε τοὺς στύλους τοῦ αἰλὰμ τοῦ ναοῦ. With this 2 Chron. iii. 13, 17 fully agrees it says he made לִפְנֵי הַבַּיִת two pillars, . . . and placed the pillars עַל־פְּנֵי הַהֵיכָל. For if they were in the porch, they must have stood immediately before the house, that is, before the principal com-

partment. But it says nowhere that he placed them before the porch. If the latter were thirty cubits high, as most think, the pillars could have stood free inside, as their monumental character required.

Vers. 21–22. **And called the name thereof, &c.** Thenius justly remarks: "There can be nothing more improbable than that pillars standing at the entrance to God's house should have been named after the donor, or their architect (Gesenius); and it is impossible to understand the assertion, 'that they were no doubt named at their erection and dedication, after men much liked at that time, perhaps some of Solomon's young sons' (Ewald)." But Thenius' own assertion does not seem less improbable; namely, that "the pillars, which apparently bore up the entire building of the temple (?) had the characters יָכֵן בְּעֹז, *i. e.*, He (the Lord) founds (or: may He found) with strength, engraved, or formed in the casting, and that the people read these words, which should be taken together (?), separately, and . . . gave them as names to the pillars." Aside from every other consideration, it is not, he had inscribed יכן בעז on the two pillars; but: he called the name of the one at the right יכן, and called the name of the one at the left בעז; so these were two distinct "names," and not a sentence of connected words. We have no reason to change בֹּעַז to בְּעֹז; יָכִן means rather: *statuit, fundavit*, and is used about the founding and establishing of the kingdom, the throne, and the sanctuary (1 Kings vi. 19; Ezra iii. 3; 2 Sam. vii. 12; 2 Chron. xvii. 5). בֹּעַז is composed of עַז, strength, power, firmness (Gen. xlix. 3), and בוֹ, *i. e.*, in Him, Jehovah. The name means exactly the same as in Isai. xlv. 24, עֹז . . . בַּיהוָֹה, a thought often occurring in the Old Testament (Ps. xxviii. 7, 8; xlvi. 2; lxii. (7) 8; lxxxvi. 6; cxl. 7; Isai. xlix. 5; Jer. xvi. 19). The first name denotes the founding and establishing of the central sanctuary, in contrast with the tabernacle; the second denotes the firmness and stability of the same. Simonis (*Onom.*, *s.* 430, 460): *Stabiliet templum, in illo* (*Domino*) *robur*.

Vers. 23–26. **And he made a molten sea, &c.** Comp. 2 Chron. iv. 2–5. The name יָם only means the great quantity of water that the vessel contained. *Latini ejusmodi vasa appellant lacus* (Castel.). The 10 cubits denote the diameter, 30 the circumference, not certainly the mathematical proportion, but very near it, for we must reckon 9 cubits and rather more than half a cubit for the diameter, for 30 cubits of circumference. The 5 cubits are for the depth of the vessel, which was not cylindrical, as some old pictures represent, but, according to ver. 26, was shaped like a lily, with an edge curved outwards, and widening out considerably lower down. It could only hold 2,000 baths of water (ver. 26) with a form like that, as Thenius (*Stud. u. Kritiken*, 1846, I.) has proved. Chronicles, on the contrary, gives 3,000 baths (2 Chron. iv. 5), but this is a confusion of the signs ב and נ (Keil); it is also a mistake of the pen when ver. 3 gives פקרים instead of פקעים. The latter does not mean coloquinths, but flower-buds (see above, on chap. vi. 29). The two rows must have been pretty close together, under the edge of the vessel. The position of the 12 oxen is remarked especially, but nothing said of their size or height. Thenius thinks they must have been as high as the vessel at least; this would make the whole vessel 10 cubits high. It is impossible to say whether the feet of these oxen rested on the floor of the court, as on a brazen plate (Keil), or whether they stood in a basin. As the priests had only to wash their hands and feet, the vessel was provided (so the rabbinical traditions say) with faucets for letting out the water. It is very improbable that the water came from the mouths of the oxen, as many suppose.

Vers. 27–39. **And he made ten bases of, &c.** The description of these vessels, vers. 27–39, is involved in much more obscurity than that of the two brazen pillars. All the pains which the latest commentators have spent upon it have not cleared it up fully, because the text (under consideration) is no longer the original one; the old translations are widely different from it, and do not agree together. The insertions also which we have admitted into our translation, following now Thenius, and now Keil, do not claim to have solved the exegetical riddle. Above all, it is necessary to realize what the object of these vessels was. 2 Chron. iv. 6 says that the priests "washed such things as they offered for the burnt-offering," *i. e.*, those parts of the sacrificial animal which were placed on the altar to be burnt, as ordered in Lev. i. 9 (comp. Ezek. xl. 38). Hence it appears that the basin which held the water for washing was the chief thing in that complicated vessel, and all the other parts only made for the sake of that one part. The altar of burnt-offering of the temple was 10 cubits high (2 Chron. iv. 1); a step for the priests to stand on, when performing their functions, was much more needed in this altar than in that of the tabernacle, which was only 3 cubits high (Ex. xxvii. 1–5). Now, in order to perform the washing of the parts for sacrifice at the altar itself, without descending, the basins must, on the one hand, have stood high, and higher than the altar-step, and on the other, have been movable also, so that they could have easily been brought backwards and forwards, filled or emptied. So we see that a wheelwork was needed for the high basins or lavers. The basins, bases, and wheelwork were then the component parts of the vessel. The *basins* (lavers), being the simplest part, are the least explicitly described in ver. 38. The word כִּיּוֹר occurs oftenest, for the basins of the tabernacle (Ex. xxx. 18, 28; xxxi. 9, &c.); these were not cylindrical, as is well known, but shaped more like a kettle; and nowhere else is a vessel described which has the form of a pot or jug. It appears from Zach. xii. 6, that a firebasin (pan) was of a flatter shape than a kettle, and had at least the form of a cooking-pot, as Zullig thinks (*die Cherubimwagen*, *s.* 79, 94). The measure 4 cubits can only be understood, like ver. 31, to apply to the diameter (Thenius), and not to the depth. Thenius reckons the 40 baths at 12 eimer and 16 kannen, Dresden measure. [Without a parade of decimals, in the rough as one may say, the Dresden kanne is *about* one quart (+). Seventy-two kannen are one eimer, *i. e.*, seventy-two quarts. 72 × 12 = 864 quarts. To these must be added 16 quarts, and the whole amount is 880 quarts or 220 gallons. If however any one wishes to work out the sum, it may be well to add that 1 kanne = 0.937

liter, and 1 liter = 1.0567 quart (wine-measure).—E. H.] In respect of the second main part of the vessel, the **base** מְכוֹנָה, so much is certain, that it was a four-cornered box, which consisted of strong edge-bands on the top and on the bottom, along the sides, as well as at the corners: into which the walls (or panels) were introduced, and were held by these edge-bands as in a frame. Figures were engraved on these walls (panels, מִסְגְּרוֹת): lions, oxen, and cherubim (according to Josephus, distributed in three different fields). The box had also 4 **feet** פְּעָמוֹת (ver. 30), at the 4 corners, no doubt; with which it stood upon the axle-trees of the wheelwork. It is very difficult to form an adequate and just view of the 4 **undersetters**, כְּתֵפֹת, which are named in ver. 30 with the feet, and in ver. 34 with the wheelwork; they must have projected certainly from the feet, but it is uncertain in what manner they were connected with the box, and what they bore—whether indeed they bore anything. The box seems to have been open at the bottom, but it had an arched covering at the top (ver. 35) with a round ornament, a crown כֹּתֶרֶת (ver. 31) on which the basin was placed. But the nature of the hands or holders יָדוֹת and their relation to the arched cover and the crown, is obscure. They must have been rather broad, as the figures were engraved upon them as well as on the cover (vers. 35, 36). It is equally difficult to say where and how the borders mentioned in vers. 29, 30, and 36, לֹיוֹת, were put on. According to ver. 29 they were מַעֲשֵׂה מוֹרָד, by which Thenius, appealing to the מִקְלְעוֹת in ver. 31, and וַיְפַתַּח in ver. 36, understands "work of cutting in, *i. e.*, sunken work;" but if the text meant this, why did it not make use of the identical expressions? The specific word must denote something specific; it remains only to take the usual translation, "hanging work" (Vulgate: *dependentia*), "which certainly does not mean festoons hanging free, and waving in the air" (Keil); מוֹרָד means a declivity (hanging) in a local sense (comp. Josh. vii. 5; x. 11; Jer. xlviii. 5). According to ver. 29 the borders were on the edge-frames above as well as under the carved work upon the side walls of the box or chest, for כֵּן cannot be here, as Keil has it, a substantive, "and upon the ledges there was a base above," but only an adverb (De Wette, Thenius, and others), as in ver. 18. But we cannot with certainty ascertain the meaning of "at the side of every addition" (wreath) at the end of ver. 30. [Bp. Horsley, "at the side of every addition." Rather "each over-against a compound figure." The shoulder-pieces (instead of "undersetters") went just so far down within the base as to be on a level with the compound figures on the outside."—E. H.] The "additions (wreaths) round about" in ver. 36 are the same as mentioned in ver. 29. The third main part, *i. e.*, the *wheels*, differed so far from wheels of ordinary vehicles that their axle-trees were not immediately under the box or chest, but under its feet, so that the edges moved completely under the box, and the carved work on its sides was not hid by the wheels (ver. 32). But it is impossible to determine the relation of the hands or holders of the wheels to the feet of the box and to the shoulder-pieces (ver. 30). The description of the wheels begun in ver. 30 is continued in vers. 32, 33, 34; but ver. 31 treats of the upper part of the box, which is further described in vers. 35 and 36; strictly speaking, therefore, ver. 31 should stand immediately before vers. 35 and 36, or else vers. 31, 35, and 36 immediately before ver. 30. Fortunately the whole of the difficult section from vers. 27–39 does not treat of a main integral part of the temple, and not even of one of the principal vessels, but only of one that is subordinate and secondary. Its description, therefore, obscure as it is, may be regarded as sufficient, at least as far as concerns its purpose. The best drawings that have been made of this vessel are those of Thenius (*Commentar*, taf. III., fig. 4), and Keil (*Archäologie*, I., taf. 2, fig. 4); and the most defective of all, whether ancient or modern, that of Unruh (*das Alte Jerusalem*, Fig. 11).

Vers. 40–47. **And Hiram made the lavers, &c.** Ver. 40. The first part of this verse forms a kind of independent section, for the lavers, shovels, and basins did not belong to the bases, but were, like the latter, utensils of the altar of burnt-offering. The lavers were for carrying away water, &c., the shovels for removing the ashes, the basins for catching the blood that spouted from the sacrifice (Ex. xxvii. 3; Numb. iv. 14). It is remarkable that the text never names the chief vessel of all, the altar of burnt-offering; for it was made anew at the same time (2 Chron. iv. 1), and upon a larger scale. Perhaps it was not made by Hiram, who only executed the more artistic brass-castings, among which this altar could not be reckoned. The words, **and so Hiram made an end of doing all the work,** &c., begin the general list of all the vessels Hiram had made, the brass, from ver. 40 to 47, and the golden, from ver. 48 to 51. The former were all of **bright brass** (מְמֹרָט), *i. e.*, it was polished after the casting, so that it shone like gold (see above, on ver. 13), but it was no actual *aurichalcum* (Vulgate); Josephus says, *χαλκὸς τὴν αὐγὴν ὅμοιος χρυσῷ καὶ τὸ κάλλος*. The region between Succoth and Zarthan is mentioned as the place where the brass works were cast in the clay, *i. e.*, in moulds of potters' earth. Succoth (Judg. viii. 5; Josh. xiii. 27) lay beyond Jordan, not on the south side of Jabbok (Keil), but rather northwards, for it could not possibly have been very far from Zarthan, which chap. iv. 12 places near Beth-shean, on this side Jordan. Consequently the foundry must have been on this side too; Burkhardt says (*Reise*, II. *s.* 593) that the "soil is all marl, and the further shore has no hollows whatever." Comparison of both places shows that they lay diagonally opposite, and there was no larger ground suitable for the brass foundry in this side of the valley above (or below) Zarthan (Keil). The quantity of brass was so great (comp. 1 Chron. xviii. 8), that it was not necessary to weigh it out carefully for each distinct vessel; and the weight of each cannot therefore be ascertained. וַיַּנַּח, ver. 47, does not mean: he laid them down, but he let them lie, *i. e.*, he did not weigh them, as the following verses show.

Vers. 48–51. **And Solomon made all the**

vessels . . . of gold. We are not to conclude from the subject, "Solomon," that Hiram made only the brazen vessels (Thenius). As Hiram also knew how to work in gold (2 Chron. ii. 13), it is far more likely that Solomon intrusted him also with the goldsmith's work. The golden vessels are evidently only named, and not described, because they were made like those of the tabernacle (comp. Ex. xxx. 1 *sq.*; xxv. 23 to 40), only upon a larger scale. The addition in 2 Chron. iv. 8: "he made also ten tables, and placed them in the temple, five on the right side and five on the left," is declared to be an error by modern interpreters; but we might just as reasonably strike out the account of the altar of burnt-offering, which is not given in our text. The account is so definite that it cannot be a pure invention; besides, soon after, in ver. 19, the plural הַשֻּׁלְחָנוֹת occurs, and it is said also in 1 Chron. xxviii. 16: "And (David gave to Solomon) by weight . . . gold for the tables of shew-bread, for every table." Now when 2 Chron. xxix. 18 mentions but one table, this is no contradiction (Thenius); for it says in 2 Chron. xiii. 11: "and we burn, *i. e.*, light, the golden candlestick every evening;" and yet, according to our text, there were 10 candlesticks. One asks, Why 10 tables? but we, on the other hand, ask, Why 10 candlesticks, if only one were lighted? There is no ground for the opinion that the rest of the tables served for the purpose of resting the candlesticks upon them; for then there must have been 11 of them, and instead of being called tables of shew-bread (1 Chron. xxviii. 16) they must have been called tables of the candlesticks.—**Which David had dedicated** (ver. 51). According to 2 Sam. viii. 7–12; 1 Chron. xviii. 7–11, David had taken a quantity of brass, silver, and gold from the conquered Syrians, Moabites, Ammonites, Philistines, and Amalekites, which treasures he dedicated to sacred purposes. 1 Chron. xxii. 14, 16 also alludes to the great store of these metals. Immense as was the quantity of brass and gold needed for the temple, the supply was not exhausted. The rest consisted partly of unwrought gold and silver, partly of vessels, and was preserved in the sanctuary itself. Probably some of the side-chambers served as a treasury.*

HISTORICAL AND ETHICAL.

1. *The king's house* was the second large building that Solomon undertook. "After the completion of the sacred building . . . he began the building of an house which should shed lustre on the second power in Israel, the kingdom which was then approaching its culminating point" (Ewald). Chap. ix. 1 and 10 accords with our passage, in placing the two buildings near together. The section from ver. 1–12 is therefore no addition, interrupting the description of the temple building, but is purposely assigned that place; and the description of the vessels, ver. 14–50, is a sequel to that of the temple, and forms the transition to chap. viii. To Israel the monarchy had become a necessary institution, and stood so little in opposition to divine rule, that it rather served to sustain the latter; the king not being an absolute sovereign, and, as in other Eastern states, God's vicegerent, but a servant of Jehovah, who had to execute His orders and to maintain the law (= covenant). Like the theocracy, the monarchy also had reached its highest point through David; and Solomon represents this culminating point. When, therefore, a spacious, splendid house was built for an abiding dwelling-place, a sign and monument of Jehovah's might and truth, instead of the tabernacle hitherto used, it was fitting that it should be a house corresponding with the greatness and prosperity of the kingdom. Therefore the building, which was a token and pledge of the theocracy, was followed by one which represented the kingdom; and both stood, according to their signification, on two opposite neighboring hills. [We must repeat our doubts of the author's topography here. See above, *Exeget.* on ver. 1.—E. H.]

2. *The plan and arrangement of the king's house* quite accord with the conception Israel had of the calling of the monarchy. When the people desired a king, they said to Samuel, "that our king may judge us, and fight our battles" (1 Sam. viii. 20). The first or foremost of the three buildings which together formed the royal palace, namely the armory, set forth the mission of the king against his enemies; and it represented his protecting war-strength; the next building, the porch of pillars and the porch of the throne, or of judgment, signified the vocation of the king in respect of his subjects, viz., judging and ruling (see above on chap. iii. 9; 1 Sam. viii. 5, 6; 2 Sam. xv. 4); it represented the royal elevation and majesty; lastly, the third and innermost building was the real dwelling-house, where the king lived with his consort; a private house which he had an equal right with any of his subjects to possess. The plan of the palace thus was very simple, and follows so clearly from the nature of the relations, that we need not seek for the model of it anywhere. Least of all should we be likely to find such in Egypt, although Thenius does not doubt that "Solomon built the royal residence after Egyptian models," and then refers us to the palaces at Medinat-Abu, Luxor, and Carnac. Just the main feature in the one we have been considering, *i. e.*, the three parts forming a completely united whole, is wanting in these Egyptian buildings, which besides were entirely of stone, and consequently quite differently constructed. Where is there anything in Egypt that in the least approximates to the house of the forest of Lebanon, with its numerous wooden pillars and galleries? Solomon's palace, as well as the temple, belonged entirely to the architecture of anterior Asia, but the fundamental idea upon which its plan and interior arrangement rested, was essentially and specifically Israelitish.

3. *The calling of Hiram from Tyre* to finish all the temple-vessels, was occasioned by the want of distinguished artists in Israel (see above on chap. v. No. 3). As Hiram's mother was an Israelite, which is expressly mentioned, we may well suppose that he was not unacquainted with the God whom his mother worshipped, and therefore was better able than all other Tyrian artists to enter into the right spirit and meaning of the works

* If the reader wish to investigate this subject any further, he can find some strange fancies, and occasionally good guesses, in Mr. T. O. Paine's *Solomon's Temple, &c.*, Boston, 1861, on chap. vii.

which Solomon intrusted to him. But besides this, the sending for Hiram is important, inasmuch as it shows that Solomon desired to have real works of art, and that he so little despised art as the handmaid of religion, that he even sent for a heathen and foreign artisan. In his "wisdom" he regarded the command, Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven image, not as the prohibition of every species of religious sculpture. In this respect he rises far above the Pharisaism of Josephus, who accounts the images of the oxen supporting the molten sea, and the lions near his throne, as much breaches of the law as the peopling of his harem with foreign women (Joseph., *Antiq.* 8, 7, 5). Modern spiritualism, which rejects all plastic art in the service of the church, by an appeal to a false interpretation of our Lord's words in John iv. 24, is a lapse into the narrow-minded Jewish Pharisaism.

[The service of art in the Christian Church, and its employment by Christians in behalf of the interests of religion, is always recognized except in periods of intense reforming life, when an iconoclastic spirit is apt to develop itself. The men who "denuded" the churches in the sixteenth and in the seventeenth centuries, regarded "ornaments" as snares to the conscience, and as the foster-nurses of superstitions. The principle laid down and developed by Neander is the true one, viz., that the design of the Christian religion, which is to promote holiness of life, should be kept constantly in view; and that the beautiful should be observed and employed subordinately to this design. When the beautiful becomes, or tends to become, supreme in worship and in Christian art, then it becomes unlawful.

Solomon, in the luxuriance of his nature, undoubtedly was exceptional in his taste for ornament; and, in this respect, he did not represent the genius either of Judaism or of the Hebrew race. And the tradition as being against him, was true to the instincts of the race.—E. H.]

4. *The well-defined difference of the materials of the vessels* used in Solomon's temple next strikes us. Those made for the interior of the building were all of gold; all those outside of it, of brass. The design of this is apparent. Gold (see *Historical, &c.*, on chap. vi. No. 5), by virtue of its surpassing splendor, is the celestial metal, and was therefore fitted for the typical heavenly dwelling, where all is gold. Brass (see *Exeget. and Crit.* remarks on ver. 13) most resembles gold in color and brilliancy, but stands in the same relation to it that iron does to silver (Isai. lx. 17); it approaches nearest to gold, and is fitted, not indeed for the building itself, but for its approaches, the porch and the outer court. There were, then, no new vessels unknown in the tabernacle; but the two pillars, Jachin and Boaz, were new. There was the old ark of the covenant in the holy of holies (chap. viii. 3), the altar, candlestick, and table in the holy place, the altar of burnt-offering (brazen altar) in the outer court (2 Chron. iv. 1); the molten sea instead of the laver (Ex. xxx. 18), and the lavers instead of the basins, which it is to be presupposed from Lev. i. 13 were used. The increased size of some of these vessels, such as the altar of burnt-offering and the brazen sea, as well as the multiplication of others, such as the candlestick, the table, and the "bases," was called for in part by the increased size of the sanctuary, and the relation of the house (palace) to the tent, and in part by the extension of the central-cultus.

5. *The two pillars Jachin and Boaz* were no more an innovation than the erection of a house instead of a tent; they owed their existence to the conditions that distinguished a new period of the theocracy. This we learn from their suggestive names. Jachin refers to the fact that Jehovah's dwelling-place, hitherto movable and moving, was now firmly fixed in the midst of His people; Boaz tells of the power, strength, and durability of the house. Both were monuments of Jehovah's covenant with His people, monuments of the saving might, grace, and faithfulness of the God of Israel, who at last crowned the deliverance from Egypt, by dwelling and reigning ever in a sure house in the midst of His people. It stands to reason that such pillars could not have been placed before the tent; they could only stand before the house, where they belonged to the porch, for it was the latter that gave to the dwelling-place the appearance of a house and a palace, in distinction from that of a tent. They were formed in accordance with their signification, being not of wood, not slender and slight, but of brass, thick and strong, which gave the impression of firmness and durability. The crown (capital), which is the principal characteristic of every pillar, consisted mainly, as did the brazen sea, of an open *lily-cup.* The Hebrew named the lily simply "the white," (שׁוֹשָׁן from שׁוּשׁ, to be white;) it is, therefore, a natural symbol of purity and of holiness to him.

The priests, as the "holy ones" (Ex. iii. 27 *sq.*), were dressed in white (Num. xvi. 7), and the high-priest, the holiest of the holy, wore, on the great day of atonement, white garments, instead of his usual many-colored ones; and these white robes were called "holy garments" (Lev. xvi. 4, 32). Inasmuch as "holiness" was the characteristic and fundamental idea of the Israelitish religion, the "white," *i. e.*, the lily, seems to have been their religious flower, as the lotus was the well-known sacred flower of the Indian and Egyptian religions. Besides this, the lily is nowhere more indigenous than in Palestine (Matt. vi. 28; Winer, *R.-W.-B.*, ii. *s.* 28), and it may therefore be named the flower of the promised land, as the palm was its tree (see above, *Histor. and Ethical*, in chap. vi. No. 6, b). If the capitals of the pillars were thus always and everywhere decorated with carvings of flowers, no more characteristic and suitable one could be chosen for the capitals before the "holy temple" (Ps. v. 7; lxxix. 1; cxxxviii. 2) than the lily. *The pomegranates* on the capital, and which were also on the high-priest's robe, are no less characteristic (Ex. xxviii. 33 *sq.*). As the apple is the figure generally of the word (Prov. xxv. 11), so the pomegranate, the noblest and finest of all apples, is the symbol of the noblest, most precious word, that of Jehovah, which is essentially law (= covenant). Just as this law is a complex unity, consisting of a number of single commands, that delight the heart and are sweeter than honey (Ps. xix. 9, 11), so the pomegranate encloses a number of precious, delicious, and refreshing seeds. The Chaldee paraphrast renders the words (Eccles. iv. 13, thus: "Thy youths are filled with (divine) laws, like pomegranates," and vi. 11: "if they are full of good works (*i. e.*, of the law) like pomegranates." The Gemara also uses the expression:

"Full of the commandments (of God) as a pomegranate" (comp. *Symbol. des Mos. Kult.*, ii. *s.* 122 *sq.*). Now the union of this symbol with the lily is very natural, for the law was the revealed sacred will of Jehovah, and the covenant, which was identical with it, was a covenant of holiness. The symbol, therefore, bore the seal of the same number as the law and covenant, *i. e.*, ten. Each row of pomegranates consisted of ten times ten; they were adjusted to the different quarters of the heavens, exactly as the typical heavenly dwelling was, the kernel and centre of the same being the law laid up in the ark. *The nets*, or net-work, connected with the significant symbols of the lily and pomegranate, cannot be viewed as mere ornaments, used only "for graceful and suitable fastenings of the pomegranates" (Thenius). The number seven engraved on them (the symbolical number of the covenant-relation and of sanctification) (*Symb. des Mos. Kult.*, i. *s.* 193) shows the contrary. But their signification cannot be exactly known, through utter want of analogous objects to judge from. The later critics have declared these pillars to have been only imitations of heathen symbols, but this is a very uncritical and superficial view. It borders on the ridiculous to look on them as phallus-figures, or to compare them with the phallus 180 feet high in the temple of the Syrian goddess at Hierapolis (Lucian., *de dea Syr.*, 28 *sq.*). It is also quite wrong to compare them with the two columns of the Phœnician Herakles, or Saturn, who bears up or sustains the world, like Jehovah, and yet lives and moves eternally (Movers, *Rel. der Phöniz.*, *s.* 292 *sq.*); for these pillars were, the one of gold and the other of emerald (Herodot., 2, 44); they were but an ell high, were square, anvil-shaped, and stood, like all idols, in the interior of the temple. It is not less astonishing to find these almost disproportionately thick, brazen pillars, taken for an imitation of the Egyptian stone obelisks (Stieglitz, *Gesch. der Baukunst*, *s.* 136), and to hear it asserted that "they originally represented, as needles (!) the power and force of the sun's rays." (Br. Bauer, *Relig. des A. T.*, ii. *s.* 92.) Why should the religion of Israel alone absolutely have had no peculiar symbols, but have borrowed all from the natural religions that stood so far beneath it?

6. *The molten sea was "for the priests to wash in"* (2 Chron. iv. 6), *i. e.*, "their hands and feet, when they went into the sanctuary or went up to the altar also, to offer incense before Jehovah" (Exod. xxx. 19 *sq.*), in fact before any of their priestly functions. It was, therefore, peculiarly the priests' vessel. Its form, that of an open *lily-cup*, corresponded to its purpose. If all budding and blossoming signified holiness and priesthood (Num. xvi. 7, comp. with xvii. 20, 23; Ps. xcii. 14), the flower named the "white," *i. e.*, the lily, must have been pre-eminently the priestly one. The forehead-plate of the high-priest, his insignia of office, was named צִיץ, flower, and the head-covering of the ordinary priests מִגְבָּעָה, cognate with גָּבִיעַ flower-cup (Ex. xxviii. 36, 40). The form of the lily-cup showed every one that the vessel was a priestly vessel; the flower-buds also that adorned the edge like a wreath, showed the same. The measure of the sea was according to the number dominant throughout the whole sanctuary, *i. e.*, the number ten (see above, *Histor. and Ethic.* on chap. vi. No. iv. b); it was ten cubits broad, five deep, and there were ten flower-buds to every cubit of the wreath. The molten sea, as a priest's vessel, stood beside, on *twelve young oxen*. The ox בָּקָר is not only the chief animal for sacrifice, but was the sacrificial animal of the priests, in distinction from that of all who were not priests. The law ordered a young ox to be the sacrifice for the high-priest and his house, and for the whole priesthood (comp. Lev. iv. 3 *sq.* with vers. 23, 27, 32, and xvi. 11, with ver. 15; Ex. xxix. 10 *sq.*; Num. viii. 8); it was specially the priests' animal. The twelve oxen, therefore, stood in the same relation to the molten sea, as the twelve lions to the king's throne (1 Kings x. 20), the lions being the royal animal. It is plain that the number twelve was not chosen merely for the sake of "symmetry" (Thenius), but had reference, like the twelve loaves on the table of shewbread, to the twelve tribes of Israel, and is moreover confirmed by the fact that they were placed just like the twelve tribes in camp, viz., three each to a quarter of the heavens (Num. ii. 2–31). The twelve beasts, then, were the symbol of the whole nation, not in its general, but in the peculiar characteristic imparted to it when it was chosen from all nations, as "a kingdom of priests, a holy nation" (Ex. xix. 6). As Israel stood in relation to all peoples as a priestly nation, so one tribe stood as the priest-tribe in relation to the whole nation; the special priesthood of the tribe rested upon the universal priesthood of the nation, and was, as it were, borne by it. The whole carved-work of the molten sea was rooted finally in this great idea. Here, also, instead of explaining Israelitish symbols by Israelitish ideas, just as with the brazen pillars, the effort has been made to look around for heathen models, and such an one has been found in the egg-shaped stone giant-vessel of thirty feet in circumference, having four handles, and ornamented with an ox, which stood at Amathus in Cyprus; it is also asserted that the twelve oxen were symbols of Time and the twelve months (Vatke, *Bibl. Theol.*, *s.* 324, 336: Winer, *R.-W.-B.*, ii. *s.* 68, n). We need scarcely say that that vessel belonged completely to nature-religion; the material (stone), the shape (that of an egg), the four handles (elements), the bull (generation); everything, in fact, denotes the fundamental dogmas of nature-religion; nothing but the blindest prejudice and utter want of critical capacity could discover —where the difference in outward form as well as in significance is so great—a likeness with the brazen sea, the purpose of which the biblical account itself states so clearly and definitely.

7. *The ten lavers on the movable bases were* united to the brazen sea (2 Chron. iv. 6), for as the latter served for the purification of the priests at their functions, so the former were for the washing of the sacrifices brought to the altar for burning. They were, therefore, only placed there for sacrificial service, the chief vessel of which was the altar of burnt-offering, and they stood in an inseparable though subordinate relation to it. As they were not independent, then, we need not seek any further signification for them, more than for the other lesser vessels, the pots, shovels, bowls. But if they were only useful articles, why does the text dwell so much at length on them, and describe them so exactly and carefully, while it

never once mentions the chief one, the altar itself? The altar of sacrifice seems to have been originally of earth, of unhewn stones (Ex. xx. 24 *sq.*); it had, therefore, only one covering, which gave it a definite shape, in the tabernacle as well as in the temple (Ex. xxvii. 1–8). Solomon neither could nor would alter anything in respect of this law-appointed and significant simplicity; however, in order indirectly to impress upon this chief article of use the character of the glorious house of Jehovah, he made the vessels inseparably connected with it, and forming with it one whole, the more splendid and artistic, and decorated them with all the emblems which were the significant temple-insignia: cherubim, palms, and flowers. He did not adorn *them* on their own account, therefore, but rather for the sake of the altar, which they were to beautify. All these figures belonged properly to the interior of the sanctuary (see above, *Histor. and Ethic.* on chap. vi. No. 6), and they were placed here, on the vessels of the altar of sacrifice, to point to the interior of the sanctuary, and signified the intimate relation in which the outer court, and especially the altar for sacrifice, stood to it. When lions and oxen are particularly mentioned as next the cherubims, these are not to be understood as new figures, but only as single component parts of the cherub; as in Rev. iv. 6, 7, where all four are presented apart from each other. One may look in vain for a heathen parallel to these bases and lavers. "The whole arrangement, so full of meaning, appears quite peculiar to the Israelitish temple, for nothing of the kind is found anywhere else, either on Egyptian or Assyrian monuments" (Thenius).

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

Vers. 1–12. Solomon first builds the house of the Lord, then begins to build his own house. We must first render to God what is of God, and when this has been truly done, then to Cæsar what is Cæsar's (Matt. xxii. 21). He who strives first after the kingdom of God, will likewise succeed in what he undertakes for his personal and temporal welfare (Matt. vi. 33).—The building of the house for the king followed immediately upon the building of the temple; they belong together. Altar and throne stand and fall together, even as we have the two commandments: Fear God, honor the king (1 Pet. ii. 17; Prov. xxiv. 21). In the kingdom where religion and Christianity are cherished and highly honored, there royalty is most secure; a God-fearing people is the best, nay, the only support of the throne.—Kings and princes cannot, on account of their high position, choose to live in ordinary houses, or yet in poor hovels; it is simply folly to reproach them when they build castles for themselves. The building of palaces then becomes sinful and blamable only when they are built for the gratification of ostentation and insolence, or at the expense of a poor and oppressed people.—Before his dwelling-house Solomon placed the courts of the throne and of justice, and before these the armory, for it is the high and noble privilege of royalty to administer judgment and justice within the kingdom to all the nation (1 Chron. xviii. 14; Ps. lxxxix. 14), and from without, to protect it by force of arms from all its enemies. [Accommodate and apply these remarks to *the State*, or *nation*, the body politic—to its public buildings and the rest, as well as to the reverence for law needed upon the part of the people, and they will be found useful for our American people to consider.—E. H.]

Vers. 13–14. A wise prince, in the furtherance of his enterprises which aim at the honor of God, and the good of the nation, looks around for the best instruments, and in order to obtain them, seeks them wherever he can find them; for Prov. xxvi. 10. —He who has learned anything thoroughly, and brought it to perfection in its especial province, must be sought out and held in esteem, whatsoever be his position or country.—Art is one of the noblest and best gifts which God has bestowed upon man; therefore, above all, it should be applied to the glorification of God, and not merely to the satisfaction and pleasure of the world. To scorn and reject art, in the service of the Church, is to reject Him who has given it.—Ver. 15 *sq.* As in the typical temple the implements were not all the same, but of very varied kinds, each one of which, gold and brass, primary and secondary or auxiliary, had its peculiar place and purpose, so it is also in the true and real temple of God, in the Church of the Lord (2 Tim. ii. 20). Thus, varied as are the gifts, the calling, and the position of each individual in it, so each one must regard himself as an instrument of the Lord, remaining in that calling wherein he is called, and serving all the others with the gift which he has received (1 Pet. iv. 10; 1 Cor. xii. 28–31).—What signification have the holy vessels of the temple for the Church of the Lord, which is the true temple of God (Eph. ii. 20 *sq.*)? (1) The pillars, Jachin and Boaz, in the porch, are, as it were, the superscription over the temple, and declare its strong foundation and its permanence; the Lord declares both to His Church: Upon this rock will I build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it (Matt. xvi. 18). Great, noble promise! (2) The brazen sea and the vases in the porch are there, that the priests may purify themselves, and the sacrifices which they bring there. The Church of the Lord is that holy priesthood which offers spiritual sacrifices, &c. (1 Pet. ii. 5). Those who wish to perform such service the prophet summons: Wash ye, &c. (Is. i. 16), and the apostle: I beseech you, &c. (Rom. xii. 1). (3) The altar, the candlesticks, and the table stand in the building itself, which is a type of heaven, and show that for them who offer themselves pure and holy sacrifices, a divine light and life are prepared before the throne of God, and no other sacrifice is rendered except the incense of prayer, of praise, and worship of God (Ps. xvi. 11; Rev. v. 8–14).

B.—*The Consecration of the Temple.*

CHAP. VIII. 1–66.

1 [1]THEN Solomon assembled the elders of Israel, and all the heads of the
tribes, the chief[2] of the fathers of the children of Israel, unto king Solomon in
Jerusalem, that they might bring up the ark of the covenant of the Lord [Je-
2 hovah] out of the city of David, which *is* Zion. And all the men of Israel
assembled themselves unto king Solomon at the feast in the month Ethanim,
3 which *is* the seventh month. And all the elders of Israel came, and the priests
4 took up the ark. And they brought up the ark of the Lord [Jehovah], and
the tabernacle of the congregation, and all the holy vessels that *were* in the
5 tabernacle, even those did the priests and the Levites bring up. And king Solo-
mon, and all the congregation of Israel, that were assembled unto him, *were* with
him before the ark, sacrificing sheep and oxen, that could not be told nor num-
6 bered for multitude. And the priests brought in the ark of the covenant of the
Lord [Jehovah] unto his place, into the oracle of the house, to the most holy
7 *place*, *even* under the wings of the cherubims. For the cherubims spread forth
their two wings over the place of the ark, and the cherubims covered the ark and
8 the staves[3] thereof above. And they drew out[4] the staves, that the ends of the
staves were seen out in the holy *place* before the oracle, and they were not seen
9 without: and there they are unto this day. *There was* nothing in the ark save
the two tables of stone, which Moses put there at Horeb, when the Lord [Jeho-
vah] made *a covenant* with the children of Israel, when they came out of the
10 land of Egypt. And it came to pass when the priests were come out of the holy
11 *place*, that the cloud filled the house of the Lord [Jehovah], so that the priests
could not stand to minister because of the cloud: for the glory of the Lord
[Jehovah] had [*omit* had [5]] filled the house of the Lord [Jehovah]. Then spake
12 Solomon, The Lord [Jehovah] said that he would dwell in the thick darkness.
13 I have surely built thee an house to dwell in, a settled place for thee to abide in
for ever.[6]

14 And the king turned his face about, and blessed all the congregation of
15 Israel: and all the congregation of Israel stood; and he said, Blessed *be* the
Lord [Jehovah] God of Israel,[7] which spake with his mouth unto David my
16 father, and hath with his hand fulfilled *it*, saying, Since the day that I brought
forth my people Israel out of Egypt, I chose no city out of all the tribes of
Israel to build an house, that my name might be therein;[8] but I chose David
17 to be over my people Israel. And it was in the heart of David my father to
18 build an house for the name of the Lord [Jehovah] God of Israel. And the
Lord [Jehovah] said unto David my father, Whereas it was[9] in thine heart to
19 build an house unto my name, thou didst well that it was[9] in thine heart. Never
theless, thou shalt not build the house; but thy son that shall come forth out of
20 thy loins, he shall build the house unto my name. And the Lord [Jehovah]
hath performed [established[10]] his word that he spake, and I am risen up [estab-
lished[10]] in the room of David my father, and sit on the throne of Israel, as the
Lord [Jehovah] promised, and have built an house for the name of the Lord
21 [Jehovah] God of Israel. And I have set there a place for the ark, wherein *is* the
covenant of the Lord [Jehovah], which he made with our fathers, when he
brought them out of the land of Egypt.

22 And Solomon stood before the altar of the Lord [Jehovah] in the presence
of all the congregation of Israel, and spread forth his hands toward heaven:
23 And he said, Lord [Jehovah] God of Israel, *there is* no God like thee, in heaven
above, or on earth beneath, who keepest covenant and mercy with thy ser-
24 vants[11] that walk before thee with all their heart: who hast kept with thy
servant David my father that thou promisedst [spakest to [12]] him: thou spakest

also with thy mouth, and hast fulfilled *it* with thine hand, as *it is* this day.
25 Therefore now, Lord [Jehovah] God of Israel, keep with thy servant David my
father that thou promisedst [spakest to[12]] him, saying, There shall not fail thee
a man in my sight to sit on the throne of Israel; so that thy children [sons] take
heed to their way, that they walk before me as thou hast walked before me.
26 And now, O[13] God of Israel, let thy word,[14] I pray thee, be verified, which thou
27 spakest unto thy servant David my father. But will God indeed dwell on the
earth? behold the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain thee; how
28 much less this house that I have builded? Yet have thou respect unto the
prayer of thy servant, and to his supplication, O Lord [Jehovah] my God, to
hearken unto the cry and to the prayer, which thy servant prayeth before thee
29 to-day: that thine eyes may be open toward this house night and day, *even*
toward the place of which thou hast said, My name shall be there: that thou
mayest hearken unto the prayer which thy servant shall make toward this place.
30 And hearken thou to the supplication of thy servant, and of thy people Israel,
when they shall pray toward this place: and hear thou in[15] heaven thy dwell-
31 ing-place: and when thou hearest, forgive. If any man trespass against his neigh-
bour, and an oath be laid upon him to cause him to swear, and the oath come
32 before thine altar in this house: then hear thou in[16] heaven, and do, and judge
thy servants, condemning the wicked, to bring[17] his way upon his head; and
33 justifying the righteous, to give[17] him according to his righteousness. When
thy people Israel be smitten down before the enemy, because they have sinned
against thee, and shall turn again to thee, and confess thy name, and pray,
34 and make supplication unto thee in this house: then hear thou in heaven, and
forgive the sin of thy people Israel, and bring them again unto the land which
35 thou gavest unto their fathers. When heaven is shut up, and there is no rain,
because they have sinned against thee; if they pray toward this place, and con-
36 fess thy name, and turn from their sin, when thou afflictest them: then hear thou
in heaven, and forgive the sin of thy servants, and of thy people Israel, that thou
teach them [when thou teachest them (by affliction)] the good way wherein they
should walk, and give rain upon thy land, which thou hast given to thy people
37 for an inheritance. If there be in the land famine, if there be pestilence, blast-
ing, mildew,[18] locust, *or* if there be caterpillar [if there be consuming locust[19]];
if their enemy besiege them in the land of their cities; whatsoever plague,
38 whatsoever sickness *there be;* what prayer and supplication soever be *made* by
any man, *or* by all thy people Israel, which shall know every man the plague of
39 his own heart,[20] and spread forth his hands toward this house: then hear thou
in heaven thy dwelling-place, and forgive, and do, and give to every man accord-
ing to his ways, whose heart thou knowest; (for thou, *even* thou only, knowest
40 the hearts of all the children of men;) that they may fear thee all the days that
41 they live in the land which thou gavest unto our fathers. Moreover, concerning
a stranger, that *is* not of thy people Israel, but cometh out of a far country for
42 thy name's sake;[21] (for they shall hear of thy great name, and of thy strong
hand, and of thy stretched-out arm;) when he shall come and pray toward
43 this house; [22]hear thou in heaven thy dwelling-place, and do according to all that
the stranger calleth to thee for: that all people of the earth may know thy name,
to fear thee, as *do* thy people Israel; and that they may know that this house,
44 which I have builded, is called by thy name. If thy people go out to battle
against their enemy,[23] whithersoever thou shalt send them, and shall pray unto
the Lord [Jehovah] toward the city which thou hast chosen, and *toward* the
45 house that I have built for thy name: then hear thou in heaven their prayer
46 and their supplication, and maintain their cause.[24] If they sin against thee, (for
there is no man that sinneth not,) and thou be angry with them, and deliver them
to the enemy, so that they carry them away captives unto the land of the enemy,
47 far or near; *yet* if they shall bethink themselves in the land whither they were
carried captives, and repent, and make supplication unto thee in the land of them
that carried them captives, saying, We have sinned, and have done perversely,
48 we have committed wickedness; and *so* return unto thee with all their heart,

and with all their soul, in the land of their enemies, which led them away cap-
tive, and pray unto thee toward their land, which thou gavest unto their fathers,
49 the city which thou hast chosen, and the house which I have built for thy name:
then hear thou their prayer and their supplication in heaven thy dwelling-place,
50 and maintain their cause, and forgive thy people that have sinned against thee,
and all their transgressions wherein they have transgressed against thee, and
give them compassion before them who carried them captive, that they may
51 have compassion on them: for they *be* thy people, and thine inheritance, which
52 thou broughtest forth out of Egypt, from the midst of the furnace of iron: that
thine eyes may be open[25] unto the supplication of thy servant, and unto the
supplication of thy people Israel, to hearken unto them in all that they call for
53 unto thee. For thou didst separate them from among all the people of the
earth, *to be* thine inheritance, as thou spakest by the hand of Moses thy ser-
vant, when thou broughtest our fathers out of Egypt, O Lord [Jehovah] God.[26]
54 And it was *so*, that when Solomon had made an end of praying all this
prayer and supplication unto the Lord [Jehovah], he arose from before the altar
of the Lord [Jehovah], from kneeling on his knees with his hands spread up to
55 heaven. And he stood, and blessed all the congregation of Israel with a loud
56 voice, saying, Blessed *be* the Lord [Jehovah], that hath given rest unto his peo-
ple Israel, according to all that he promised: there hath not failed one word of
all his good promise, which he promised by the hand of Moses his servant.
57 The Lord [Jehovah] our God be with us, as he was with our fathers: let him
58 not leave us, nor forsake us: that he may incline our hearts unto him, to walk
in all his ways, and to keep his commandments, and his statutes, and his judg-
59 ments, which he commanded our fathers. And let these my words, wherewith
I have made supplication before the Lord [Jehovah], be nigh unto the Lord
[Jehovah] our God day and night, that he maintain the cause[27] of his servant,
60 and the cause of his people Israel at all times, as the matter shall require:[28] that
all the people of the earth may know that the Lord [Jehovah] *is* God, *and that*
61 *there is* none else. Let your heart therefore be perfect with the Lord [Jehovah]
our God, to walk in his statutes, and to keep his commandments, as at this day.
62 And the king, and all Israel with him, offered sacrifice before the Lord [Je-
63 hovah]. And Solomon offered a sacrifice of peace offerings, which he offered
unto the Lord [Jehovah], two and twenty thousand oxen, and an hundred and
twenty thousand sheep. So the king and all the children of Israel dedicated
64 the house of the Lord [Jehovah]. The same day did the king hallow the mid-
dle of the court that *was* before the house of the Lord [Jehovah]: for there he
offered burnt offerings, and meat offerings, and the fat of the peace offerings:
because the brazen altar that *was* before the Lord [Jehovah] *was* too little to
receive the burnt offerings, and meat offerings, and the fat of the peace offer-
65 ings. And at that time Solomon held a feast, and all Israel with him, a great
congregation, from the entering in of Hamath unto the river of Egypt, before
the Lord [Jehovah] our God, seven days and seven days, *even* fourteen days.
66 On the eighth day he sent the people away: and they blessed the king, and
went unto their tents joyful and glad of heart for all the goodness that the
Lord [Jehovah] had done for David his servant, and for Israel his people.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

[1] Ver. 1.—[On the apocopated future יַקְהֵל in connection with אָז, see Ewald, *Krit. Gramm.*, § 233 b., p. 593 in 7th ed. The Vat. Sept. prefaces this chapter with the statement "and it came to pass when Solomon had made an end of building the house of the Lord and his own house, after twenty years, then," &c.; and omits the middle part of this verse and nearly all of ver. 2, etc. The Alex. Sept. follows the Heb.

[2] Ver. 1.—[The renderings of the Heb. נָשִׂיא in the A. V. are various. Besides a few irrelevant translations, it is rendered by *captain*, *chief*, *governor*, *prince*, and *ruler—prince* being the most common. There is also some variation in the Sept. translation of the word, but it is usually rendered ἄρχων.

[3] Ver. 7.—[For staves the Sept. substitute *holy things*.

[4] Ver. 8.—[Luther, followed by our author, here translates "And the staves were so long that," etc., thus leaving out

the evidence of design in the arrangement; they adopt the intransitive sense of the verb וַיַּאֲרִכוּ, as has also been done by the Vulg. and Syr. The sense of *prolonging, extending*, which is given by Keil, and adopted by the A. V., is at least as usual, and seems better suited to the connection. The staves, at the utmost, could have been but 10 cubits long, the depth of the holy of holies in the tabernacle. The author however assumes that the length of the ark, and consequently the direction of the staves, was north and south, in which case the staves could not in any way have been seen from outside the vail.

[5] Ver. 11.—[There is no occasion here for the pluperfect, nor is it expressed in any of those VV. which admit of the distinction.

[6] Ver. 13.—[The Vat. Sept. omits vers. 12 and 13, the Alex. following the Heb.

[7] Ver. 15.—[The Sept. here add σήμερον, and instead of *unto* read *concerning David*.

[8] Ver. 16.—[The Vat. (not Alex.) Sept. here supplies from 2 Chron. vi. 6 the clause καὶ ἐξελεξάμην ἐν Ἱερουσαλὴμ εἶναι τὸ ὄνομά μου ἐκεῖ. Our author omits the name Israel at the end of the verse.

[9] Ver. 18.—[Luther, followed by the author, uses here the present tense; the VV., following the Heb., have, like the A. V., the past.

[10] Ver. 20.—[It seems better, if possible, to render the Heb. verb קוּם in both these clauses by the same English word, though with differing shades of meaning. The Sept. has ἀνέστησα . . . ἀνέστην; the author has *bin bestätigt*. Luther, like the A. V., varies the word.

[11] Ver. 23.—[The Sept. put this in the singular.

[12] Vers. 24, 25.—[The Heb. דִּבֵּר, being the verb in all these clauses, there is no occasion to change the English word.

[13] Ver. 26.—[Many MSS., followed by the Sept., Vulg., Syr., and Arab., prefix יְהוָה.

[14] Ver. 26.—Even allowing that the k'tib דְּבָרֶיךָ points to 2 Sam. vii. 28, yet nevertheless the k'ri דְּבָרְךָ appears according to 2 Chron. vi. 17 and i. 9 to be the true reading.—Bähr. [It is also the reading of many MSS., followed by the Sept., Syr., and Arab.

[15] Ver. 30.—[אֶל־מְקוֹם שִׁבְתְּךָ אֶל־הַשָּׁמַיִם the proposition is the same as in the previous clause, *toward* this place. The expression is a pregnant one=hear thou the prayer which is offered toward heaven, &c.

[16] Ver. 32.—[One MS., followed by the Sept., Chald., Syr., and Arab., reads *from* heaven—מִן־הַשׁ״, and so in vers. 34, 36, 39, 43, 45, 49, according to 2 Chron. vi. 22, 23, 25. But see last remark.

[17] Ver. 32.—[The Heb. לָתֵת is the same in both clauses, and is rendered alike by the Chald. and Sept., which the English idiom scarcely admits.

[18] Ver. 37.—Withering of the grain through a hot wind.—Bähr. [Such is the sense of יֵרָקוֹן wherever it occurs, as here, in connection with שִׁדָּפוֹן, viz., Deut. xxviii. 22; 2 Chron. vi. 28; Amos vi. 9; Hag. ii. 17.

[19] Ver. 37.—[חָסִיל appears to be merely an epithet of אַרְבֶּה. *Cf.* Deut. xxviii. 38.

[20] Ver. 38.—[נֶגַע לְבָבוֹ. *Cf.* 2 Chron. vi. 29, נִגְעוֹ וּמַכְאֹבוֹ.

[21] Ver. 41.—[The Vat. Sept. omits the latter half of ver. 41 and the parenthesis of ver. 42.

[22] Ver. 43.—[Many MSS. and editions, followed by the Sept., prefix the conjunction here as in vers. 36, 39, 45, &c.

[23] Ver. 44.—[Some MSS. and the VV. read איביו in the plural.

[24] Ver. 45.—[The phrase עָשָׂה מִשְׁפָּט always means the support of the righteous cause; with the suffix of the personal pronoun here and ver. 49 it assumes that the warfare to which they had been sent was righteous.

[25] Ver. 52.—[The Sept. supplement this frequent expression by adding "and thine ears."

[26] Ver. 53.—[The Chald., Vulg., and Syr. here follow the masoretic punctuation of אֲדֹנָי יֱהוִֹה and, like the A. V., translate Lord God. The Sept. have, according to the Vat., κύριε κύριε, which is followed by Luther, while the Alex. omits the expression altogether. Our author translates Herr Jehovah. The Sept. make a considerable addition at the end of the verse.

[27] Ver. 59.—[See note on ver. 45.

[28] Ver. 59.—[The words *as the matter shall require* not being in the Heb. are better omitted.—F. G.]

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

Vers. 1–7. **Then Solomon assembled,** &c. The section 2 Chron. v. 2 to vi. 42, which is for the most part like it, may be compared with this whole chapter. The little word אָז *time* denotes, like ver. 12 (comp. Josh. x. 12; Ex. xv. 1), the point of time which immediately follows what is above related, and means, what indeed the context infers, namely, that as soon as all the vessels were finished (chap. vii. 51), Solomon proceeded to dedicate the temple. In accordance with the great importance of the temple-building to the whole theocracy, he called together the elders, *i. e.*, the presiding officers of communities, and also the heads of the tribes and the families, that the entire people might thereby be represented. The solemnity took place *at the feast in the month Ethanim, which is the seventh month.* The usual interpretation of הָאֵתָנִים, month of the flowing rivers (rainy season), is more acceptable than that of Thenius, gift (fruit) month, or that of Böttcher, suspension of the equinox. This month was called Tisri in our writer's time and later; upon this account he expressly says that Ethanim was the seventh. The feast of tabernacles occurred on the 15th of this month (Levit. xxiii. 34); it was the greatest and best observed of all the three yearly festivals, and was especially called "the feast" by the Jews (*Symb. des Mos. Kult.* ii. s. 656). Solomon therefore very fitly solemnized the dedication of the temple at the time of this feast. Although the text gives here only the month and the day, and not the year, it is of course to be understood that it was the first feast of tabernacles that occurred after the completion of the temple in the eighth month (chap. vi. 38); consequently it fell in the following year. The opinion that the dedication took place in the seventh month of the same year, in the eighth month of which the temple was finished (Ewald), needs no refutation. The assertion of Thenius, with which Keil also now agrees, appears more probable. He thinks that the temple was not dedicated until twenty years from the commencement of the building, *i. e.*, thirteen years after its completion; because the divine answer to the dedication prayer, according to chap. ix. 1–10, did not

come till the temple of Jehovah and the king's house were both finished (chap. vi. 38, and vii. 1), and in the Sept. chap. ix. begins with these words: "And it came to pass, when Solomon had finished the building of the house of the Lord, and the king's house (*after twenty years*), *he assembled*, &c.;" but the passage, chap. ix. 1, certainly does not say that the dedication did not take place for twenty years, or that Jehovah immediately thereafter appeared to Solomon; it speaks not only of the completion of both those buildings, but of all the others besides, which Solomon had begun (chap. ix. 19), so that we must in that case place the dedication much later than twenty years (see below, on chap. ix. 1). As to the words of the Sept., they are unmistakably a gloss from chap. ix. 1 and 10, inserted here, and such as is found nowhere else, either in a MS. or in any other ancient translation, and therefore can never be regarded as the original text. When we consider how very desirous David was to build an house unto the Lord, that when he was not permitted to do so, he pressed the task as a solemn duty upon his son, that Solomon then, as soon as he had established his throne, began the building and continued it with great zeal; it seems utterly incredible that he should have left the finished building thirteen years unused, and delayed its dedication until the twenty-fourth year of his reign. The weightiest reasons alone could have induced him to do so, but we hear nothing of any such. Even if we suppose the vessels not to have been finished as soon as the building, but to have been commenced after its completion, still it could not have taken thirteen years to make them; and there was no reason why the dedication of the temple should have been put off until the palace was finished, the latter requiring no solemn dedication, while the speedy dedication of the central sanctuary was an urgent necessity if the restoration of the unity of worship, commanded by the law, was to be established.

To bring up the ark of the covenant of the Lord. In the march through the wilderness, the ark was covered with some cloths, and carried by the levites (Numb. iv. 5, 15), but on special occasions, the priests themselves carried it, as here and in Josh. iii. 6; vi. 6. Not only the ark, but the tabernacle, which had hitherto stood at Gibeon (2 Chron. i. 3, 4), with all its vessels, was brought out from Zion into the temple. While the priests carried the ark, the levites (ver. 4) carried the other things pertaining to the tent, all of which were doubtless preserved in the rooms of the side-structure. When the procession reached the temple (ver. 5), the ark was laid down in the outer court before the entrance to the holy place, and a great and solemn sacrifice offered; then the priests bore the ark to its appointed place. For vers. 6 and 7 see above, on chap. vi. 23 *sq.*

Vers. 8–9. **And they drew out the staves, that the ends, &c.** Ver. 8, which has had the most various interpretations put upon it, is nothing but a parenthesis following the concluding words of the preceding verse, explaining how it happened that the great cherubim-statues, with their wings stretched across the entire width of the sanctuary (chap. vi. 27), not only overshadowed the ark itself, but even its staves. As it says in Ex. xxv. 15, the staves were never to be removed, but were to belong inseparably to the ark. If the cherubim-statues then were to overshadow the ark, they should also cover the staves inseparably united to it. Now as the ark lay lengthwise north and south in the holy of holies, and the wings of the cherubim-statues stretched from the southern to the northern wall of the holy of holies, the staves which they overshadowed with their wings must have been placed north and south, *i. e.*, on the longer sides of the ark, as Josephus (*Ant.* iii. 6, 5) expressly states. Therefore, their heads or ends could be seen from the sanctuary (great space) only close before the holy of holies (Debir). The reason why the staves were so long (יַאֲרִכוּ is to be understood as intransitive, as Keil remarks; as in Ex. xx. 12; Deut. v. 16; xxv. 15, and not to be translated: they made the staves long, as Kimchi and Thenius make it, for thus אֶת should stand before הַבַּדִּים) was in consequence of the weight of the ark, which must have been considerable, because the stone tables of the law were inside of the ark; and it was carried by more than four, perhaps by eight priests, who did not touch it, as was commanded in Numb. iv. 15. And as the holy of holies was only intended for the ark of the covenant (chap. vi. 19), and the latter was only two and a half cubits long, with its long staves inseparable from it, it took up nearly the whole space. The oldest interpretation of our verse was borrowed from the Rabbins; it says that the staves were drawn so far forward that their ends touched the veil of the most holy place, and caused visible protrusions on the outside; but this is disproved by the fact that the staves were placed on the longest side of the ark, and pointed south and north, not east and west, consequently could not have touched the curtain. Thenius, with whom Merz and Bertheau agree, explains the simple sentence in ver. 8 "by optical laws: when a person at the entrance of the holy place (he makes מִן־הַקֹּדֶשׁ mean that) could have seen through the open door the ends of the staves of the ark which was in the middle of the holy of holies, these staves must have been, according to the laws of perspective, seven cubits long." This highly ingenious explanation rests, as Keil justly remarks, on ill-founded suppositions, comp. Böttcher *Aehrenl.* ii. *s.* 69. The words עַל־פְּנֵי הַדְּבִיר cannot be translated: "from the great space before the debir," but mean, from the sanctuary, "when a person stood close before the dark holy of holies" (Ewald), or "near the most holy" (Merz). It is certain that the writer of these books had not the remotest thought about the laws of optics and perspective. The addition, *and there they are unto this day*, means: though the ark now had its fixed resting-place, the staves were left, according to the command Ex. xxv. 15, in order to signify that it was the same ark, which dated from the time when Israel was chosen to be a covenant people. The expression "unto this day," also occurring, chap. ix. 21; xii. 19; 2 Kings viii. 22, shows that the writer drew from a manuscript written before the destruction of the temple, and did not deem it necessary to deviate from its words.

Ver. 9. **There was nothing in the ark, &c.** Ver. 9 returns to the ark itself, and emphasizes the fact that it was brought into the holy of holies (ver. 6) because it preserved the original document of the covenant which God made with Israel, which consisted of the "ten commandments that

the Lord spake unto them" (Deut. x. 4). By virtue of this document, the ark was the pledge of the covenant relation; and at the same time was the fundamental condition of the religious and political life of Israel; it naturally formed the heart and central point of the sanctuary or dwelling-place of Jehovah in the midst of His chosen people (compare *Symb. des Mos. Kult.*, i. *s.* 383 *sq.*); "there would have been no temple without the ark of the covenant, that alone made it a sanctuary" (*Hengstenberg*). According to Hebr. ix. 4, the ark contained, besides the tables of the law, the golden pot with manna (Ex. xvi. 33), and Aaron's rod (Numb. xvii. 25). The endeavor has been made to reconcile this passage with the one under consideration, by the supposition that those two additional objects were no longer in the ark in Solomon's time, having only been there when Moses lived, the latter period being the one in the mind of the writer to the Hebrews (Ebrard, Moll, and others). But the passages quoted only say they were laid "before Jehovah" or "before the testimony;" not *in* the ark. The Jewish tradition alone renders it *in* (*Schöttgen*, *hor. Hebr.* p. 973), and this tradition, with which the reader of this epistle may have been familiar, was probably in the writer's mind, for he was not desirous of giving an exact archæological description (comp. Tholuck and Bleek on Heb. ix. 4). V. Meyer's opinion, which Lisco also adopts, that the manna and rod were not in the ark any longer because "the direct theocracy, with its spiritual sceptre, and its blessings, had departed, and the people had an earthly king who was now to guide and watch over them," is in the highest degree erroneous. *Horeb* is not the highest summit of the mountains of Sinai, but a general name for the mountain-range of which Sinai is only a part: comp. Thenius on the place.

Vers. 10–13. **And it came to pass, when the priests were come out of the holy place,** &c. Ex. xl. 34, 35, is almost the same as vers. 10 and 11; "then a cloud covered the tent of the congregation, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle. And Moses was not able to enter into the tent of the congregation, because the cloud abode thereon (שָׁכַן) and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle." It is plain that the author meant, what once happened at the dedication of the tabernacle took place again at the dedication of the house. *The cloud*, not a cloud (Luther), but that, in and with which, as once at the tabernacle, the glory of the Lord came down, though naturally not the same cloud as at that time. What ver. 10 says of the cloud, ver. 11 says of the glory of the Lord; *it filled the house*, not only the most holy place, but the whole dwelling, so that the priests were prevented for a moment from performing their functions in the sanctuary. We cannot possibly conceive this to have been the cloud of smoke "which, rising from the burning offerings on the altar, veiled the glory of the Lord" (Bertheau on 2 Chron. v. 14); for in this case the priests themselves would have been prevented from officiating. Nor can we, on account of the כְּבוֹד־יְהוָה, think as Thenius, of the "bright and streaming cloud" which the Rabbins name שְׁכִינָה, for Solomon could not have said, on beholding it: Jehovah dwells בָּעֲרָפֶל; this word denoting, as Thenius himself rightly says, "exactly the black darkness;" and he takes an unwarrantable liberty when, as the Chaldee, he reads בִּירוּשְׁלֵם for it. It is admitted that the "darkness must refer to the cloud" just also as that which in Ex. xix. 9 is named עָנָן is called עֲרָפֶל in Ex. xx. 21; and in Deut. iv. 11; v. 9; Ps. xcvii. 2, both words are conjoined as synonymes. Keil, too, thinks the עָנָן is the shekinah, for he says: "the glory of the Lord, which is like a consuming fire, manifested itself in the cloud." But this also is contradicted by the words of Solomon, that the Lord dwells in the (thick) darkness; the text has not a syllable about a fiery appearance; and certainly a consuming fire cannot be thought of here, where the subject is the gracious presence of the Lord. Abarbanel indeed thinks that the fire of the cloud burst forth from it, after Solomon's prayer, and consumed the burnt-offering, 2 Chron. vii. 1; but it expressly says in this passage, that fire came "from heaven" (and therefore not out of the cloud). Keil further remarks: "This wonderful manifestation of the divine glory only took place at the dedication; afterwards, the cloud was visible in the holy of holies only on the great day of atonement, when the high-priest entered there" (Lev. xvi. 2). This, however, is quite contrary to the rabbinical belief, which was that the shekinah hung *constantly* above the ark of the covenant; and it also presupposes that the wonderful manifestation was regularly repeated on that solemnity of atonement, although neither the text nor the Jewish tradition mentions such a thing; and this would have no analogy with God's miracles, which never recur regularly on a particular day. Our text only mentions a dark cloud, which, as it filled the *whole* house, must necessarily have only been a passing phenomenon; it served to show that the Lord, as once in the tent, would now henceforth dwell in the house built for Him. כְּבוֹד־יְהוָה stands, as Solomon's phrase in ver. 12 shows, for Jehovah himself, and is the standing Old Testament designation of the being (majesty) of God [like the δόξα of the New Testament.—E. H.], raised absolutely above all that is creaturely, yet stooping (שָׁכַן, Ex. xl. 35), *i. e.*, concentrating himself, in order to manifest and assert himself, either blessing and saving as here, or punishing and destroying, as for instance, in Ps. xviii. *The Lord said.* Because there is no passage showing that the Lord spoke those words, Thenius translates אָמַר "the Lord proposeth to dwell in the thick darkness: or, He has made known that He will dwell in the thick darkness;" but just because the Lord had said so, Solomon beheld in the cloud a sign that he had come down to dwell in the temple (שָׁכַן); he remembered the plain declaration Ex. xix. 9; Levit. xvi. 2. "Overpowered by that sublime moment, and filled with joy that he was counted worthy of the favor of being allowed to build a house for the Lord, he utters the joyful words" (Bertheau): בָּנֹה בָנִיתִי, surely! I have built; for which Chron. gives וַאֲנִי בָּנִיתִי; I, yea, I have built. For the words in ver. 13, an *house to dwell in, a settled place*, see on chap. vi. 2, *a*, *Historical and Ethical*. עוֹלָמִים is similar to Josh. iv. 7;

Job xix. 24; 1 Kings i. 31 (comp. Hengstenberg, *Christol.* ii. s. 432 *sq.*). According to 2 Chron. v. 12 *sq.*, songs of praise, accompanied by harps and psalteries, burst forth, as the priests came out of the sanctuary.

Vers. 14–21. **And the king turned his face, &c.** Solomon had spoken the words of vers. 12 and 13 with his face turned to the temple; but he now turned towards the people who were in the outer court, and who listened *standing, i. e.*, with proper reverence, to the following discourse. This is a solemn declaration (vers. 15–21) that the temple was undertaken and finished according to Jehovah's word and will. The course of thought is, compared with 2 Chron. vi. 4–11, as follows: "so long as Israel, after the departure from Egypt, wandered about, and had not come into possession of the promised land, Jehovah had chosen no abiding dwelling-place, His habitation was movable—a tent. But after He had chosen David to be king, and brought His people by him to the full and quiet possession of the promised land, it was fitting that He, as well as the nation, should have an abiding dwelling-place. Jerusalem being the city of David, and the central point of the kingdom promised to him 'for ever,' Jehovah had chosen this very city for His 'everlasting' habitation. It was, however, forbidden to my father, David, to execute His purpose, namely, to build an house to the name of the Lord, instead of the tent; according to divine direction, He deputed this work *to me*, whom Jehovah had already confirmed as his successor. I then, specially commissioned and empowered to do so, have built this house, and brought into it the ark of the covenant, the pledge of the divine gracious presence; and the cloud that has just now filled the house, as once it did the tent, is the sign that Jehovah will dwell here." The promise, the fulfilment of which Solomon refers to in this discourse, is that of 2 Sam. vii. 4–16, comp. with 1 Chron. xxii. 6–11 and xxviii. 2–7. For the expression: *that my name shall be there*, the pregnant meaning of which we may gather from its constant repetition (vers. 16, 17, 18, 19, comp. 29, 43, 44), see above, on chap. vi. *Histor. and Ethical*, 2, 6. It is worthy of notice that at the beginning and the conclusion of the address (vers. 16 and 21), the building of the temple is placed in relation to the deliverance from Egypt. Comp. above on chap. vi. 1.

Vers. 22–26. **And Solomon stood before the altar of the Lord.** 2 Chron. vi. 13 mentions that Solomon had a brazen scaffold (כִּיּוֹר) made, which he mounted, and then knelt down to pray (comp. v. 54); as the text says nothing of its form, we will not decide whether it had, as Thenius thinks, a square support, and a rounded edge. Certainly it was a species of pulpit, not behind, but before the altar of burnt-offering. It does not follow from נֶגֶד, that Solomon again turned his face to the temple (Thenius): it means before, opposite; the people therefore could not have stood behind him, which must have happened, had he turned his back to them. The spreading out the hands is a sign of praying, just as our folding of the hands is (Ex. ix. 29, 31; Ps. xliv. 21; cxliii. 6; Isai. i. 15; lxv. 2, &c.). Modern criticism has pronounced the dedication prayer in its given form, vers. 23–61, to be unauthentic. De Wette and Stähelin place the time of its composition in the period of the exile. Ewald admits that it is, "notwithstanding its length, a very fine discourse; but belonging, in the style of thought, rather to the seventh than the eleventh or tenth century," and thinks that it was most probably composed by the first of the so-called elaborators of Deuteronomy. According to Thenius, there is a sketch in the prayer to be held as historical, though it be brief; but it contains considerable interpolations, as vers. 44–51; and the frequent coincidence with passages in Deut. and Josh., as well as "the style, which is so often diffuse, verbose, and watery (!), denote a more recent working up." We remark, on the other hand: that the text containing the prayer, in Chron., perfectly coincides with that in Kings, except in a few particulars; but this proves that it was not taken from the latter, but that both accounts were derived from a common source. So much then is certain, that our writer did not invent the prayer, but found it in the original which he drew from, and gave it again—as the similar text of Chron. shows—unaltered. The only question then is, of what date was the common original? Chap. xi. 41 names as such the "book of the acts of Solomon," and the chronicler, "the book of Nathan the prophet" (2 Chron. ix. 29). The latter, however, cannot certainly belong to the seventh century, still less to the time of the captivity; it evidently was written, as Bleek justly remarks, "in view of the state of things, when the temple, the city of Jerusalem, and David's kingdom still existed." As to the "thoughts," Thenius admits that the verses 27, 28, 41–43, 58, 60, "are fully worthy of a Solomon," and this without being able to prove that the others are unworthy of them; they are, on the contrary, in fit connection and perfect harmony with them (for the so-called interpolations of the vers. 44–51, see below, on the place). We can only conclude that this prayer was of later composition, because of its harmony with some passages of Deut. and Lev., if these books also belong to a later period; and this is unproved. But with equal propriety, inversely, we may conclude from the prayer, that these books were in existence in the time of Solomon, and were known to him as the pupil of a prophet. Finally, if the style and composition of the prayer, because they are verbose and watery, prove later working up, this objection rests on purely subjective taste; and we have just as good a right to hold, as Ewald does, that it is, "in spite of its length, a very fine discourse." It is incredible besides, that a discourse, holding so important a place in Old Testament history, should have been composed later, and falsely put into the mouth of the great king; we must believe, on the contrary, that if ever a speech were written down and preserved carefully, it was that one.

Vers. 23–26. **Lord God of Israel, &c.** Vers. 23–26, form the introduction to the prayer which is united to the speech, vers. 15–21, and gives praise and thanks to God for having already fulfilled the promise made to David (vers. 23, 24) in so far as the house (2 Sam. vii. 5–16) was concerned, uniting with it the request that the Lord would further fulfil it, with regard to the house, *i. e.*, the race of David, and their sitting upon the throne of Israel (vers. 25, 26). The address, *there is no God like Thee, &c.*, means: not that there is no god among all those in heaven and earth like Thee; but, nothing is like to Thee, who art in heaven

above and on earth below. Jehovah, the God of Israel, is not compared here with other gods, but on the contrary, is described as the only true God (comp. Deut. iv. 39; Josh. ii. 11; 2 Sam. vii. 22; xxii. 32). He had shown himself such especially by His keeping of the covenant, by His mercy (Deut. vii. 9; Dan. ix. 4), and by the fulfilment of His gracious promise. כַּיּוֹם הַזֶּה ver. 24 as in chap. iii. 6. The house, as it now stands, is a witness to His faithfulness to the covenant. Thenius remarks on ver. 26: The urgency of the petition is shown by its concise repetition.

Vers. 27–30. **But will God indeed, &c.** The prayer passes, at ver. 27, to its chief object, the temple, with which all the rest of it is occupied. כִּי at the beginning is used here as in 1 Sam. xxix. 8; 1 Kings xi. 22; 2 Kings viii. 13; Jer. xxiii. 18, "merely as an impressive introduction to the interrogatory sentence that leads to the real prayer" (Thenius), and is not, therefore, a mere confirming particle, as Keil, who connects our verse with ver. 26 instead of with vers. 28–30, repeatedly asserts. The petition in ver. 26: that God would indeed keep the house (dynasty) of David on the throne, was not founded on the fact that the heaven of heavens could not contain Him, still less that temple. On the contrary, the entire contents of the following prayer are, that God would hear all the prayers that should be offered in this place; hence Solomon very naturally begins with the thought, can the infinite, unconfined Deity really have His dwelling here? The expression, *the heaven and heaven of heavens*, can have nothing to do with the different heavens taught by Jewish theology (Schöttgen, *hor. hebr.* p. 719), but is the description of the heavens in their all-embracing extent, as Deut. x. 14; Ps. cxv. 16. This is the connection of vers. 27 and 28: Thou art the infinite God whom no house built by man can contain, but I beseech Thee to show thyself here, as a God who answers prayer. In ver. 28 Solomon prays that God would hear his present prayer, and in vers. 29 and 30 that He would also in the future always hear the prayers of the king and people in this place. The different expressions for prayer in the verses 28–30 are not very different in their meaning, and are placed near together here, to describe every kind of prayer. The words, *that thine eyes may be open* (ver. 29), do not mean that God was besought to watch over the building, and take it under His almighty protection, but always to see, when any one prayed there, and to hear his prayer, to turn His eyes and ears toward the house (comp. Ps. xxxiv. 16). For the placing of the *temple and heaven* (ver. 30) in antithesis, which is done indeed through the entire prayer, see above, on chap. vi. *Histor. and Ethic.* 2 c. The prayer for forgiveness is joined to the prayer for hearing, at the conclusion, as also in vers. 34, 36, 39, 50, because man, who is full of sin and guilt, can only hope for the acceptance of his prayer when his sins are forgiven; every answer to prayer rests on the sin-pardoning grace of God.

Vers. 31–32. **If any man trespass against, &c.** The prayer that God may hear in general is now followed, from ver. 31 on, by prayers for particular cases, of which there are *seven* altogether; which is no more remarkable than that the Lord's prayer, Matt. vi. 9 *sq.*, also contains the sacred number seven, the number of the covenant (*Symb. des Mos. Kult.* i. *s.* 193). The first of the seven prayers (vers. 31, 32) concerns the observation of the oath as sacred, namely, in cases like those of Ex. xxii. 7–10 and Lev. v. 21–24. For אֵת אֲשֶׁר it is אִם in 2 Chron. vi. 22; it means: the case happening, that = when (Keil). וּבָא אָלָה cannot be translated; and the oath comes, as the article is wanting to אָלָה; all the old translations give: comes *and* swears. *Before the altar, i. e.*, the place of divine witness and presence (Ex. xx. 24). *Thou bringest his deed upon his head, i. e.*, thou punishest him for his false oath (Ezek. ix. 10). We receive no answer from the commentators to the question, why is the prayer with respect to the oath placed foremost in the seven petitions? Perhaps the reason is as follows: The temple, which is constantly and impressively exalted in the chapter we are considering, was built to the name of Jehovah, which should be deemed holy; but the oath was nothing more than the calling upon the sacred name; *i. e.*, the name of that God who had made himself known as a holy God, and who does not allow the misuse of his name to go unpunished (according to Ecclesiasticus xxiii. 9, ὅρκος is equivalent to ὀνομασία τοῦ ἁγίου, comp. ver. 11: ὁ ὀμνύων καὶ ὀνομάζων); they swore by the name of God, is an oath-form in Levit. xix. 12; Deut. vi. 13; x. 20; Isai. xlviii. 1; Jerem. xii. 16; xliv. 26. The false oath was a contemptuous use of the name to which the house was built; but it was the chief requirement from him who stood in the holy place, that he should not swear falsely, Ps. xxiv. 3, 4. The command to keep the name of God holy, stands also first among the commandments of the fundamental law (Ex. xx. 7), and it is the first of the seven petitions in the Lord's prayer: hallowed be Thy name (Matt. vi. 9).

Vers. 33–34. **When thy people Israel be smitten down, &c.** *The second petition* concerns the case of captives, who had, through their guilt, merited overthrow, and were led away by their conquerors; and beseeches Jehovah for the return of the people to their native land. To be taken away from the land of promise, to be separated from communion with the covenant people, in whose midst Jehovah dwelt, and to live among heathens, was the greatest of all misfortunes to an Israelite, and it was very natural to pray against it. *And confess thy name* must be connected with שָׁבוּ; if they, feeling their guilt, acknowledge Thee God, dwelling and manifesting thyself here; it is not then the same as: praise Jehovah (Gesenius, Winer). It is unnecessary to seek a direct association of ideas between this second and the first petition. Thenius says: "The internal welfare of the state was secured by fidelity and faith arising from fear of God, but that welfare could be in peril from without." Nor is there here a direct reference to Lev. xxvi. 17 and Deut. xxviii. 25, as Keil asserts.

Vers. 35–40. **When heaven is shut up, &c.** The *third* petition (vers. 35, 36), and the *fourth* (vers. 37–40), concern divine judgments by means of long-continued drought and land-plagues. As the rain, on which the fertility of the soil, and therefore all outward prosperity, depended in the East, was a sign of divine blessing (Ezek. xxxiv. 26 *sq.*), so drought was a sign of curse and punishment (Lev. xxvi. 3, 19; Deut. xxviii. 15, 23; xi.

17; Am. xlvii.; Hagg. i. 11). The meaning of ver. 36 is: when the people were brought into the right way again, by the merited chastisement, then he beseeches God to hear their supplication, and to forgive their sin and to send rain again. In ver. 37 there are coincidences with Lev. xxvi. 25; Deut. xxviii. 22; but hunger, plague, blasting, and mildew are elsewhere mentioned as divine chastisements (Am. iv. 9, 10; Jerem. xiv. 12; xxiv. 10; Ezek. vi. 12; xiv. 21). חָסִיל is in apposition (according to Keil), to describe the plague of locusts (Deut. xxviii. 38); Thenius thinks the copula before it, which the chronicler and the old translations give, is wanting, and that a worse kind of locust is meant (Joel i. 4; Ps. lxxviii. 46). בְּאֶרֶץ שְׁעָרָיו is literally: in the land of his gates, which, however, gives no sense; it is clear that בְּאֶרֶץ must be read (as Bertheau has it), and שְׁעָרָיו be supplied with בְּ, as is clear from Deut. xxviii. 52: "thou shalt be besieged in all thy gates, in thy whole land." Thenius unnecessarily reads, according to the Sept. (ἐν μιᾷ τῶν πόλεων αὐτῶν) בְּאַחַת instead of בארץ. The words say—when the enemy is in his land, yea, even besieging his well-protected towns. The wasting of the land by locusts was similar to the wasting by hostile armies, that invaded the land like locusts (Jud. vi. 5). *Which shall know every man*, &c. (ver. 38), *i. e.*, when each one should see the connection "between his sin and the plague inflicted on him by God, and allow it to work out his chastisement" (Bertheau). *According to his ways* (ver. 39), *i. e.*, by the repentant heart, shown in all his conduct. Whether this repentance is really felt, He alone, who "*searches the hearts" of the children of men*, can know (Jer. xvii. 10). The reason of the hearing of prayer is given in ver. 40: continuance in godly fear (comp. Deut. iv. 10).

Vers. 41–43. **Moreover concerning a stranger**, &c. The *fifth petition* (vers. 41–43) ranks with the former ones: but not only those belonging to thy people Israel, who may call upon Thee here, hear also every stranger who does so; that all people of the earth, &c. In the law (Deut. xv. 14–16) it was provided that a stranger, sojourning among the Israelites, might sacrifice with them; Solomon goes further, and declares that the great deeds of God in Israel, the seal and crown of which was the temple as a fixed dwelling-place of Jehovah, were to work out the salvation not only of Israel, but the conversion of all the nations of the earth. To reach that end may God hear every stranger who comes to this house and calls upon Him for His name's sake (*i. e.*, because he had heard of the might and greatness displayed on Israel, ver. 42). The expressions in ver. 42 refer essentially to the wonderful exodus from Egypt (Deut. iv. 34; v. 15; Ex. vi. 6), which had reached its climax in the building of the temple (see above, on chap. vi. 1). The words in ver. 43: *that they may know that this house . . . is called by thy name* (נִקְרָא עַל), are a formula that occurs as here and in Jer. vii. 10, 11, 14; xxv. 29, about the temple, and about the people Israel in Deut. xxviii. 10; Isai. iv. 1; lxiii. 19; Jer. xiv. 9; xv. 16; 2 Chron. vii. 14; and is intimately related to the expression, to lay the name of Jehovah upon (עַל) a thing or person (Numb. vi. 27; Deut. xii. 5; xvi. 6; 1 Kings xi. 36, &c.). The latter was thus marked as one to whom God reveals himself (names himself), *i. e.*, manifests and communicates himself, so that he stands in union and communion with Him (Am. ix. 12, comp. Hengstenberg, *Christologie*, iii. *s.* 231 *sq.*). Through the hearing of the prayers which the heathen offered here to Israel's God, they as well as Israel were to experience that His "name" was there (ver. 16), *i. e.*, that He manifested and proved himself there to be God. The usual translation of the expression, that this house is called by Thy name, or bears Thy name, is therefore quite wrong. What good would it have done the heathen to know that the house Solomon built was called by Jehovah's name? But the following is equally erroneous: "that Thy name has been invoked upon this temple (at its dedication), *i. e.*, that this temple has been dedicated under effective invocation of Thy continued help" (Thenius); it was not that the heathens were to know that the temple had been solemnly consecrated, but that the God who dwelt there would hear their as well as Israel's prayer, and that hence He is the only true God (chap. xviii. 37; Ps. lxv. 3).

Vers. 44–50. **If thy people go out**, &c. The *sixth* petition (vers. 44, 45), and the *seventh* (vers. 46–50), relate to the conceivable cases, in which the people *cannot* pray at Jehovah's house, because they are far from it. The first case is, when the people should be *whithersoever Jehovah should send them*, *i. e.*, in war, according to Jehovah's appointment and approbation; they were then to pray towards the city in which the temple was. The other case is, if having grievously sinned against Jehovah, and in consequence, being vanquished and led away captive to another land, they were then to repent, and direct their prayers towards the country, the city, and the house where Jehovah dwelt. The outward turning was the sign of the inward turning to the God of Israel, who as such has His dwelling-place in the temple, and is a real confession to this God, who never leaves His people, if they do not forsake Him. *Maintain their cause*, ver. 45 (comp. Ps. ix. 5; Deut. x. 18). This presupposes that the war is a just one. The three expressions for sinning are scarcely to be distinguished with precision from each other, as Keil thinks, but are only meant to include every conceivable kind of sin. Thenius asserts that the verses 44–51 are a "section added later, perhaps by the elaborator," for such a petition, which belongs properly to vers. 33, 34, cannot follow ver. 43; the custom of turning towards Jerusalem is first mentioned in writings subsequent to the exile (Dan. vi. 11; Ezra iv. 58), and the last petition, vers. 46–51, was occasioned by the Babylonian captivity, just also as the formula of the confession of sin, ver. 47, belonged to a later period (Dan. ix. 5; Ps. cvi. 6). On the other hand, both petitions are exactly in the right place; the five previous ones refer to cases in which prayer is offered at the temple itself; the last two to cases where the praying people cannot come to the temple. They therefore follow quite naturally; besides this, the case in ver. 44 is evidently quite different from that in ver. 33 *sq.*, for in the latter there is an armed invasion by the enemy, in which some are taken prisoners; and in the former (ver. 44) the people go out to battle under the divine order

Turning towards the temple was a very natural custom, and mentioned not only in vers. 44 and 48, but in ver. 38, before, and also in Ps. v. 8; xxviii. 2. As the temple, being Jehovah's dwelling, was a pattern of the heavens, His real dwelling-place, it followed that as men stretched out their hands to heaven, so they stretched them towards the temple in prayer; it is, at any rate, impossible to prove that this custom came in first after the captivity. The carrying away conquered nations was "a fundamental maxim of despots which prevailed in the ancient orient" (Winer, *R.-W.-B.*, i. s. 357, and the writings quoted there); when therefore Solomon, in counting up the misfortunes and straits in which Israel could fall, thinks lastly of this most grievous case, it is less surprising that he should rather than that he should not have mentioned it, especially since it was repeatedly threatened in the law (Lev. xxvi. 33; Deut. xxviii. 25, 36, 64; iv. 27). The petition is quite general, and there is not the slightest allusion to any particular captivity. The confession in ver. 47 is by no means of a kind that could have only been made in exile (comp. Numb. xiv. 40; 1 Sam. vii. 6; Ps. li. 6; xxxii. 5), and we might, inversely, with more justice maintain that the Jews in exile appropriated this most expressive word for the deepest guilt, from the royal prayer (Keil). There are exactly seven petitions, thus giving the prayer the seal of this significant number; and the last two cannot have been added later, for they contain nothing foreign to the other ones, but on the contrary are very suitable to the former petitions, and in perfect harmony with the immediately preceding one (comp. Bertheau on 2 Chron. vi. 39).

Vers. 51–54. **For they be thy people,** &c. Vers. 51–52 form the conclusion of the prayer, as vers. 23–26, the beginning, to which this conclusion points back. He confidently gives his reason for hoping for the acceptance of the whole prayer; which reason is the election of Israel out of all nations, to be a peculiar and covenant people. With ver. 51 comp. Deut. iv. 20. *The iron furnace* is not = a furnace of iron, but the furnace in which the iron is melted, which requires the greatest heat, therefore = glowing furnace. The deliverance from Egypt is here also looked on as a pledge for deliverance from every future distress, how great soever. The beginning of the prayer, vers. 28, 29, is taken up again in ver. 52; its close connection with ver. 51 through לִהְיוֹת has this sense; that it follows from their election to be a peculiar people, that Jehovah would also listen, in future, to their prayers. Ver. 53 (comp. Lev. xx. 24, 26) is no mere repetition of ver. 51 (Thenius), but rests upon a broader ground, derived from the destiny of the nation itself. The peculiar people is that which was set apart for Jehovah's service from among all nations (Numb. viii. 14; xvi. 9), the holy people, the royal priesthood (Ex. xix. 5, 6). The prayer has quite a different ending in 2 Chron. vi. 41, 42; this, Thenius thinks the original one, which was not discovered by our author. That ending, however, must not be preferred to that in our books, and put in place of the latter; because it agrees word for word with Ps. cxxxii. 8–10, referring to a period after the captivity, and is evidently taken from that psalm, not the latter from Chronicles, or from some source common to both. Peculiarities of the language also point to a relatively late period of composition (see Bertheau on the place). This ending in Chron. appears to have been chosen to form a connecting link with what is related immediately afterwards (2 Chron. vii. 1–3), but which is not in our text.

Vers. 54–61. **And it was so, that when Solomon had made an end of praying all this prayer,** &c. As the dedication-prayer was preceded by an address of greeting to the people (vers. 14–21), so also it was followed by a concluding speech and blessing, which Solomon gave, again standing (וַיַּעֲמֹד). He next praises God for having given *rest to His people Israel* (ver. 56); for the consecrated temple, that had been filled with the glory of the Lord (vers. 10–11), was a firm, immovable habitation, and therefore the practical evidence that the people had now fully come into their promised rest (Deut. xii. 9–10), (see above, on chap. vi. 1); Solomon, the builder of the temple, was for this reason named the "man of rest" (1 Chron. xxii. 9). *The good word* is that which promises blessing (Jer. xxxiii. 14), as pronounced in Lev. xxxvi. 3 *sq.*, and Deut. xxviii. 1 *sq.* The expression *there hath not failed* as = fulfilled, often occurs (Josh. xxi. 45; xxiii. 14; 2 Kings x. 10). The praise of Jehovah, ver. 56, forms the introduction to vers. 57–61, which are also blessings and exhortations. In ver. 58, Solomon wishes for the people, that God might, as heretofore, continue to be with them; in ver. 59, that He would, in answer to the prayer just spoken, grant them continued help against their enemies. The object of the first wish is stated in ver. 58, that of the second in ver. 60. *Nigh*, meaning that He should always remember these words, and fulfil them. *Day and night*, *i. e.*, as each day should require, Ex. v. 13; xvi. 4. With ver. 60 comp. ver. 43. The שָׁלֵם, ver. 61, does not mean: in friendship with God (Gesenius), nor submissive (de Wette), nor uprightly (Luther), but: entirely, undividedly (comp. chap. xi. 4, 6). The entire concluding discourse (vers. 54–61) is missing in Chronicles, as we remarked; and this concluding portion being an integral part of the dedication-solemnity, the fact is by no means satisfactorily accounted for by saying: that "it is only a recapitulation of the preceding lengthy prayer" (Keil). On the other hand, Chron. informs us that immediately after the prayer was ended, fire fell from heaven, which consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices, and that the glory of the Lord filled the house (2 Chron. vii. 1 *sq.*). There is no apparent reason why our author, who is otherwise so minute in his account, should quite pass over this remarkable and wonderful occurrence, if it had been related in his original. Chronicles contradicts itself, inasmuch as it makes the filling of the house with the glory of the Lord follow upon the prayer, while chap. v. 14, as in our account, ver. 10 *sq.*, makes it precede the prayer, which indeed the entire contents of the prayer presuppose. No one will believe that the glory of the Lord left the house during the prayer, and afterwards filled it again. If therefore the chronicler has in any place borrowed from later tradition founded on Lev. ix. 24, it must have been here.

Vers. 62–66. **And the king, and all Israel with him, offered sacrifice,** &c. In accordance with the design of the festival, by far the greater

number of sacrifices were thanksgiving, or peace-offerings, of which the fat only was burnt, and the rest used for food (Lev. vii. 11 *sq.*; Deut. xii. 7). The number of animals, in which the Chron. and all the old translations agree, was very large, so that some have tried to prove that it was exaggerated. Thenius reckons that "as it took seven days to offer these sacrifices (allowing twelve complete hours to the sacrificial day), about five oxen and twenty-four sheep must have been slaughtered and offered every minute." This calculation, plausible as it seems, is disproved when we consider what the exact circumstances were here; as Keil on the place has thoroughly done. It was not the king alone who sacrificed, but "all Israel with him;" there were sacrificial feasts, during fourteen days, for the great assemblage of all the people from Hamoth (the northern boundary of Palestine, Numb. xiii. 21; xxxiv. 8) to the river of Egypt (the present el Arisch on the southern frontier, Josh. xv. 4), and whom we may compute at 100,000 men. Certainly the priests could not possibly have killed so many animals for sacrifice in the time stated, but according to the law it was the business of those offering the sacrifices themselves; the priests only had to sprinkle the blood on the altar. This they could easily do, for their number then amounted to at least some thousands, as we can judge from the number of levites (1 Chron. xxiii. 3). With regard to the great number of the sacrifices, it is also expressly remarked in ver. 64, that as they could not all be offered on the brazen altar, Solomon (for this purpose) hallowed the middle of the court, *i. e.*, consecrated it as a place of sacrifice by erecting subsidiary altars. How extraordinarily great the number of sacrifices at that kind of festival was, even in later times, we learn from an account of Josephus (*Bell. Jud.* vi. 9, 3), namely, that at a passover-feast at Jerusalem, in Nero's time, the priests counted no less than 256,000 sacrifices that were slaughtered and consumed. We are to understand besides the thank-offerings, by the *burnt-offerings and meat-offerings* (ver. 64), the daily morning and evening sacrifices of the law (Numb. xxviii. 3). The time and length of the festivity given in vers. 65 and 66 are more plainly expressed in the parallel passage in 2 Chron. vii. 8–10: "Solomon kept the feast (אֶת־הֶחָג, *i. e.*, the feast of the tabernacles, see on ver. 2) at the same time as temple-dedication, seven days, . . . and on the eighth day they made עֲצֶרֶת (as the law commanded, Lev. xxiii. 36); for they kept the dedication of the altar (in which that of the temple was included) seven days, and the feast (of tabernacles) seven days. And on the three and twentieth day of the seventh month he sent the people away." This places the feast of the tabernacles, which according to the law began on the 15th of the seventh month, *after* the dedication; and when our text says therefore *seven days and seven days, even fourteen days* (ver. 65), it can only mean that the dedication and the feast lasted altogether fourteen days; consequently the first immediately preceded the latter, and did not occupy from the 1st to the 7th day (Thenius), but from the eighth to the fourteenth. That the dedication lasted "fourteen days" is still more out of the question (v. Gerlach). The two narratives do not, however, perfectly agree, for ver. 66 says that Solomon sent the people away on the *eighth day* (of the feast), *i. e.*, on the 22d of the month, while 2 Chron. vii. 10 makes it the 23d. Yet this is no real contradiction, but only a vague form of speech about a known thing. Solomon sent the people away on the 8th day, *i. e.*, in the afternoon or evening, of the Azereth of the feast of tabernacles; so that they began their journey home on the following morning, *i. e.*, on the 23d of the month (Keil). Whether the feast of atonement (Lev. xxiii. 27), which fell on the 10th of the seventh month, was kept, and how, remains uncertain. Old commentators say that the dedication rendered it unusually solemn; others that, as it was a fast day, its observance was for that time omitted. *Tents* (ver. 66) is here like 2 Sam. xx. 1; Judges vii. 8 used for home, and *David* is named instead of Solomon (which the chronicler adds), because he was the originator of the temple-building, and through him Solomon was enabled to undertake it.

HISTORICAL AND ETHICAL.

1. *The dedication of the temple* is one of the most important of the facts of the Old Testament history, inasmuch as with it and through it, the "house" which Solomon built, first became what it was destined for—the dwelling-place of Jehovah, and all that the idea of dwelling comprises in it (see above, on chap. vi.). The theocratic kingdom, and that of Solomon in particular, then reached its highest glory. For this reason the feast did not last only one day, but, like the great feasts that were devoted to the remembrance of the equally important facts in the theocratic history (the passover and tabernacles), continued seven days. This is why both narratives give such minute accounts of it, and show, by their agreement, that the common source from which they drew had treated the subject with the same minuteness. V. Gerlach justly remarks that: "the solemn event recounted here crowned the work of the establishment of God's kingdom in Israel, which was begun by Samuel and continued by David."

2. *In respect of the act of dedication*, it next strikes us that the *king* stands at the head of the whole ceremony, though it was an essentially religious one. He ordains a special festival, calls all the people to it, and conducts the whole solemnity. He is the author of everything from beginning to end—speech, prayer, and blessing. The priests and levites indeed are also busied in it, but they only perform their usual services, and the high-priest is not even named, still less mentioned as the chief actor on the occasion, performing the dedication. It has been said in explanation, that Solomon stood at this moment, like Moses, Samuel, and David, as a direct and divine ambassador, as king, priest, and prophet (von Gerlach), or that he had taken on himself, as an absolute temporal ruler, the functions of a priest and prophet (Ewald, Eisenlohr, Menzel, and others). Both suppositions are, to say the least, unnecessary. The position Solomon took here is thoroughly justified by the nature of the theocratic kingdom, which was not designed to remove or displace the divine rule, but rather to exalt and execute it. The theocratic king did not take the place of the God-king, Jehovah, but was his "servant," and as such, Solomon repeatedly designates himself here (vers. 25, 28, 29, 52, 59). What the whole people were to Jehovah, by virtue of the covenant (Ex. xix. 6), was summed up in their king,

and true of him as an individual. The priesthood was not at the head of the kingdom, which was not an hierarchy, but a theocracy; theirs was a separate institution, which it was the duty of the king to maintain, as well as all other institutions of the law (covenant). He would therefore have acted contrary to Jehovah's law, and have sinned (comp. 2 Chron. xxvi. 16 *sq.*), had he taken on himself the offices which belonged by law to the priests. Solomon therefore let the priests perform their services at the dedication, as the law prescribed, and he was not guilty of the shadow of usurpation of the priestly office. But the act of dedication of the "house of Jehovah" built by him through divine commission, which act bore such high importance to the realm and people, and began a new epoch in theocratic history, belonged rightly to his mission as a theocratic king. No one else had the right, because no one else had the same theocratic position and duties. And as the theocratic kingdom reached its culminating point with Solomon, the theocratic kingdom also attained in him its full significance. It would be quite perverse to attempt to ground or to defend the modern imperial papalism (*Cäsaro-papismus*), or the so-called liturgical rights of the sovereign, by the precedent of Solomon's conduct. The Old Testament theocratic kingdom was essentially different from the monarchy of these of modern times.

3. *The act of dedication began by carrying the ark of the covenant* in solemn procession, with the king at the head, into the temple, and depositing it in "its place," the holy of holies, while numerous sacrifices were offered. The ark of the covenant was the root and kernel of the whole sanctuary; it contained the moral law, at once the original document and pledge of the covenant, through which, and in consequence of which, Jehovah was willing to "dwell" in the midst of his chosen people; the Kaporeth upon which Jehovah was enthroned was therefore inseparably united with it (Ex. xxv. 22), so that the entire sanctuary only became through this throne what it was intended to be—the dwelling-place of Jehovah. On this subject Witsius says (*Miscell. sacr. p.* 439) of the *arca fœderis: Quæ sanctissimum fuit totius tabernaculi κειμήλιον, quæque veluti cor totius religionis Israeliticæ primum omnium formata est Exod.* xxv. 10, *et cui ne deesset habitationis locus, ipsum tabernaculum dein et superbum illud templum conditum fuit. Exod.* xxvi. 33 *et* xl. 21; 1 Chron. xxviii. 2. By the placing of the ark of the covenant in the temple, it first became the house of Jehovah, and hence its solemn introduction into it. While everything else within it was made new (chap. vii.), the same ark of the covenant was kept, and only changed its place. It could never grow old, for it was the witness of the past victorious divine guidance, as well as the pledge of Jehovah's faithfulness and might. With it, all the historical facts bound up with it became associated with the temple; it was the historical tie between the old and new sanctuary, between the two periods of the tent and the house (see *Introd.* § 3), making the latter the immediate sequel to the former.

4. *The filling of the house with Jehovah's glory*, made manifest to the senses by the *cloud*, is in harmony with the spirit of the Old Testament economy, inasmuch as it bore, compared with the New Testament economy, a bodily form, and in it the entire human-divine relation, as it comes to its expression in a cultus, assumed shapes perceptible to the senses. As Jehovah, in the old covenant, chose a visible dwelling amongst his people, in token of their election, so also He verified His presence in this dwelling in a way cognizant to the senses, that is, through the *cloud*, which is the medium and sign of His manifestation, not only here, but all through the Old Testament (Ex. xvi. 10; xx. 21; xxiv. 15, 16; xxxiv. 5; xl. 34; Lev. xvi. 2; Numb. xi. 25; xii. 5; Isai. vi. 3, 4; Ezek. i. 4, 28; x. 3, 4; Ps. xviii. 10–12). But the cloud is not so well suited for this purpose, because it exists far above, in heaven, which is Jehovah's peculiar dwelling (Prov. viii. 28; Ps. lxxxix. 7; Job xxxv. 5), and is also, as it were, His chariot (Ps. civ. 3); but rather because, as its name shows, its nature is to conceal and veil, so that cloud and darkness are synonymous words. "עָנָן, cloud, named from the covering of the heavens" (Gesenius); עֲרָפֶל, "thick darkness," comes from עָרַף, drop down dew (Deut. xxxiii. 28), and means literally cloud-night; עָב from עוּב, to darken, sometimes means thick darkness, sometimes cloud (Ex. xix. 9; Ps. xviii. 12; Job xxxvi. 29; xxxvii. 11, 16). The cloud is, on account of its darkness, the mode of manifestation of Jehovah and of His glory, and the throne on which His presence was concentrated within the dwelling stood in the back part, which was perfectly dark. Even the high-priest, when he entered once a year into this dark place, covered the throne besides with a cloud of incense, "that he died not" (Lev. xvi. 2, 13). When Moses prayed, I beseech Thee, show me Thy glory! he received the answer: Thou canst not see my face, for there shall no man see me and live; but Jehovah then came down in the cloud to manifest himself to him (Ex. xxxiii. 18, 20; xxxiv. 5 *sq.*). *Nebulâ*, says an old commentator, *deus se et repræsentabat et velabat.* The cloud is then, on one hand, the heaven-descended sign of the presence of the self-manifesting God; on the other hand, it declares that God in His being, spiritually and ethically, is so far above, and different from all other beings, that man, in his sinful and mortal nature, cannot comprehend Him nor endure the sight of Him. Görres rightly says (*Mythengeschichte* II. *s.* 507): "It is the distinguishing characteristic of the genius of the Mosaic fundamental view, that it veils the Deity far off from the temerity of the exploring reason, just as it chastely and abstemiously forbids polluting Him with the sensuous dreams of the imagination." The God of the Old Testament manifests Himself to man through word and deed, yet ever remains at infinite distance above him, so that when he strives to overstep the creature-limits of his nature he must perish. *Quemadmodum*, says Abarbanel (in Buxtorf, *hist. arcæ fœd.*, cap. 11), *lucem solis propter summum ejus splendorem et claritatem oculus humanus non potest videre, quamvis causa sit, ut res videantur; et si homo proprius et fixe eum intueri velit, oculis ejus percutiuntur et hebetantur, ut nec illud amplius videre queat, quod alias videre potuit: sic non potest intellectus humanus apprehendere deum secundum veritatem suam, et si terminum suum egrediatur, apprehensio ejus confunditur aut moritur* (*cf.* 1 Timothy vi. 16).

5. *The dedication prayer*, which belongs to the finest pieces of the Old Testament, received a high

significance through the fact that the person who offered it, did so in his highest official character and rank, as king and head of the theocracy, and in view of the whole people, on an occasion (see above on chap. vi. 1) which formed an epoch in the theocracy. This, then, is not the prayer of a private person, upon a private matter, but one offered in the name of the whole nation, and about a subject which formed the central point of its worship, and therefore touched its highest interests. It did not spring from individual religious views, but from the religious consciousness of the whole community, and may therefore be regarded as a public and solemn confession of faith, inasmuch as it brings to light the chief and fundamental truths of the Old Testament religion which peculiarly distinguished it from all others. There is not a prayer to be compared with this in all pre-Christian antiquity. Had we nothing belonging to Jewish antiquity but this prayer, it would alone suffice to attest the depth, the purity, and the truth of the Israelitish knowledge of God and of salvation, over against the religious ideas of all other peoples.

6. *Prominent beyond all else in this prayer are the expressions respecting the being of God, especially in His relations to the temple.* At the beginning (ver. 23) God is addressed as He with whom nothing can be compared, whether in heaven or on earth; as the Being who is above and beyond the world, and therefore the only God; and it is emphatically confessed (ver. 27) that no house built by man can contain Him in His infinitude and omnipresence. This was the most decisive refutation of all anthropomorphistic representations of God, such as heathenism made in its temples (see above), and which it might seek to associate with Jehovah's dwelling, now no longer a movable tent, but an abiding house. At the same time, this infinite, only God is most explicitly praised as Israel's God, *i. e.*, as the God who had chosen Israel out of all peoples to be His inheritance, had shown Himself to them in word and deed, and entered into a covenant with them, as a pledge of which He took up His dwelling in their midst. This confession of a personal, living God presents the strongest contrast to every pantheistic representation of the being of God, such as the higher wisdom of heathendom, identifying God and the world, imagined, and of which, most unjustly, the effort has been made to discover a soupçon in Solomon's words in ver. 27. The Israelitish idea of God knows nothing of a contradiction between the supernal, infinite, and absolute being of God, and His entering into creaturely, finite, and limited being. Just because He is infinite and unsearchable, He can communicate with the finite; and because He is everywhere, He can be peculiarly present in one place, centring His presence, and displaying His glory (absolute sublimity). Heaven is His throne, and earth His footstool, therefore no house built by man can be His permanent place of rest (Isai. lxvi. 1); but as He dwells in heaven, so He can dwell on earth; "for thus saith the high and lofty one that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy: I dwell in the high and holy place, with him [also] that is of a contrite and humble spirit" (Isai. lvii. 15). "Behold, the heaven and the heaven of heavens is the Lord's, the earth also, with all that therein is. Only the Lord had a delight of thy fathers to love them, and He chose their seed after them, even you above all people" (Deut. x. 14 *sq.*). "For Him nothing is too great and nothing too small, nothing is too high and nothing too low, that He cannot set His name there" (vers. 16, 29; chap. xi. 36; xiv. 11), *i. e.*, manifest Himself at and through it, without ceasing to fill heaven and earth. To confess and pray to Him as such a God means to "confess His name" (vers. 35, 41, 43). His covenant relation to Israel, and the consequent dwelling in the midst of that people, are not at all inconsistent with his infinitude and unsearchableness, but rather were the means by which He could be known as the one, true, and living God. The expression touching the infinite grandeur of God's being is followed by this: "who keepest covenant and mercy with Thy servants that," &c. The God, with whom nothing in heaven or earth could be compared, has manifested and revealed Himself to Israel as a *moral* being; the covenant which He has made with them is of a purely ethical nature, for it is the law (Ex. xxxiv. 28; Deut. iv. 13), the revealed will of God, and rests on the grace of election; it is a covenant of grace. He who gave the law, and will have it kept, is also merciful and gracious, long-suffering and abundant in goodness and truth (Ex. xxxiv. 6). The knowledge of this gives the key-tone to the whole prayer; all trust and hope of an answer is rooted in it. But heathenism, which in its deepest grounds is nature-religion, knows nothing of this; the God of Israel is the only absolute holy one, and therefore the alone true.

7. *The general substance of the prayer is that Jehovah might hear all those who should* call on Him here for help or deliverance from any need. But the answer is not expected by any mere outward coming or turning to the place of His presence, but by the knowledge, that all distress *is caused by the turning away from Jehovah and His laws, that is, by sin.* Answer, with regard to deliverance, must rest therefore upon *forgiveness of sins*, which has again as its prerequisite repentance and return, *i. e.*, conversion to Jehovah. This is why the petition: forgive the sin! (vers. 30, 34, 36, 39, 50) is repeated in the several prayers for deliverance from a state of suffering. *Universal sinfulness* is not only expressly asserted (ver. 46), but the living consciousness of it is interwoven with the whole prayer. This is the more characteristic, as it was not a penitential ceremony at which the prayer was offered, but a joyful thanksgiving-festival, and it was offered by a king who was the wisest of his time, and had reached the summit of power and prosperity (chap. v. 1, 11). From this we see how firmly that consciousness was rooted in the people Israel, and how inseparably it was united with all their religious views. Such a thing is found in no other nation of the ancient world, because none of them knew the God whose name is Holy (Isai. lvii. 15), *i. e.*, who had revealed Himself to His people as the Holy one, and whose covenant with them bore this inscription: Ye shall be holy for I am holy (Levit. xi. 44). When God is known as the absolutely Holy, and the sanctifier, man appears in contrast as a sinner, and the more living the knowledge, the more living is the consciousness of sinfulness. No man can confess the name of God, which is the name of holiness, who does not know himself to be a sinner: acknowledging his sin he gives God, the Holy One, glory. Hence הוֹדָה (ver. 33) means just as much, to con-

fess his sin to Jehovah, as to give him praise (Ps. xxxii. 5; liv. 8).

8. *Much as it is insisted on through the whole prayer*, and its acceptance grounded in the fact, that Jehovah is the God of Israel, and has chosen that people from all nations of the earth (ver. 51-53), yet the *purpose of this election*, namely "*that all people of the earth may know Jehovah's name*," and "fear Him as do His people Israel" (ver. 43), is also very clearly set forth. The prayer that Jehovah may ever hear the strangers also, who come from distant lands and do not belong to His people, when they call upon Him here; this prayer, we say, receives peculiar importance when Solomon, in his blessing at the end of the whole festivity, alludes once more to the grand end designed: "that all the people of the earth may know that the Lord is God, and that there is none else" (ver. 60). It is therefore hoped of the Temple, the central sanctuary of the one true God, that the knowledge and worship of this God should spread forth from it among all nations of the earth; and it is very remarkable, that what the prophets declared no less distinctly afterwards, was pronounced here so explicitly, at the dedication of the Temple (*cf.* Isai. ii. 3; lvi. 7; lx. 2 *sq.;* Jer. iii. 17; Mic. iv. 2 *sq.;* Zech. viii. 20 *sq.*). Thus the prophetical element, that element which formed so essential and important a part of Old-Testament religion, is not absent from the prayer. The common talk of vulgar rationalism, about Jehovah being only a God of the Jews and of their land, appears in all its emptiness and folly when contrasted with the official (to a certain degree) acknowledgment of Israel's world-wide mission, and which acknowledgment was made on a most solemn occasion.

9. *In its form and breadth*, the prayer of Solomon is a genuine public or common prayer; it wears a completely objective character; the views, wishes, and wants of individuals, as expressed, for instance, in the prayer of chap. iii. 6-9, are here left quite in the back-ground, while the common wants of the whole people occupy the foreground. Solomon, as the head and representative of the whole nation, does not pray from his own faith and consciousness, but from those of the collected nation. First, praise and thanksgiving; then follow the various petitions and intercessory prayers; lastly, an appeal to the grace hitherto vouchsafed, for a pledge of acceptance and the promised succor. Both the language and modes of expression have the genuine ring of prayer. God is not preached to nor addressed nor taught, but prayed to. A firm trusting faith, a holy moral earnestness, unfeigned humility, and great simplicity breathe through the whole, while with these there is united a fervor which shows the deepest emotion; in short we feel that this prayer was not composed among the soft cushions of the palace, but on the knees. In this respect it may be regarded, at the present day, as a model of a general church-prayer. This seems to have been more or less the case in earlier times; as for example, the so-called Litany, with its intercessions and responses,—Hear us, O Lord God! has the ring of our dedication prayer (vers. 32, 34, 36, 39, 43, 45, 49).

10. *In the concluding speech* following the prayer Solomon desires for the people the help of God, that they may accomplish the world-wide design of their mission—the spreading of the knowledge of the one true God among all nations. He founds the hope that Jehovah will assist him, on the fulfilment of all the promises, already experienced, made to the people, of which the building of the Temple as a firm dwelling of Jehovah had given practical witness; he therefore begins the benediction with praise of the divine faithfulness; but he limits the attainment of their mission to the condition that they should persevere in keeping God's laws. Thenius remarks forcibly on this subject: "How seemly and truly edifying it is that God's help is specially implored for the purposes of ordinary life (ver. 58), and that the wish that men may find an answer to prayers for temporal aid (ver. 59), has for its end increased knowledge of the one true God (ver. 60)."

11. *The great seven days' feast of the sacrifices* connected with the dedication of the Temple is not to be looked on as a mere thanksgiving feast. The שְׁלָמִים which were brought in such unusual numbers, and formed the principal sacrifices, were by no means only thank and praise offerings, but also vow-offerings. The peculiar and characteristic mark of this kind of sacrifice, which distinguished it from the others, and in which their ritual culminated, was the sacrificial meals, in which the whole family of the sacrificers, even man-servants and maid-servants—the whole house, took part (Lev. vii. 15 *sq.;* Deut. xii. 17 *sq.*); it was a *common meal*. As eating at one table is a sign of communion and united feeling (Matt. viii. 11; Gal. ii. 12; Gen. xliii. 32), so the sacrificial meal was the sign of religious unity of those who eat, among each other as well as with the Deity, to whom the sacrifice belonged, and at whose table it was eaten in common (*cf.* 1 Cor. x. 18 *sq.*, and in general *Symbolik des Mos. Kultus*, xi. s. 373 *sq.*). When therefore the king, and with him the whole people, held sacrificial meals during seven days, at the Temple-dedication, they celebrated and sealed, in doing so, both their union with Jehovah and with each other; thus the dedication of the Temple, the central point of all religious life in Israel, became also a *covenant-festival*.

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

The dedication of the Temple. (*a*) The bringing in the Ark of the Covenant to the Holy of Holies, vers. 1-13. (*b*) The speech, prayer, and benediction of the King, vers. 14-61. (*c*) Great sacrificial solemnity of the entire people, vers. 62-66.

Vers. 1-9. The solemn procession to the new Temple. (*a*) Its aim and signification (it was the Ark of the Covenant, because in it was the Law—*i. e.*, the covenant, the very Soul of the Sanctuary, *vide* Historical and Critical, 3). We have in the new covenant not only the Law but the Gospel, which is everlasting, 1 Pet. i. 25. Where His Word is, there the Lord dwells and is enthroned; it is the soul of every house of God, and indeed gives it its consecration; without it, every church is dead and empty, whatsoever may be the prayers and praises offered therein; hence at the consecration of a church it is customary to bring it in in solemn procession. (*b*) The members of the procession (the King at its head, the heads of tribes, the princes, the priests and Levites, the entire

people; all gathered round the ark, in which was the Law, *i. e.*, the covenant, and by this march, solemnly and significantly recognizes the word of the Lord; no one, be his position high or low, is ashamed of this public acknowledgment. Nothing can be nobler than to see a whole nation, from the highest to the lowest, gathered in unity round its holiest possession).—What, from an evangelical standpoint, must we think of public processions, with a religious object (Prozessionen)?—WÜRT. BIB.: The consecration of a church is a praiseworthy custom. But it should not be done with holy water, but with the word of God, with prayer, and with thanksgiving.—PFAFF. BIB.: All men, especially those of highest rank, ought to show themselves zealous in God's service, and enlighten others by their example.—The priests bear the ark, and bring it to its place. To be bearers of the Divine word, and to set up the mercy-seat in the House of God, as Paul points out, Rom. iii. 24 *sq.*, is truly the office and the glory of God's servants, Mal. ii. 7.—CRAMER: Christ, the true Ark of the Covenant, is the end and fulfilling of the Law. My God! may I, as in an ark, preserve and guard thy law! Ps. xl. 9.—Ver. 6 *sq.* The word of the Lord is under divine protection, the angels are its guardians and watchers; it can neither be destroyed by human power, nor is it aided or protected by men.

Vers. 10–13. The glory of the Lord filled the House. (*a*) What this means; (*b*) in what manner it befell (*v.* Historical and Critical, 4).—It is impossible that mortal, sinful man should see or comprehend the Holy and Infinite One (1 Tim. vi. 16). We see through a glass, darkly (1 Cor. xiii. 12). I can experience his merciful Presence; but presumption and folly it is to wish to sound the depths of His Being, Job. xxxviii; Ex. ii. 33, 20.—STARKE: O soul, who finding thyself tempted, and as if in darkness and gloom, mournest that God is far from thee: ah! mark this for thy comfort, God abides with thee in darkness, and is thy light, Ps. xxiii. 4; xxvii. 1; Is. lvii. 15.—The eye of faith beholds in the darkness the glory of the Lord, in the night of the Cross the Light of the World, through the dim veil of the flesh the Only begotten Son of God, full of mercy and grace.

Vers. 14–21. The Speech of Solomon to the assembled people. He solemnly announces, (*a*) that the building of the temple was of the gracious will and counsel of God, vers. 15, 16 (with it the leading of Israel out of Egypt is come to its end, reached its final aim; the House in place of the tent is the crowning act of God to Israel, a clear spoken testimony to his might and truth; therefore Solomon begins his speech: Blessed be, &c.); (*b*) that God had called him to the performance of his decrees, vers. 17–21. (He announces the mercy of God, in that he allows him to undertake the work whose completion was denied to his father. He who understands a great, holy work must be assured of this—that he is not actuated by ambition, by passion for glory, or by vanity, but that he is called thereto by God, and that it is his sacred duty.) Ver. 14. After every completed work permitted thee by the Lord, be it great or small, let it be thy first care to give Him the honor, and to declare His praise.—Ver. 15. I have spoken it and performed it, said the Lord (Ezek. xxxvii. 14). What man speaks and promises, now he *cannot* perform, again he *will* not perform. Hence Ps. cxviii. 8.—Ver. 16. The choice of God is no blind preference of one and prejudice against another, but aims at the salvation of both. As from amongst all nations he chose Israel for its salvation, so out of all the tribes of Israel he chose the City of David for the blessing of the whole kingdom.—Vers. 17, 18. How many individuals as well as whole congregations have the means and the power wherewith to build a church, to repair a ruinous one, or to enlarge one which has become too small; but nothing can be further from their mind.—He who purposes to do a good work, but is hindered therein, not by his own fault but by divine decree, he has yet "well done," God regards his intention as the deed itself.—V. 19. God sometimes, in His inscrutable but all-wise councils, denies to His own people the fulfilment of their dearest wishes, whose object may even be the glory of His name, in order to try their faith, and exercise their submission and self-denial.—V. 20. The fairest prerogative of him whom God has placed upon a throne is, that he has power to work for the glory of God's name, and to watch over the extension of the divine kingdom amongst his people. Every son who succeeds to the inheritance of his father should feel obliged, first of all, to take up the good work whose completion was denied to his father, and perfect it with love and zeal.

Vers. 22–53. The dedicatory prayer of Solomon. (*a*) the exordium, vers. 23–26; (*b*) the prayer, vers. 27–50; (*c*) the conclusion, vers. 51–53.—The prayer of Solomon a witness to his faith (he confesses the living, holy, and one God, before all the people); to his love (he bears His people upon His heart, and makes intercession for them); to his hope (he hopes that all nations will come to a knowledge of the true God). From Solomon we may learn how we ought to pray: in true reverence and humiliation before God, with earnestness and zeal, with undoubting confidence that we shall be heard.—What an elevating spectacle, a king upon his knees, praying aloud, in the presence of his whole people, and in their behalf! Although the highest of them all, he is not ashamed to declare himself a servant of God, and to fall down upon his knees; although the wisest of them all (chap. v. 11), he prays as a testimony that a wisdom which can no longer pray is folly; although the mightiest of all (chap. v. 1), he confesses that nothing is done by his power alone, but that the Lord is the King Eternal; therefore it is, that he does not merely rule over his subjects, but as an upright king supplicates and prays for them likewise.—Ver. 22 (*cf.* ver. 54). Solomon stands before the altar, bows the knee, stretches out his hands, the people stand around, the worshippers turn their faces towards the sanctuary (vers. 38, 44, 48). Outward forms, for the worship and service of God, are not to be rejected when they are the natural unbidden outflow of inward feeling. (The Lord himself and his apostles prayed upon their knees, Luke xxii. 41; Eph. iii. 14. No one is so exalted that he ought not to bow his knee and clasp his hands.) They (outward forms) are worthless when they are regarded as meritorious, and man puts his trust in them (Luke xviii. 11, *sq.*). They are sinful and blameworthy if they are performed merely for appearance's sake, or to deceive men (Matt. vi. 5, 16). The Lord knows the hearts of all men (ver. 39); one cannot serve the living God with dead works (Heb. ix. 14).

Vers. 23–26. The introductory prayer. (*a*) The invocation, vers. 23, 24. (Solomon calls upon the

infinite God of heaven and of earth as the God of Israel, not because he was only the God of that nation, but because he had revealed himself to it, had spoken to it, and with it had made a covenant of mercy and grace, and had kept this covenant. In the new covenant we no longer call upon God as the God of Israel, but as the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ (Eph. i. 3), because he has revealed himself to us through Christ, and through Christ alone do we find in Him the true God, the God of grace and mercy. Thus He wills that we should call upon Him.) (*b*) The supplication joined to this, vers. 25, 26. (Let thy promise be fulfilled. It is fulfilled, for God has sent that son of David whose kingdom shall have no end, Luke i. 32 *sq.*; Is. ix. 7. In the new covenant we pray that God will prove true the word which He has spoken to us, through this Son of David.—Ver. 25. Covenant and mercy are no couch of repose for old men, but the working energy which keeps the path of God, and walks in His way.—Ver. 24. STARKE: Word and deed, promise and fulfilment, with God go hand in hand.)

Vers. 27–30. What does Solomon declare concerning the destination of the house which he had built unto the Lord? (*a*) But will God indeed, &c., ver. 27. God dwells not, &c., Acts xvii. 24; Is. lxvi. 1. He is everywhere, in the heaven above as in the earth beneath, in lonely, secret chambers as in grandest temples, Ps. cxxxix. 7 *sq.*; Jer. xxiii. 23 *sq.* But he has said: (*b*) My name shall be, ver. 29. Where His people dwells there will He also dwell, and will declare Himself to them as the God who is holy, and will be sanctified; not for His own sake, but for that of His people, has He a temple in their midst, Ex. ii. 20, 24; xxvii. 43. Here is His word of revelation, here His mercy-seat. Therefore, (*c*) He wills that here prayer shall be made unto him, and here He will listen to those who pray. Ver. 30. Every prayer offered to Him here is a confession of Him, of His name.—Ver. 27. Although the heaven of heavens cannot contain the Unmeasurable and Infinite One, and no building, how great and noble soever, can suffice for Him, yet, in His mercy, He will make his dwelling-place (John xiv. 23) in the heart of that man who loves him and keeps his word, and it will truly become a temple of God (1 Cor. iii. 16); He will dwell with those who are of an humble spirit (Is. lvii. 15; Ps. cxiii. 5, 6).—Ver. 29. The eye of God looks upon every house where His name is honored, where all with one mind raise heart and hand to Him, and call upon His name (Ps. cxxi. 4). To every church the saying is applicable: My name shall be there: the object of every church is to be a dwelling-place of divine revelation, *i. e.*, if the revealed Word of God, in which, upon the strength of that Word, worship, praise, and prayer shall be offered to the name of the Lord.—Ver. 30. The houses of God, above all else, must be houses of prayer (Is. lvi. 7); they are desecrated if devoted merely to worldly purposes of any kind whatsoever instead of being used for prayer and supplication.—The hearing of prayer does not indeed depend upon the place where it is offered (John iv. 20 *sq.*), but prayer should have an appointed place, where we can present ourselves, even as God wills that together with one voice we humbly exalt His name (Rom. xv. 6; Ps. xxxiv. 4). Where two or three are gathered together in His name He is in their midst; how much more will He be where a whole congregation is assembled to call upon Him.

Vers. 31–50. The seven petitions of the prayer teach us, (*a*) in all necessity of body and soul to turn to the Lord who alone can help, and call upon Him with earnestness and zeal (Ps. l. 15; xci. 14, 15); (*b*) in all our straits to recognize the wholesome discipline of an holy and just God, who will show us the good way in which we must walk (Ps. xciv. 12; Heb. xii. 5 *sq.*); (*c*) to confess our sins and to implore forgiveness, in order that we may be heard (Ps. xxxii. 1, 5, 7); (*d*) not only for ourselves but also for others, in their time of need, should we pray and supplicate, even as the king does here for all individual men and for his entire people.—Vers. 31, 32. *First Petition.* We may and must call upon God to help the innocent man to his rights (Ps. xxvi. 1), and, even here in this world, to reward the evil man according to his deserts.—STARKE: It is allowable for a pious man to entreat God to administer his just cause; yet must he not wish evil to his neighbor in mere human vindictiveness (Ps. cix. 1 *sq.*). The oath is a prayer, a solemn invocation of God in testimony of the truth; the false oath is not merely a lie but an insolent mockery of God, and God will not be mocked (Gal. vi. 7; Ex. xx. 7).—Bear in mind when thou swearest that thou art standing before the altar, *i. e.*, before the judgment-seat of the Holy and Just God, who can condemn body and soul to hell.—Where the oath is no longer held sacred there the nation and the State go to ruin (Zech. viii. 16 *sq.*).—Vers. 33, 34. *Second Petition.* A victorious enemy is the whip and scourge with which the Lord chastises a nation, so that it may awake out of sleep, confess its sins, turn unto Him, and learn anew its forgotten prayers and supplications.—To those who are taken captive in war, and far from fatherland must dwell beneath a foreign yoke, applies the word of the Lord, Luke xiii. 2. Therefore they who are prospering in their native country must pray for them, believing in the words of Ps. cxlvi. 7.—Vers. 35, 36. *Third Petition.*—Inasmuch as fruitful seasons, instead of leading to repentance, as being proofs of God's goodness, so often tend to create pride, haughtiness, and light-mindedness, therefore the Lord sometimes shuts up His heavens. But then we should murmur not against him, but against our own sins (Lam. iii. 39), and confess that all human care and toil for obtaining food out of the earth is in vain if He give not rain out of heaven, and fruitful seasons.—STARKE: Fine weather is not brought about by the means of processions, but by true repentance and heartfelt prayer, Lev. xxvi. 3, 4.—When God humbles us, He thus directs us to the good way (Ps. cxix. 67; Deut. v. 8, ii. 3).—Vers. 37–40. *Fourth Petition.* Divine judgments and means of discipline are very various in their kind, their degree, and their duration. God in his wisdom and justice metes out to a whole people, as to each individual man, such measure of suffering as is needed for its salvation, for He knows the hearts of all the children of men, and He tries no man beyond his power of endurance; He hearkens to him who calls upon Him in distress (2 Sam. xxii. 7; Ps. xxxiv. 18; Is. xxvi. 16).—Distress teaches us how to pray, but often only so long as it is present with us. God looks upon our heart, and knows whether our prayer is a mere passing emotion, or whether we have truly turned to Him. How entirely different would our prayers often sound if we reflected that we are addressing Him who knows our heart, with its most secret and

mysterious thoughts, expectations, and wishes. The effect of an answer to our prayers must be that we fear the Lord, and walk in His ways, not only in the time of need and trouble, but at all times, as long as we live. It is a priceless thing that the heart remains constant.—Ver. 41–43. *Fifth Petition.* Even as Solomon bore witness that the house which he had built could not encompass Him whom the heaven of heavens cannot contain, so likewise he testified that the covenant made by God with Israel did not exclude all other nations from salvation, but rather aimed at leading all men to a knowledge of the truth. If a Solomon prayed for the attainment of this object, how much more does it become us to pray for the conversion of the heathen, and do our utmost that the people who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death may come to Him, a light set by God before all nations to lighten the heathen (Luke ii. 31, *sq.*). He who desires to know nothing of missions to the heathen fails to know the God who wills that help should be given to all men, and that all should come to a knowledge of the truth (1 Tim. ii. 4).—Solomon hoped that the heathen, when they heard the great deeds which the Lord did in Israel, would turn to that God; how much stronger becomes this hope when the infinitely greater scheme of salvation in Christ Jesus is declared to them! But how shall they hear without a preacher? How shall they preach if they are not sent? (Rom. x. 14 *sq.*).—The acknowledgment of the name of God necessarily causes the fear of God. If an individual, or an entire nation, be wanting in the latter, they will also lack a true knowledge of God, let them boast as they will of enlightenment and enlightened religious ideas.—Vers. 44, 45. *Sixth Petition.* A people who undertake war should, above all, be sure that it is under the guidance of God. That alone is a just war which is undertaken with God's help, and in the cause of God, of truth, and of justice.—A host going forth to battle should remember this: Nothing can be done in our own strength, we are soon quite ruined! (Ps. xxxiii. 16 *sq.*) and thereupon we should pray and entreat the Lord, from whom alone proceeds victory (Prov. 21, 31; Ps. cxlvii. 10 *sq.*).—Vers. 46–50. *Seventh Petition.* Righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people (Prov. xiv. 34). Thus the people Israel is a living example for all times, as a warning and as an admonition (1 Cor. x. 11).—The Lord has patience with each person, as also with whole peoples and governments, for He knows "there is no man who is not sinful." But when the riches of his goodness, patience, and long-suffering are despised, and a nation given over to hardness of heart and impenitence (Rom. ii. 4 *sq.*), He casts it away from before His face, and wipes it out as a man wipeth a dish (2 Kings xxi. 13), so that it ceases to be a people and a kingdom. The world's history is the world's final doom. The wrath of God towards all ungodly conduct of men is not a mere biblical form of speech, but a fearful truth, which he who hearkens not will learn by experience.—The saying: There is no man who sinneth not, must not be misused to apologize for sin as a natural weakness; it should rather warn and exhort us that we must not give the reins to that will which lieth even at the door, but rule over it (Gen. i. 4, 7); for he who committeth sin is the slave of sin (John viii. 34).—The confession: We have sinned, &c., must come from the depths of the heart, and must be in connection with the conversion of the whole soul to the Lord; for he alone can obtain forgiveness of all his sins in whose spirit there is no guile (Ps. xxxii. 2). But how often, in days of fasting and humiliation, is this confession made only with the lips! How, then, can a man hope for mercy and forgiveness through the hearing of prayer?—The Lord who guides the hearts of men as water-courses can bestow upon our enemies a forgiving and merciful heart, even as Israel experienced. For this, and not for the destruction of our enemies, we ought to pray.—Vers. 51–53. In the midst of our cries and prayers we should remember how dearly the Lord has purchased us for His own, by the blood of His son (Rom. viii. 32; 1 Cor. vi. 20; Rev. v. 9). The grace of God in Christ is the foundation of our assurance that the Lord will deliver us from all tribulation and sorrow, and will lead us to his heavenly kingdom. For this do we close our prayers with the words: For the sake of thine eternal love.—STARKE: God does not leave his people in the furnace of misery, but always guides them forth from it (Job iii. 22).—Our prayers, from beginning to end, must be grounded on the divine promises (2 Sam. vii. 25).

Vers. 54–61. Solomon's final address to the people contains a psalm of praise (ver. 56), a wish for a blessing (vers. 57–60), and a warning (ver. 61).—Ver. 56. It is a gift of God, for which we must thank and praise him, if we can lead a quiet and peaceful life, in all godliness and honesty (1 Tim. ii. 2).—The rest which God promises to his people and has granted unto them, under Solomon the peaceful prince, was merely a temporal one. But we have this good saying: There remaineth a rest for the people of God (Heb. iv. 9). This word will not fail if we do not harden our hearts, if we hear his voice, and strive assiduously to attain to that rest, where God shall wipe away, &c. (Rev. xxi. 4).—Vers. 57, 58. The aid and blessing of God have no other object than to turn thy heart to Him, that thou mayest walk in His way. He only forsakes those who have forsaken Him (Ps. ix. 11).—All keeping of the commandments, all mere morality, without submission of the heart to God, is worthless—a mere shell without the kernel.—Vers. 59, 60. The words which rise out of the depths of the heart to God reach Him and abide with Him; He forgets them not (Rev. viii. 3, 4).—That the Lord is God, and none other, seems nowhere more conspicuous than in the choosing and leading of the people Israel, in which He has revealed Himself in His might and glory, in His holiness and justice, His faithfulness and mercy (Ps. cxlv. 3–12). No better proof of the existence of a one living God than the history of Israel.

Ver. 61. The best and greatest wish which a king can form for his people, a father for his children, a pastor for his flock, is: May your heart be righteous, *i. e.*, whole and undivided before the Lord our God. He who elects to side with Him must do so wholly and entirely; all "halting between two opinions" is an abomination to Him: the lukewarm He will "spue out of His mouth." Be thou on the Lord's side, and He will be with thee.

Vers. 62–66. The temple-dedication, a thanksgiving feast (ver. 62), a covenant feast (ver. 65, *vide* Historical and Ethical, 11), a feast of great

gladness (ver. 66).—WÜRT. SUMM.: For great benefits men should offer great thanksgivings, and indeed should prove their gratitude by promoting the true service of God, and by benevolence to the poor and needy (Ps. l. 14).—At public thanksgiving-feasts there should be not only banquets, but prince and people, high and low, rich and poor should bow unto the Lord, to serve him with one accord and steadfastly.—Ver. 63. So they dedicated, &c. PFAFF: This was indeed a holy temple-consecration. O! how entirely otherwise are those of to-day constituted in general, which should be abolished or reformed rather than praised, on account of the sinful abuse which has gained the upper hand. Ver. 66. Even as Solomon blessed his people, even so his people blessed their king. The prince alone who prays for his people can expect them to pray for him. Well for that land where prince and people wish well to each other, and make supplication for each other, for there mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace shall kiss each other (Ps. lxxxv. 10). When a man has rendered unto God what is of God, he can go forth to his daily labor with joy and gladness. To praise and thank God makes the heart glad and willing to work.

F.—*Various matters connected with the accounts of Solomon's architectural works.*

(CHAP. IX. 1-28.)

1 AND it came to pass, when Solomon had finished the building of the house
of the Lord [Jehovah], and the king's house, and all Solomon's desire which he
2 was pleased to do, that the Lord [Jehovah] appeared to Solomon the second time,
3 as he had appeared unto him at Gibeon. And the Lord [Jehovah] said unto him,
I have heard thy prayer and thy supplication, that thou hast made before me:[1]
I have hallowed this house, which thou hast built, to put my name there forever;
4 and mine eyes and mine heart shall be there perpetually. And if thou wilt walk
before me, as David thy father walked, in integrity of heart, and in uprightness,
to do according to all that I have commanded thee, *and* wilt keep my statutes
5 and my judgments; then I will establish the throne of thy kingdom upon Israel
forever, as I promised [spake] to[2] David thy father, saying, There shall not fail
6 thee a man upon the throne of Israel. *But* if ye shall at all [altogether[3]] turn
from following me, ye or your children, and will not keep my commandments
and my statues which I[4] have set before you, but go and serve other gods, and
7 worship them; then will I cut off Israel out of the land which I have given
them; and this house, which I have hallowed for my name, will I cast out of my
8 sight; and Israel shall be a proverb and a byword among all people: and at[5]
this house, *which* is high, every one that passeth by it shall be astonished, and
shall hiss; and they shall say, Why hath the Lord done thus unto this land, and
9 to this house? And they shall answer, Because they forsook the Lord [Jehovah]
their God, who brought forth their fathers out of the land of Egypt, and have
taken hold upon other gods, and have worshipped them, and served them: therefore hath the Lord [Jehovah] brought upon them all this evil.[6]
10 And it came to pass at the end of twenty years, when Solomon had built the
11 two houses, the house of the Lord [Jehovah], and the king's house, (*Now* Hiram
the king of Tyre had furnished Solomon with cedar-trees and fir-trees, and with
gold, according to all his desire,) that then king Solomon gave Hiram twenty
12 cities in the land of Galilee. And Hiram came out from Tyre to see the cities
13 which Solomon had given him; and they pleased him not. And he said, What
cities *are* these which thou hast given me, my brother? And he called them the
14 land of Cabul[7] unto this day. And Hiram sent to the king six-score talents of
gold.
15 [8]And this *is* the reason of the levy which king Solomon raised; for to build
the house of the Lord [Jehovah], and his own house, and Millo, and the wall of
16 Jerusalem, and Hazor, and Megiddo, and Gezer. *For* Pharaoh king of Egypt
had gone up, and taken Gezer, and burnt it with fire, and slain the Canaanites
17 that dwelt in the city, and given it *for* a present unto his daughter, Solomon's
18 wife. And Solomon built Gezer, and Beth-horon the nether, and Baalath, and
19 Tadmor[9] in the wilderness, in the land, and all the cities of store that Solomon
had, and cities for his chariots, and cities for his horsemen, and[10] that which Solomon desired to build in Jerusalem, and in Lebanon, and in all the land of his
20 dominion. *And* all the people *that were* left of the Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites,

21 Hivites, and Jebusites, which *were* not of the children of Israel, their children
that were left after them in the land, whom the children of Israel also were not
able utterly to destroy, upon those did Solomon levy a tribute of bond-service
22 unto this day.[11] But of the children of Israel did Solomon make no bondmen:
but they *were* men of war, and his servants, and his princes, and his captains, and
23 rulers of his chariots, and his horsemen. These *were* the chief of the officers that
were over Solomon's work, five hundred and fifty, which bare rule over the people that wrought in the work.
24 But Pharaoh's daughter came up out of the city of David unto her house
which *Solomon* had built for her: then did he build Millo.
25 And three times in a year did Solomon offer burnt-offerings and peace-offerings upon the altar which he built unto the Lord [Jehovah], and he burnt incense
upon the altar that *was* before the Lord [Jehovah]. So he finished the house.
26 And king Solomon made a navy of ships[12] in Ezion-geber, which *is* beside
27 Eloth, on the shore of the Red sea, in the land of Edom. And Hiram sent in
the navy his servants, shipmen that had knowledge of the sea, with the servants
28 of Solomon. And they came to Ophir, and fetched from thence gold, four[13]
hundred and twenty talents, and brought *it* to king Solomon.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

[1] Ver. 3.—[The Sept. here insert, "I have done to thee according to all thy prayer."

[2] Ver. 5.—[Many MSS. replace the preposition עַל by אֶל, and certainly, if the former is the true reading, it is used in the sense of the latter, as is frequently the case, *cf.* Gesenius, s. v. A. 4.

[3] Ver. 6.—[The Heb. is here in the usual intensive form שׁוֹב תְּשֻׁבוּן, which is preserved in all the versions, while the English expression implies the slightest dereliction instead of complete apostasy.

[4] Ver. 6.—[The Sept. put Moses instead of the personal pronoun as the nominative.

[5] Ver. 8.—[The words *at* and *which* are not in the Heb. The latter is given in the Heb. of 2 Chr. vii. 21, and supplied here by the Chald. All the other versions give *house* in the nom. and omit the relative. The Syr., followed by the Arab., has "this house shall be destroyed." Vulg. "shall be for an example."

[6] Ver. 9.—[According to the Sept. the time of this vision is determined as after the completion of the palace by the addition to this verse, "Then Solomon brought up the daughter of Pharaoh out of the city of David into his house which he had built for himself in these days."

[7] Ver. 13.—[The Sept. say he called them ὅριον—coast, boundary, omitting the name Cabul altogether. They doubtless read גְּבוּל—border for כָּבוּל.

[8] Ver. 15.—[Vers. 15–25 are transposed by the Vat. Sept. from their place here and inserted after x. 22.

[9] Ver. 18.—The k'thib תָּמָר is decidedly to be preferred to the k'ri תַּדְמֹר. [In connection with this and with the author's remarks on this name in the Exeg. Com. the following facts are to be borne in mind: the reading of the k'ri תַּדְמֹר is found in many MSS. instead of the present k'thib תמר and in our printed editions a space is left in the text for the missing ד while the vowel points are those of Tadmor. All the versions, except the Sept., give either Tadmor or its equivalent Palmyra; the Sept. gives according to the Alex. Θερμάθ, which shows that the ד was before them, or according to the Vat. in x. 22 Ἰεθερμάθ. Keil, who adopts this rendering, explains the words "in the land" (which the author considers an insuperable difficulty) by the remark of Tremellius *in regno Salomonis et intra fines a Deo designatos*, connecting the word with "built" in ver. 17. The expression in 2 Chr. viii. 4, is simply "Tadmor in the wilderness;" but the previous verse has recorded his successful attack upon Hamath-zobah, and it is thus implied that Tadmor was in that region.

[10] Ver. 19.—[Many MSS., followed by the Chald. and Vulg., insert "all."

[11] Ver. 21.—[Until all the buildings were finished.

[12] Ver. 26.—[The Sept., Chald., and Arab., both here and in ver. 27, have *ship* in the singular.

[13] Ver. 28.—[The Vat. (not Alex.) Sept. reads a hundred and twenty, while 2 Chr. viii. 18 has four hundred and fifty.—F. G.]

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

Vers. 1–2. **And it came to pass when Solomon had finished, &c.** *Cf.* 2 Chron. vii. 11–22. Solomon built, besides the temple and the palace, a number of other buildings, of which mention is made in vers. 15 and 19. Chron. says: all that he desired to build, for *All which he was pleased to do;* חֵשֶׁק cannot, therefore, mean, as Thenius thinks, "pleasure-buildings," as distinguished from necessary and useful ones, but rather from the words of vers. 19, "in all the lands of his dominions," must signify public works which he had undertaken for the benefit of the latter, as for instance (according to Ewald), aqueducts, reservoirs, &c. It is very distinctly stated here, that the divine appearance of ver. 2 took place after the completion of the temple and palace, as well as several other buildings. But because the divine address, ver. 3 *sq.*, refers to the prayer at the temple-dedication, some have concluded, as we have already mentioned in our remarks on chap. viii. 1, that the appearance immediately followed the dedication; and that the latter, accordingly, occurred thirteen years after the completion of the temple. But there is no reason whatsoever for such a conclusion. The dedication had been performed in a spirit and manner that could have

given no cause for such a sharp warning and severe threatening as are found in vers. 6–9; and yet this threatening seems to be the principal thing in the divine discourse. It is very possible that it was occasioned by circumstances of a later date. The meaning in this case would be: I have indeed heard thy prayer at the dedication of the temple, and will do that for which thou hast besought me; but take warning. If ye turn away from me I will destroy Israel, &c. In like manner Seb. Schmidt: *quod Deus distulerit hanc apparitionem usque ad tempus, quo Salomonis peccatum appropinquabat, ut non diu antequam fieret eum serio moneret.* If this view be rejected we must think, with Keil (in the Commentary of 1846), that the writer wished to say all that he had to remark concerning Solomon's different buildings, in the same place in our chapter, and "that he made the transition-formula, ver. 1, at the same time the heading of the following section, in which not only is the divine appearance mentioned, but an account also is given of Solomon's undertakings after he had finished all the buildings."

Vers. 3–9. **And the Lord said unto him,** &c. We may conclude from the words: "as at Gibeon," that it took place, as then, in a dream (chap. iii. 5). *I have hallowed this house . . . my,* &c., *i. e.,* I have appointed it by my glory (chap. viii. 10, 11; Ex. xxix. 43: בִּכְבֹדִי) to be the place where I reveal my holiness (*cf.* Histor. and Ethic. 2, on chap. vi.). The parallel passage in 2 Chron. vii. 12, says: I have chosen this place to myself for a house of sacrifice; which means that, as Jehovah was known and honored as the Holy One, through sacrifice, so sacrifice was also His appointed means of atonement and sanctification for the sacrificer. The house was essentially a place of sanctification. Our author evidently left out what the Chron. adds in vers. 13 and 14, because it is partly contained in ver. 3. For vers. 4 and 5 see on chap. ii. 4, and viii. 25. When David is here, as in chap. iii. 14, held up to Solomon as a model in keeping Jehovah's commandments, it is not because David never broke a divine law, or never sinned, but because he kept inviolate the first and chief commandment upon which the existence of Israel depended (Ex. xx. 2–5); because in every situation in which he was placed, in prosperity and adversity; amongst his compatriots or in banishment among the heathen, he remained loyal to Jehovah, and never discovered the slightest leaning to idolatry. The threat, vers. 6–9, is the same as in Lev. xxvi. 14; Deut. viii. 19; xxviii. 15, 37; Josh. xxiii. 16, and is therefore not one that was made for the first time after the captivity, as some have said. Thenius rightly remarks that the style and living force of the address are proofs that "we have an ancient utterance before us here." מָשָׁל, ver. 7, is a proverb which every one has in his mouth, a proverb of universal truth; every one will adduce Israel as a terrible example, and will mock them (Isai. xiv. 4; Mic. ii. 4). Thenius and Bertheau, by reference to Mic. iii. 12; Jer. xxvi. 18; Ps. lxxix. 1, read instead of עֶלְיוֹן, in vers. 8, עִיִּים, *i. e.,* ruins, and this certainly facilitates the translation of the word very much. But no MS. nor old translation reads it thus; and Chron. says expressly: "this house which is high" (2 Chron. vii. 21); we must, therefore, adhere to the text-reading. It cannot, however, be translated: and "this house, exalted as it may be, whosoever passes by the same, shall," &c. (De Wette, von Meyer, and others), but only as Keil has it: "this house shall stand high, *i. e.* stand high in its destruction, a conspicuous example, a warning to all passers by." The Vulgate translates, moreover, directly: *et domus hæc erit in exemplum;* but the Sept., more in the sense of the Chronicles: *καὶ ὁ οἶκος οὗτος ὁ ὑψηλός, πᾶς ὁ διαπορευόμενος ἐκστήσεται.* But we must supply what is understood, namely, that the house is destroyed. Keil thinks there is an allusion to Deut. xxiv. 19; xxviii. 1, in עֶלְיוֹן. Vers. 8 and 9 mean that what was threatened in the law in Deut. xxix. 23–26, shall be fulfilled. שָׁרַק does not denote a scornful hissing, but, as the connection with שַׁמָּה requires, a hissing of terror. *Cf.* Jer. xix. 8; xlix. 17.

Ver. 10. **And it came to pass at the end of twenty years.** In vers. 2–9 the author has given an account which concerns the temple, the most important of all Solomon's buildings. From ver. 10 on, he gives further information respecting them; how Solomon was enabled to undertake his many and, in part, expensive buildings; that is to say, through his treaty with Hiram, vers. 11–14; and also by the levy which he raised, vers. 15–25; and finally by the voyage to Ophir, which brought him gold, vers. 26–28 (Keil).—The seven years of the temple-building (chap. vi. 38), and the thirteen years of the palace-building (chap. vii. 1), are included in the twenty years of ver. 10. There is no historical connection between the section vers. 10–14, and that in vers. 1–9. The heading in ver. 1 is therefore repeated on account of the following collective remarks on the different buildings.

Vers. 11–14. **Now Hiram the king of Tyre,** &c. The section in vers. 11–14 is easily seen to be an excerpt, which has gaps not to be filled with perfect certainty. According to chap. v. 1–6, Solomon had made a compact with Hiram, by the terms of which he was to indemnify him by the delivery of certain natural productions; no allusion is made here to any further recompense in the way of territory, nor to any payment of gold which Solomon had obtained from Hiram. It is plain, therefore, that the twenty cities were an equivalent for the 120 talents of gold mentioned in ver. 14. Probably Hiram had at first agreed to the proposition; but upon a closer inspection he was not pleased with these towns, though he had to abide by his agreement. This is the only explanation of the fact that no answer from Solomon to the question in ver. 13 is recorded. As we may conclude, from the account of their joint enterprise in ver. 26 *sq.*, that the friendly relations of the two kings continued, it is probable that Solomon satisfied him in some other way.

The land הַגָּלִיל is not the later province of Galilee in its whole extent, but only the northern part of it, originally belonging to Naphthali; it was called גְּלִיל הַגּוֹיִם, district or country of the heathen (Isai. viii. 23; 1 Macc. v. 15). Solomon fixed upon it as an equivalent because it bordered on the ter-

ritory of Tyre, and, as its name shows, was not so much inhabited by Israelites as by heathens (*cf.* 2 Sam. xxiv. 7).—The אָחִי is not, as in chap. xx. 32, an expression of intimacy, but is a prince's title (1 Macc. x. 18; xi. 30). The designation כָּבוּל, which Hiram gave the land of the twenty cities, is also given to a place or district in the tribe of Asher (Josh. xix. 17), and is derived from כָּבַל, *vincire*, to chain, to close; thus describing the district as closed (but not pawned, as some allege), by virtue of its geographical position. This is much more natural than the explanation, according to which כָּבוּל is from כְּהַבּוּל, *i. e.*, *sicut id, quod evanuit tanquam nihil* (Maurer, Gesenius), or formed by כָּ and בַּל=בוּל (Thenius), and meaning "As nothing." How could Hiram give the district a permanent name, which contained rather a mockery of himself than of the land? The assertion of Josephus (Antiq. 8, 5, 3), that Χαλαβών means οὐκ ἀρέσκον in Phœnician, is utterly without foundation. We have no need to seek the reason of the name in Hiram's exclamation: "What cities are these," &c.; the second sentence of ver. 13 is quite independent of the first. In order to reconcile the conflicting assertion in 2 Chron. viii. 2 (that Hiram gave cities to Solomon, who peopled them with Israelites), with the passage under consideration, it is generally supposed that Solomon had, in the first place, given up twenty cities to Hiram, but as they did not please Hiram, took them back again (Keil). But נתן cannot, in itself, mean to give back, and our passage also, which is the fullest, would in this case be quite silent about what it intends to state, namely, that Hiram had received an equivalent. Our passage cannot, at any rate, be disproved by the short, abrupt assertion of Chron. The question may be asked, too, if these cities were the same as in Kings. Perhaps later tradition, which Chron. follows, changed the circumstances so, because people could not believe that Solomon should have given up Israelitish land to Tyre, contrary to the law, Lev. xxv. 23 (*cf.* Bertheau on 2 Chron. viii. 1).

Vers. 15–19. **And this is the reason of the levy, which,** &c. It was chiefly through Hiram's aid that Solomon was enabled to undertake his buildings, but it was also a great assistance to him that he could use the Canaanites that were left in the land to perform this tribute labor. It seems from Judges ix. 6 and 2 Kings xii. 21, that הַמִּלּוֹא does not mean merely a wall of earth (filling up), but a building (בַּיִת) or a collection of buildings that serve to fortify a place, *i. e.*, fortifications, rampart, citadel. David had made such for Zion (2 Sam. v. 9), and Solomon renewed it, *cf.* chap. xi. 27; 2 Chron. xxxii. 5. "It can only have been where Zion rises highest, and consequently most needs fortification" (Thenius). *The walls of Jerusalem* do not here mean the walls of Zion, the upper city, but those of the lower city (see on chap. iii. 1), so that the temple mountain was included. *Hazor*, a town in the tribe of Naphthali, formerly a Canaanitish royal city, was not far from the northern frontier of Palestine, and was therefore "built," *i. e.*, fortified by Solomon, Josh. xix. 36; 2 Kings xv. 29. *Megiddo* (*cf.* on chap. iv. 12) lay in an important military position, for it formed an entrance to the plain of Jezreel and the Jordan (meadows) valley, thus being the way from the sea-coast to central and north Palestine. *Gezer*, also once a Canaanitish royal city, between Beth-horon and the Mediterranean sea; it lay in the southerly portion of the tribe of Ephraim (Josh. xvi. 3). What Hazor was to the north and Megiddo to the central part of Palestine, Gezer and the lower Beth-horon were to the south; an army could much more easily penetrate to the capital from those places, than from the mountains of Judah (*cf.* Thenius on the place). Ver. 16 is a parenthesis, and tells how Gezer came into Solomon's possession. Probably, it was the capital of a district that extended to the coast, into which Pharaoh entered from the sea. The great importance of the situation of this place made its possession very valuable to Solomon. Whether the town was built again immediately after it was destroyed, or not until Solomon's time, is uncertain; at any rate, he fortified it. *Baalath* is a town in the tribe of Dan (Josh. xix. 44), *according to Josephus* (*Antiq.* viii. 6, 1), not far from Beth-horon and Gezer; it has been wrongly asserted to be identical with Baal-gad at Hermon (Josh. xi. 17), because the directly following תָּמָר is = to תַּדְמֹר according to 2 Chron. viii. 4, and the later denotes the large and rich city of Palmyra, situated between Damascus and the Euphrates (Keil). But the connection of תמר with Baalath, Gezer, and Beth-horon indisputably denotes a southern city, especially as the more northern fortresses, Hazor and Megiddo, were named before. תָּמָר is also named as a southern place in Ezek. xlvii. 19; xlviii. 28. The addition "*in the wilderness, in the land*," can only mean, in the wilderness that lay in Palestine, which is the wilderness of Judah; it is therefore unwarrantable to add אֲרָם, *i. e.*, Syria, after בָּאָרֶץ as some have done. Thus Thamar was the most southern fortress, and "commanded the passes which led to the most frequented routes from Edom to Jerusalem" (Thenius). A fortified city was very necessary and important in this very place, and it is inexplicable that Solomon should have left the south without any fortress, and yet have fortified the distant city of Palmyra, beyond the confines of Palestine. As in all doubtful cases, so here the statement of the books of the Kings merits the preference over that of the Chron., which has given occasion to the *K'ri*. Besides, תַּדְמֹר occurs nowhere else, and it is much more probable that תָּמָר has been changed into the famous תַּדְמֹר than the reverse. The account of the fortresses that protected the land is followed (ver. 19) by an account of the buildings required for storage of victuals and materials of war. The cities of store were not dépôts of merchandise (*Ewald*), but magazines of produce of the soil reserved for times of need (2 Chron. xvii. 12; xxxii. 28). For the cities for chariots and horsemen see chap. x. 26.

Vers. 20–23. **And all the people that were left,** &c. Ver. 20 refers back to ver. 15, and after it has been stated for what purpose Solomon raised the levy, it now informs us whom it in-

cluded. Upon מַס־עֹבֵד, *i. e., slave-service*, see chap. v. 13. עֲבָדָיו, ver. 22, means chiefly, officials of the war-department; שָׂרָיו chief officers of the army; and שָׁלִשָׁיו *royal adjutants* and life-guardsmen. *Gesenius*, *De Wette*, and others translate the latter: *chariot warriors*, or chariot-driver, because there were always three of them standing in one chariot; this, however, does not admit of proof, and τριστάτης, as the Sept. usually renders it, does not mean *chariot warriors*. In every place where the word occurs in our books (2 Kings vii. 2; xvii. 19; xv. 25; ix. 25) it denotes the *royal staff;* in 2 Kings x. 25, the רָצִים and שָׁלִשִׁים are the king's body-guard; and in 2 Sam. xxiii. 8 (1 Chron. x. 11) still less is there reference to *chariot warriors*. The old glossaries explain τριστάτας, τοὺς παρὰ χεῖρα τοῦ βασιλέως. The reason of the name cannot be given with certitude. For the 550 superintendents of the work see above on chap. v. 16.

Ver. 24. **But Pharaoh's daughter came up.** The two facts recorded in vers. 24 and 25 are by no means irrelevant and disconnected, as they appear; but plainly refer back to chap. iii. 1–4. They mean that the wants which were felt in the beginning of Solomon's reign ceased with the completion of all the buildings (vers. 1 and 10); the king's consort took possession of the part of the royal palace that was for her use; and Solomon no longer sacrificed on the heights, but always in the temple he had built. אַךְ, ver. 24, is here the same as in Gen. xxvii. 30; Jud. vii. 19. It does not follow, because Solomon built Millo immediately after his consort repaired to her dwelling, that the former was to be a "protection to the harem" (*Thenius*), for there is no proof that the "house of Pharaoh's daughter" was the harem, and Millo was evidently intended to protect the upper city.

Ver. 25. **And three times in a year did Solomon offer,** that is, on the three chief festivals, when the whole people assembled at the sanctuary (Ex. xxiii. 17; xxxiv. 23). These were not ordinary sacrifices, but were especially solemn official ones, which the king, as head of the theocracy, offered. The words וְהַקְטֵיר אִתּוֹ אֲשֶׁר לִפְנֵי יְהוָֹה have been very differently understood. Stier translates like v. Meyer, "and he burnt of it what was fitting," which is wrong, because "that was before Jehovah" never means, what was fitting. Maurer's interpretation is very far-fetched: *et adolebat apud eum (sc. Jova) id, quod coram Jova erat (sc. suffimentum)*. Ewald renders it: "he burnt incense alone there, where one stands before Jahve, *i. e.*, in the holy place." But what does burning incense alone mean? Thenius asserts אֲשֶׁר to be a false "insertion," and translates: he brought with him (*i. e.*, himself) offerings of incense before the Lord (*i. e.*, upon the altar of incense in the sanctuary). אִתּוֹ is supposed to mean: "he, without the mediation of another," so that "we have here an evidence that Solomon, at least, exercised in person the functions of the high-priest." But we cannot so easily throw אֲשֶׁר out of the text; and אִתּוֹ never means: he himself in his own person; so that the supposed "evidence" falls to the ground. Finally, Keil translates, because הַקְטֵיר is not *præter.* but *infin. absol.*: "and, indeed, setting fire to (the sacrifice) at the (altar), which was before the Lord;" but הִקְטִיר always means "to burn incense" when it stands as here, without an object; besides, the sentence evidently means more than the immediately preceding one, which speaks of burnt-offerings, in the case of which burning is of course implied. It is certainly true that אֵת here, as well as immediately after in ver. 26, and so often elsewhere, means "with, by," and the suffix וֹ must be referred to the preceding מִזְבֵּחַ; but it is incorrect to make the clause "which was before Jehovah," mean the altar of incense which was so described in Lev. xvi. 12, 18, and thus to conclude that Solomon burnt incense "in the sanctuary." As 2 Chron. xxvi. 16 shows, the priests alone might do this, even in later times; the kings were strictly prohibited. If an exception had been made in the case of Solomon, it could not have been noticed only casually and vaguely. That clause by no means exclusively indicates the altar of incense, but, as chap. viii. 64 shows, the "brazen altar," too, and this it is which is meant here. According to Num. xv. 1–12 a meat-offering was offered with every burnt and peace offering; and for the former incense was essential, according to Lev. ii. 1, 2, which was wholly burnt (ver. 16). "Incense," therefore, was not only "offered" on the altar of incense in the sanctuary, but also on the altar of burnt-offering, and קְטֹרֶת in Ps. cxli. 2 is synonymous with מִנְחָה. This passage, then, says nothing remarkable respecting Solomon, but only that he presented his meat-offering three times a year, as well as his burnt and peace offering. The parallel passage of Chron. therefore does not mention the latter expressly, and only says: "Then Solomon offered burnt-offerings unto the Lord on the altar of the Lord, which he had built before the porch . . . three times in the year" (2 Chron. viii. 12, 13). The concluding sentence וְשִׁלַּם אֶת־הַבָּיִת does not mean: "thus the house was finished" (Luther), for this was not done by sacrifice and incense, neither does שִׁלֵּם mean finished, but, to make perfect, whole. The house Solomon had built only became all it was designed to be, *i. e.*, לְבֵית זָבַח, a house of sacrifice (2 Chron. vii. 12), a central sanctuary, in that he presented now all the offerings on the festivals which were appointed to be celebrated by the whole people (Lev. xxiii. 14; Deut. xxvi. 16); *cf.* 2 Chron. viii. 16. Böttcher: he brought the temple, as God's house and place of prayer, to its full meaning.

Vers. 26–28. **And king Solomon made a navy of ships.** This is told here because Solomon received through these ships the large amount of gold which he required, partly for his splendid buildings, and partly to carry on his expensive works. *Ezion-geber*, a sea-port of Edom, situated on the Elanitic arm of the Arabian gulf, Num. xxxiii. 35; Deut. ii. 8. *Elath* is the modern Aka-

bah on the eastern bay of the same gulf, and was incorporated with the Israelitish kingdom by David, 2 Sam. viii. 14. Both cities were of the highest importance in a commercial view (*cf.* Winer, *R.-W.-B.* I., *s.* 313, 361). The Phœnician sailors were accounted the most skilful, and were known even in distant lands (Winer II., *s.* 406).

Upon the fleet which sailed from Ezion-geber Chron. gives (viii. 18): "and Hiram sent him by the hands of his servants, ships;" and as there was no way of conveyance by land, nor means of shipping from Africa, this must only mean (as Keil remarks) "that Hiram gave the ships for this voyage (to Ophir), *i. e.*, he ordered his people at Ezion-geber to build them, and sent all the requisite material not forthcoming at that place." For the situation of *Ophir* see on chap. x. 22. Instead of 420 talents of gold, Chron. gives 450; this is, no doubt, only a change of the ciphers כ (20) and נ (50).

HISTORICAL AND ETHICAL.

1. *This section now before us closes the account* of *Solomon's buildings*, which account embraces the largest portion of the history of this reign. Never would the narrative have dwelt so long upon them, had all these building-undertakings stood outside of all relation to the theocratic kingdom. None of all the kings of Israel "built" so much as Solomon, who is described for that reason, in the history of Israel, as the king of peace, the peace-prince. His buildings were no pleasure and luxury structures, but were designed to further the greatness, power, and splendor of the kingdom, while at the same time they gave evidence thereof. First he built the house of Jehovah, which formed the heart and centre of the whole theocracy; then the palace, *i. e.*, the house, "which was to shed glory on the second power in Israel, the kingdom which was then reaching its highest summit" (Ewald); then he fortified the house by Millo, and surrounded Jerusalem, the capital, with walls; furthermore he made fortresses and store-cities throughout the whole country, in north, middle, and south Palestine; and, finally, he himself began ship-building, so as to bring his kingdom into communication with rich and distant countries. All this, however, he conducted so as to cause no injury to his own kingdom, but rather so as to bring it to a height of prosperity that it never before or afterwards attained. The time of the שָׁלוֹם and with that of the "building" in its widest sense, came on שְׁלֹמֹה; his building enterprises were the natural result of the stage of development at which the kingdom was; he built to build up the kingdom, thus fulfilling his mission in the history of the theocracy.

2. *The appearance with which Solomon* was favored after the completion of his many grand edifices, as the text clearly and positively says (see Exegetical upon ver. 1 *sq.*), is expressly placed in relation to and contrasted with that which he had in the beginning of his reign, at Gibeon (chap. iii. 5). The Lord had given him not only what he had asked for, but also riches, dignity, and fame. He had succeeded in all that he had undertaken; not only did he himself stand at the summit of fortune, but his people had never before reached such a great and prosperous state, being blessed with peace and quiet without, and with prosperity and comfort within (chap. iv. 20; v. 4 *sq.*; viii. 66). Then came the second appearing, which contained with the remembrance of the prayer answered at the dedication of the temple, and the promise of blessing in the future, a threatening and warning very wholesome, and even necessary now for Solomon himself, who, though hitherto loyal and faithful to the Lord, was open to the temptation to fall away, as the after-history shows, and whose heart the searcher of hearts knew better than he did himself (*cf.* chap. viii. 39). But it was also needed (the discourse ceases to concern Solomon alone after ver. 6) by that ever-restless, fickle people which in the enjoyment of the greatest happiness were in danger of forgetting their Lord and God, and of relapsing into the idolatrous worship which was more agreeable to the flesh. Hence it appears, too, that the words in vers. 6–9 are the chief part of the divine discourse, and not an addition invented by the author of these books, after the destruction of the temple, as Ewald and Eisenlohr assert.

3. *The divine threatening* was literally fulfilled. No people in the world ever became such a "proverb." Singular as it stands in the world-history in its election, it is equally so in its rejection and ruin. It has remained, to the present day, the living witness of the saving love and grace of God on the one hand, and, on the other, of holiness, truth, and retributive justice. By its story it preaches to all nations the eternal truth which the prophet Azariah proclaimed to king Asa: "If ye forsake him, He will forsake you" (2 Chron. xv. 2). When, in consequence of their complete departure from God, the temple built by Solomon was destroyed, Israel ceased to be an independent kingdom, and the people were banished; and when, after the second temple was built, they rejected David's great Son, their promised, true, and eternal king, in Whom all nations of the earth were to be blessed, this temple was destroyed never to be rebuilt, and the people were scattered through all the world, ceasing forever to be an independent kingdom and nation, everywhere despised, reviled, and persecuted.

4. *The various building-enterprises* of Solomon, as well as the arrangements more or less connected with them, were practical evidence that the Lord had given him in unusual measure the *wisdom for ruling and skill in affairs* which he had implored in the beginning of his reign (chap. iii. 7–9). He knew how to procure the material, in part costly, which was requisite for his buildings, as well also the requisite architects and builders, by a compact (favorable to himself) with his Tyrian neighbor; and repaid him for the quantity of gold he supplied him with without heaping oppressive debts on his people, but by surrendering a district of little value near the Tyrian frontier, and almost altogether inhabited by strangers to Israel. He made use of the descendants of the subjugated Canaanites who were left in the land, to execute those public works which were designed to protect the country and further its material prosperity; thus sparing his own people, who, like every other free people, had no slavish work, but performed only military service. He built a separate palace for his consort, Pharaoh's daughter, and by this means secured the favor of his powerful neighbors, the Egyptians. That the

temple he had built might become and remain the central place of worship, and thus a bond of unity and communion for the entire people, he himself, as head and representative of the theocracy, offered solemn sacrifices on the three great yearly festivals, when all the tribes met. In order not only to meet the expenses of his many and costly buildings, but also to teach commerce to his people, who had hitherto almost entirely lived by agriculture, he managed to engage the sea-faring and skilled Phœnicians to build a common fleet, which opened the way to other seas and lands for them, and was the source of great riches to his own kingdom.

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

Vers. 1–9. The second appearance of Jehovah to Solomon: (*a*) the point of time at which it occurred, vers. 1, 2 (see Histor. and Ethic.); (*b*) the object which it had, vers. 3–9 (Promise and warning).—In the divine address to Solomon the goodness and the severity of God are shown (Rom. xi. 22): his goodness in the establishment of His promises (vers. 3–5), his severity in the chastisement of backsliding (vers. 6–9).—Vers. 3, Würt. Summ.: A most powerful thing is a devout, humble, and believing prayer, for thereby man beseeches God to grant him his desire (John xvi. 23).—To every house where the name of God is truly honored applies the divine saying: Mine eyes and my heart shall dwell there forever.—Vers. 6–9. Because men endure uninterrupted prosperity with much greater difficulty than they do crosses and afflictions, therefore, when they are at the summit of their wishes, and their hearts' desire, it is most necessary that the grave importance of God and of eternity should be held up before them, so that they may not fall into security, and forget to work out their own salvation with fear and trembling; for what availeth it a man, &c. (Matth. xvi. 26). He who thinketh he standeth, let him take heed lest he fall (1 Cor. x. 12).—The more abundantly God displays his mercy and love towards an individual or towards a nation, so much the more fearful will be the righteous sentence if the riches of His mercy are despised.—In happy and prosperous days forget not that the Lord tells us: Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation.—How many men, how many families, how many nations blessed in every respect, have come to a fearful and shameful end! Askest thou: Wherefore is this? the only reply is: Because they have forsaken the Lord their God; for what a man sows that shall he also reap.—Let him who will not recognize a divine justice turn to the twice-destroyed temple of Jerusalem, and to the world-scattered people who have become a by-word amongst all nations.

Vers. 10–14. The demeanor of Solomon and Hiram towards each other. (*a*) Friends and neighbors should be of one mind, and mutually ready to help each other. (*b*) Let not him who has kindly aided thee with his substance be long awaiting the proofs of thy gratitude, and render to him more rather than less even if he need it not. (*c*) Regard not so much the gift which thou receivest as the disposition of the giver, remembering always: it is more blessed to give than to receive.—From the heathen Hiram many Christians may learn, even where real cause for dissatisfaction and just claims exist, to state the disproportion between gifts and recompenses with friendly words, and in a kindly manner.—Friends, who through long years have aided each other, must not be estranged, even when one thinks himself injured by the other, but must strive to come to a thorough understanding and agreement.

Vers. 15–23. The plans and arrangements of Solomon for the benefit and protection of the land. (*a*) First he built the house of the Lord, forth from which would come all salvation for Israel; then he built the store-houses for times of need and famine, and as protection against the enemies of the kingdom. A wise prince cares alike for the religious and spiritual, and for the material and temporal well-being of his people, and in times of peace does his utmost to provide against every danger which may assail the land, either from without or within. For this a nation can never be grateful enough, and should uphold him with readiness and might, instead of murmuring and complaining, as is often the case. (*b*) Solomon's plan was, in his undertakings to spare his nation all servile labor, as far as possible. Therefore, for all compulsory service he employed the conquered enemy, who, as such, were slaves. A wise prince will never impose burdensome taxes or heavy labor upon his people, and reigns much more willingly over freemen than over slaves; but a good and loyal people does not make freedom a pretext for villany, and ever follows the king's call for arms when the defence of "*Fatherland*" is concerned. For Israel can no more say with truth—The Lord is my rock, my fortress, and my deliverer (Ps. xviii. 3), if all the nation does not aid in its defences and fortifications.—In the kingdom of the true and eternal prince of peace bondage will cease, and all men shall obtain the freedom of the children of God.—Ver. 25. Solomon sets a good example before all the people; he not only builds the temple, but also frequents it regularly. It is as much the duty of the highest as of the lowest to hear the word of God, to pray, and to celebrate the Sacrament.—Ver. 26 *sq.* A wise government seeks not only to preserve existing prosperity, but also to discover new sources thereof.—Many there are who travel over land and sea to seek gold, and to become rich, and forget that the Lord hath said: I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich (Rev. iii. 18). Expeditions into far countries must serve not only to obtain gold and treasure, but also to carry thither the treasure which neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal (Matth. vi. 19 *sq.*)—Commerce may become a rich blessing for a nation, but a greedy thirst for gold often leads to extreme luxury and neglect of God, as is many times exemplified in the history of Israel.

FOURTH SECTION.

THE FAME AND THE MAGNIFICENCE OF SOLOMON.

(CHAPTER X.)

A.—*The Visit of the Queen of Sheba.*

CHAP. X. 1–13.

1 AND when the queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon concerning[1] the
2 name of the Lord [Jehovah], she came to prove him with hard questions. And
she came to Jerusalem with a very great train, with camels that bare spices, and
very much gold, and precious stones: and when she was come to[2] Solomon, she
3 communed with him of all that was in her heart. And Solomon told her all
her questions: there was not *any* thing [a question[3]] hid from the king, which
4 he told her not. And when the queen of Sheba had seen all[4] Solomon's wisdom,
5 and the house that he had built, and the meat of his table, and the sitting of
his servants, and the attendance of his ministers, and their[5] apparel, and his
cupbearers, and his ascent[6] by which he went up unto the house of the Lord
6 [Jehovah]; there was no more spirit in her. And she said to the king, It was a
true report[7] that I heard in mine own land of thy acts[7] and of thy wisdom.
7 Howbeit I believed not the words,[7] until I came, and mine eyes had seen *it;*
and behold, the half was not told me: thy wisdom and prosperity exceedeth
8 the fame which I heard. Happy *are* thy men,[8] happy *are* these thy servants,
9 which stand continually before thee, *and* that hear thy wisdom. Blessed be the
Lord [Jehovah] thy God, which delighted in thee, to set thee on the throne of
Israel: because the Lord [Jehovah] loved Israel forever, therefore made he thee
10 king, to do judgment and justice. And she gave the king an hundred and
twenty talents of gold, and of spices very great store, and precious stones: there
came no more such abundance of spices as these which the queen of Sheba gave
11 to king Solomon. And the navy also of Hiram, that brought gold from Ophir,
brought in from Ophir great plenty of almug[9] trees, and precious stones.
12 And the king made of the almug trees pillars for the house of the Lord [Jehovah], and for the king's house, harps also and psalteries for singers: there
13 came no such almug trees, nor were seen unto this day. And king Solomon
gave unto the queen of Sheba all her desire, whatsoever she asked, besides *that*
which Solomon gave her of his royal bounty.[10] So she turned and went to her
own country, she and her servants.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

[1] Ver. 1. [The Sept. and Syr. render this very difficult expression, אֶת־שֵׁמַע שְׁלֹמֹה לְשֵׁם. יְהוָֹה (See Exeg. Com.), "heard the name of Solomon and the name of the Lord," and the Arab. the same except in retaining *fame* in the first clause.

[2] Ver. 2. [Many MSS. editions, and the Vulg. and Syr., insert *king* before Solomon.

[3] Ver. 3. [There seems no sufficient reason for varying the translation of דָּבָר occurring twice in such close proximity. The same variation is observed in the Chald. and Syr., but the Sept. have λόγος in both cases.

[4] Ver. 4. [Several MSS. followed by the Arab. omit "all."

[5] Ver. 5. [The Sept., quite without authority, put the pronoun in the singular as referring to Solomon's apparel.

[6] Ver. 5. [All the ancient versions render "the burnt-offerings which he offered" (see Exeg. Com.) and must therefore have read עלותו instead of עלתו, but without reason. See Exeg. Com.

[7] Vers. 6, 7. [The Heb. for *report* and *acts*, ver. 6, and *words*, ver. 7, is the same דָּבָר, דְּבָרִים and this sameness is preserved in the Sept., although hardly possible in English.

[8] Ver. 8. [The Sept. curiously enough render "happy are the *women*."

[9] Ver. 11. [Almug is not a translation, but only a putting into English letters of the Heb. אַלְמֻגִּים. The versions render:—Vulg thyina; Sept. πελεκητά (Alex. ἀπελέκητα); Arab. colored wood, *i. e.* that kind of wood naturally painted with various colors. The sense as now generally understood is *sandal-wood.* See Exeg. Com.

[10] Ver. 13. [Lit. gave her as *from* the hand of king Solomon.—F. G.]

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

Vers. 1–3. **And when the queen of Sheba.** *Cf.* 2 Chron. ix. 1–12. The name of Solomon became famous far and near, through the trading ships that were mentioned in chap. ix. 26 *sq.* A proof is here given. שְׁבָא, Sheba, is a country in Arabia Felix (not to be confounded with סְבָא, *i. e.*, Meroë in Ethiopia, as Josephus has it), on the Red Sea, rich in spices, frankincense, gold, and precious stones (Jer. vi. 20; Ezek. xxvii. 22; Isai. lx. 6; Ps. lxxii. 15). "The Sabæans, whose capital city was Sheba, had become, through their extensive commerce, the richest nation among the Arabians" (Winer, *R.-W.-B.* II. *s.* 405; Duncker, *Gesch. des Alterth.* I. *s.* 140 *sq.*). The Queen of this country, who visited Solomon, was certainly the reigning one; according to Claudian *in Eutrop.* i. 132, the Sabæans were generally governed by queens, but this has no historical foundation. Whether she were widowed or unmarried is, like her name, uncertain. Her fame spread with and through that of Solomon, who was the beau-ideal of a king throughout the East, for even the Koran mentions her visit to Solomon (Sur. 27), and there are many legends about it among the Arabians and Abyssinians. The former name her Balkis, and the latter Maqueda, and even say that she had a son by Solomon, named Menihelek (or Melimelek),* who was the ancestor of the Abyssinian kings (comp. Winer). These fables of after-times need no refutation. The words לְשֵׁם יְהוָה, which are wanting in Chron., are by no means unsuitable or superfluous (Movers); they exist in all the old translations, but have been very differently understood. *Propter nomen Jeh.* (Le Clerc) is least like it; neither is De Wette right: to Jehovah's honor; nor this, "the fame of what Solomon had become by Jehovah's favor" (Gesenius); nor, the fame "that Solomon had acquired through the glory of his God" (Ewald); nor yet, "which he had attained, by Jehovah glorifying himself so in him" (Weil). The expression involuntarily reminds us of the לְשֵׁם יְהוָה chap. iii. 2; v. 17, 19; viii. 17, 18, 19, 20, 44, 48; 2 Sam. vii. 13. The house built to Jehovah's name was the first and principal reason of Solomon's fame; and was what the Queen had chiefly heard of, in which she had seen, like Hiram, an evidence of wisdom. This she desired to prove for herself.

To prove him with hard questions. To clothe wisdom in the form of proverbs, which were often dark and enigmatical on account of their brevity, is a primitive custom of the East, especially among the Arabians, who are very rich in proverbs; the collection of the Meidani, for instance, which contains 6,000 proverbs, and the Makami of the Hariri show this. Chap. iv. 32 says that 3,000 are by Solomon; and those in his name, that are now extant, include many that are enigmatical. We do not mean enigmas in the sense of those that used to be propounded at meals or otherwise (*cf.* Rosenmüller *A. u. N. Morgenland* with Judges xiv. 12); the Queen did not want any trial of skill in enigmas with Solomon, but wished to propound important and difficult questions to him. Solomon did not fail in a single answer (הִגִּיד ver. 3 is solving riddles in Jud. xiv. 19, and interpreting dreams in Gen. xli. 24; Dan. v. 12).

Vers. 4–8. **And when the Queen had seen all Solomon's wisdom.** Solomon's wisdom was shown, not only in his answers and discourses (ver. 3), but in all his arrangements, in the whole constitution of the court, and manner of his government; whithersoever the Queen looked, she beheld evidence of his wonderful gifts and powers of thought. The "house" is not the Temple, but the royal palace, as the following words concerning the court-appointments show. "*The meat of his table*" is the royal table, the splendor of which is especially described. *The sitting of his servants, and the attendance of his ministers,* means "the civil officers who sat at the royal table, and the servants, among whom were the "*cup-bearers,*" in attendance upon them (Bertheau). These three descriptions have nothing to do with localities, with the ministers' seats, the place where the servants stood, nor the preparations for the cup-bearing (Weil); nor the order of the offices, and the rooms of the lower servants (Thenius); for the parallel passage in 2 Chron. ix. 4 shows that מַשְׁקָיו are persons. It is more doubtful how we are to understand the following words עֹלָתוֹ, &c.; Chron. has עֲלִיָּתוֹ instead. All the translations give for both passages: "and the burnt-offerings, which he offered in Jehovah's house;" this would mean the solemn and magnificent rites of the Temple worship. But it would not agree with the description just preceding, of the royal table and court appointments, the servants and cup-bearers; and above all, the splendid Temple building would have deserved mention; it would be necessary, too, to alter the text in both places; and עֹלֹתָיו should be read, yet we have no grounds for doing this. If this were the right reading, the Chronicler, who was so partial to the details concerning the worship, would not have taken עֲלִיָּתוֹ instead. Most modern translators (Keil, Winer, Ewald), therefore, give ascent for עֹלָתוֹ; meaning the particular ascent of steps that led from the palace to the Temple; and עֹלָה Ezek. xl. 26 has the same signification. This ascent of steps belonged to the palace, and very likely struck the eye, as it is here expressly mentioned; it also appears from 2 Kings xvi. 18 that the king had a peculiar entrance of that kind to the Temple. The concluding words of ver. 5 are literally, and there was no more breath in her; as the breath goes in terror (Josh. ii. 11; v. 1), so it also goes in cases of extreme astonishment.

Vers. 9, 10. **Blessed be the Lord thy God.** We cannot conclude from these words that the Queen had formally confessed the One God of Israel, but rather that it meant what we have already remarked of a similar expression of Hiram, chap. v. 7. What she saw and heard excited her wonder to such a degree, that it seemed to her directly imparted by the God Solomon adored, and for whom she became filled with reverence. The presents which the Queen, according to custom, made, consisted of those articles in which her land most

* See the graceful account of the legends, in Stanley's *Jewish Church*, Second Series, p. 250-262.—E. H.

abounded, and for which it was most famous. The spices were principally the famous Arabian balm, which was largely exported; according to Josephus (*Ant.* 8, 6, 6) the balm-shrub was introduced into Palestine by the Queen of Sheba (Winer, *R.-W.-B.* I. *s.* 132).

Vers. 11–13. **And the navy also of Hiram,** &c. The mention of the costly presents leads the author to the remark, vers. 11 and 12, which may be regarded as a parenthesis, that such articles of luxury were introduced in abundance into Jerusalem by commerce; and the (fragrant) spices reminded him of the equally great quantities of *sandal-wood* that Solomon received through Hiram's ships. This wood, which is indigenous to India, "was highly prized throughout the East for its fragrance, and partly was carved into images, partly used for fine utensils, and partly used for incense-burning" (Winer, II. *s.* 379). מִסְעָד (ver. 12) only occurs here, and its meaning is not quite certain. The root סָעַד means, to support, make sure. Thenius calls it "supports of the resting," *i. e.*, seats made by Solomon on the walls of a palace or Temple room; but we do not find the slightest mention of such a Temple room anywhere. As Chron. has מְסִלּוֹת (from סָלַל, to prepare the way, Ps. lxviii.; v.) instead of our word, Bertheau thinks that סעד like צעד is to advance, so that both expressions really denote the same thing; *i. e.*. the "way of entrance, ascent." Jarchi gives כסעד by רצפה *i. e.*, wainscoting on the floor (tessellated pavements); and this seems the best. The translation, steps with banisters (Keil), has no authority. כִּנּוֹר and נֶבֶל must be stringed instruments with sounding-boards; they are mentioned together in Ps. lxxi. 22; cviii. 3; cl. 3; we know nothing certain of their natures. *Which Solomon gave her of his royal bounty* (ver. 13), *i. e.*, besides the things he presented her with according to the custom of kings, he gave her everything else she desired. We can scarcely think this included, as the other translators think, any literary productions. It is very doubtful whether the Ethiopian Christians "concluded rightly from these words that their Queen had a son by Solomon" (Bertheau).

HISTORICAL AND ETHICAL.

1. *The section before us does not*, by any means, contain a story accidentally and arbitrarily inserted here, which, however beautiful it may be, might be left out without doing harm, because it does not bear upon the history of the Israelite kings. How high the significance which has always been attached to the event recorded is, is shown by the fact that the remembrance of it has been preserved outside of Palestine for thousands of years, and that two ancient peoples, the Arabians and Abyssinians, revered the Queen of Sheba as the mother of their line of kings; the Abyssinian tradition making the son she bore to Solomon the founder of the ancient Ethiopian kingdom. And when the Lord, from out the treasure of the Old Testament history, chooses this narrative, and presents it for the shaming of his contemporaries, this presupposes that it was known to and specially esteemed by all other nations It is, therefore, something more than an ordinary visit of royal etiquette. Sabæa was reckoned to be the richest, most highly favored and glorious land in the ancient world, and therefore was given the unique name of "The Happy." Agatharchides names the Sabæans *γένος παντοίας κύριον εὐδαιμονίας*. Now when the Queen came with a splendid retinue to visit this distant land, and from no political design, but merely to see and hear the famous king; and when she, the sovereign of the most fortunate country in the world, declared that what she had seen and heard exceeded all her expectations; this surely was the greatest homage Solomon could have met, homage that no king had ever yet received; and the result was that Solomon was regarded as the ideal of a wise, great, and happy king, throughout the Eastern world. The visit of the Queen of Sheba marks, then, the splendor and climax of the Old Testament Kingdom, and marks an essential moment in the history of the covenant as well as of Solomon. This story is therefore in its right place, following, as it does, the account of the great and glorious works Solomon made for his country and which acquired for him so much fame.

2. *The context explains the kind of "wisdom" that the Queen sought* and found in Solomon. It was not much learning; neither were the "riddles" that Solomon solved metaphysical problems, nor mere conversation and play of wit. Besides the answers he gave to her questions, his works, appointments, and arrangements convinced the Queen of his great wisdom, in which she recognized the working of a peculiar power and grace imparted by God. It was also a practical or life-wisdom, such as Solomon himself describes, "a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her, length of days is in her right hand, and in her left hand riches and honor. The merchandise of it is better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold. She is more precious than rubies, and all the things thou canst desire are not to be compared unto her," Prov. iii. 14–18. But this wisdom rests upon the foundation of the knowledge and fear of God (comp. ver. 1 and Prov. ii. 4–6), and the whole reign of Solomon is the result of the same (see Historical and Ethical on chap. iv. 29). "O! happy time, when mighty princes visited each other in the midst of their lands, made tranquil by a holy fear of God, so to vie with each other in wisdom and what is still better, the search after wisdom" (Ewald).

3. *When the Lord says in* Matt. xii. 42 and Luke xi. 81: "The Queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with this generation and shall condemn it; for she came from the uttermost part of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and behold a greater than Solomon is here," he recognizes the prophetical and typical meaning of our narrative, as is the case generally with the kingdom of Solomon. It is said in the prophetical descriptions of the peaceful kingdom of Messiah, "the Kings of Sheba and Seba (Meroë) shall offer gifts; yea, all kings shall fall down before him; all nations shall serve him" (Ps. lxxii. 10, 11); and "all they from Sheba shall come; they shall bring gold and incense, and they shall show forth the praises of the Lord" (Isai. lx. 6). The Queen of Sheba, who came from far, out of the happiest country of the world, to Solomon, brought him presents, and received all she wished from him, is a type of the kings who with their people shall

come from far and near to the everlasting Prince of peace, the King of kings, and shall do him homage. Her visit is an historical prophecy of the true and eternal kingdom of peace. It is just this prophetical and typical character of the story that gives such emphasis to our Lord's reproof of the hardened Israelites of His time.

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

Vers. 1–13. The queen of Sheba comes to Solomon. (*a*) She comes in order to hear the wisdom of Solomon. (*b*) She finds more than she expected. (*c*) She worships and praises the Lord for what she has seen and heard. (*d*) She returns home in peace, with rich gifts.—Solomon receiving the Queen of Sheba a type of Christ (Matt. xxii. 42). (*a*) He did not reject her who sought him, but raised her up (John vi. 37). (*b*) He solved her questions, and showed her his glory (John i. 9, 14; xxii. 46; vi. 68). (*c*) He accepted her gifts, and gave her much more in return, even all that she desired and requested. (John x. 11, 28; xvi. 24; iv. 13 *sq.*). Vers. 1–3. The Queen of Sheba had everything that pertains to temporal prosperity and good fortune, high rank, power and honor, health and wealth; but all these satisfied not her soul; she sought the solution of the enigma of life, and when she heard of Solomon, and of the name of the Lord, she spared no expense or trouble, neither regarded the scorn and contempt of the world, in order to satisfy the longing of her soul for the word of life. She said not: I am rich, and have an abundance, and need nothing; but she felt that she still needed the highest and the best. How superior is this heathen woman to so many Christians, who hunger and thirst after all possible things, but never after a knowledge of truth and wisdom, after the word of life. We do not need to journey to Jerusalem, to find him who is greater than Solomon, for he has promised: "I am with you forever, until the end of the world," and can be found everywhere, if men seek him earnestly.—God is not without a witness in the midst of the heathen, whereby they may feel and recognize Him, for He wills that all men shall be aided to come to a knowledge of the truth. The same God who gave Solomon the wise heart for which he prayed, revealed to the inquiring spirit of the heathen queen what she most desired.—Ver. 3. One receives with readiness and alacrity the soul which longs after the truth of God; such souls faithfully apply the same, they do not weary—and the counsel of God unto salvation is not withheld from them (Acts xx. 27, and James v. 19–20).

Vers. 4–9. The acknowledgment of the Queen of Sheba, when she beheld the works of Solomon. (*a*) It is true . . . I would not believe it until I, &c., vers. 6, 7 (John x. 35, 38; xiv. 11). (*b*) Thy wisdom has exceeded, &c., ver. 7 (John vi. 68 *sq.*). (*c*) Happy are thy men, &c., ver. 8 (Luke x. 23). (*d*) Praised be the Lord, &c., ver. 9 (Eph. i. 3).—Ver. 4. Words must be followed by works; the beholding with her own eyes, and her very own experience, must be added to the rumors she has heard. Nathaniel, when he heard of Jesus, the Messiah, spoke doubtingly at first: Can any good thing come out of Nazareth? But when he came and saw he joyfully exclaimed: Thou art the Son of God, thou art the King of Israel (John i. 45–49).—Ver. 5. Great palaces, brilliant arrangements, &c., are objects worthy of real admiration if they are not evidently mere works to gratify the lust of the eye and the pride of life, but rather proofs of wisdom, of spiritual elevation, and of love of art.—Ver. 7. As in order to form a just conception of visible things we must see them with our own eyes—so also with invisible and divine things: rightly to recognize them as such, we must feel and taste their strength in our own hearts, and not merely hear of them from others (1 Pet. ii. 3; Ps. xxxiv. 9).—Ver. 8. Not because of their fine clothes, of their high position, of their splendid possessions, did the Queen regard the people and the servants of Solomon as blessed and happy, but because they could always listen to his wisdom. How much the more are those to be esteemed blessed, who, sitting at His feet, who Himself contains all the treasures of wisdom and of knowledge, can hear the word of everlasting life from His mouth (Luke x. 23 *sq*). Ver. 9. It is proof of a good and noble heart, when a man gives thanks to God for the gifts which he bestows upon other men. CRAMER: Upon the land which God will bless He bestows good and wise rulers; but if He will to punish a country, he does the opposite (Is. iii. 4; Ec. x. 16, 17). If the Queen, in God's gift of a Solomon to Israel, recognized a singular proof of God's love to this nation, and exclaimed: Blessed be, &c., how can we thank and praise God enough for the love which sent his only begotten Son into the world, to save us from utter darkness, and to place us in the kingdom of His dear Son (Cor. i. 13; Eph. i. 3).—OSIANDER: Rulers are given their high position by God, not simply to enjoy the pleasures of life, and to see good days, but to administer justice to their subjects, and care for their temporal and eternal welfare.

Vers. 10–13. The interchange of gifts between the Queen and Solomon. (*a*) The Queen is not content with words of praise and thanks; she testifies her gratitude by means of great and royal gifts. Of what avail is all mere verbal thanks and praise, if the life be devoid of lovely deeds, and of cheerful gifts, for the acknowledgment of God's kingdom? (*b*) Solomon needed not the gifts; he had more than she could give him (vers. 11, 12); he gave her all that heart could desire. What are all our gifts in comparison with those which we receive from the Lord,—those which are immeasurably beyond what we ask and seek (Eph. iii. 20), and where it is more blessed to give than to receive (Acts xx. 35)? Vers. 11, 12. As God bestows various gifts upon individual men, so He also blesses different countries with varied products, not that nations should covet and contest the same, but that they should serve and mutually benefit each other.—Ver. 13. With a treasure incomparable in value to gold and jewels, the Queen joyfully went her way, like the Eunuch of Ethiopia.

How many are there who return from far journeys into distant lands, rich in gold and substance, but poor in faith and knowledge of the truth. They have lost more than they have won; the Queen gained more than she lost.—The generation of the present day in comparison with the Queen of Sheba; its satiety and indifference, its unbelief and its guilt (Matt. xii. 42).

B.—*The Wealth, Splendor, and Power of Solomon's Kingdom.*

CHAP. X. 14–29 (2 CHRON. IX. 13–28).

14 Now the weight of gold that came to Solomon in one year was six hundred
15 threescore and six talents of gold, beside *that he had* of the merchantmen,[1]
and of the traffick of the spice [*omit* spice] merchants, and of all the kings of
Arabia,[2] and of the governors of the country.
16 And king Solomon made two hundred targets [*i. e.* large shields] *of* beaten
17 gold; six hundred *shekels* of gold went to one target. And *he made* three
hundred shields *of* beaten gold; three pound [manehs [3]] of gold went to one
shield: and the king put them in the house of the forest of Lebanon.
18 Moreover the king made a great throne of ivory, and overlaid it with the
19 best gold. The throne had six steps, and the top of the throne *was* round behind:
and *there were* stays [arms [4]] on either side on the place of the seat, and
20 two lions stood beside the stays [arms]. And twelve lions stood there on the
one side and on the other upon the six steps: there was not the like made in any
kingdom.
21 And all king Solomon's drinking vessels *were of* gold, and all the vessels of
the house of the forest of Lebanon *were of* pure[5] gold; none *were of* silver:
22 it was nothing accounted of in the days of Solomon. For the king had at
sea a navy[6] of Tharshish with the navy of Hiram: once in three years came the
23 navy of Tharshish, bringing gold, and silver, ivory, and apes, and peacocks.[7] So
king Solomon exceeded all the kings of the earth for riches and for wisdom.
24 And all the earth sought to Solomon, to hear his wisdom, which God had
25 put in his heart. And they brought every man his present, vessels of silver,
and vessels of gold, and garments, and armor,[8] and spices, horses, and mules,
a rate year by year.
26 And Solomon gathered together chariots and horsemen[9]: and he had a thousand
and four hundred chariots, and twelve thousand horsemen, whom he be-
27 stowed in the cities for chariots, and with the king at Jerusalem. And the king
made silver *to be* in Jerusalem as stones, and cedars made he *to be* as the sycamore
[mulberry [10]] trees that *are* in the vale, for abundance.
28 And Solomon had horses brought out of Egypt, and linen yarn [a troop [11]]:
29 the king's merchants received the linen yarn [troop] at a price. And a chariot
came up and went out of Egypt for six hundred *shekels* of silver, and an horse
for an hundred and fifty: and so for all the kings of the Hittites, and for the
kings of Syria, did they bring *them* out by their means.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

[1] Ver. 15. [מֵאַנְשֵׁי הַתָּרִים, on the meaning of this difficult expression, see Exeg. Com. The versions render as follows: Vulg., the men who were over the tribute; Sept., the tribute of those subject; Chald., the wages of the artisans; Syr., simply from the artisans; and so the Arab.

[2] Ver. 15. [The ancient versions generally sustain this rendering. The Chald. alone has מַלְכֵי סוּמְכוּתָא "kings of auxiliary or allied nations," which must be wrong. The Heb. word עֶרֶב is used Ex. xii. 38, Neh. xiii. 3, generally of "a mixed multitude" of aliens attaching themselves to the Israelites; and Jer. xxv. 24, specifically of the mixed races of Arabia Deserta. Hence in the parallel place 2 Chron. ix. 14 we have עֲרָב.

[3] Ver. 17. [The Maneh=100 shekels.

[4] Ver. 19. [The Heb. יָדוֹת undoubtedly means *arms*, and is so rendered by the Syr. The Chald. and Arab. give the sense of the A. V., while the Vulg. and Sept. render literally, *hands*.

[5] Ver. 21. [The English version gives without doubt the true sense; so the Vulg., Chald., and Syr. The word סָגוּר is the *part. pass.* from סָגַר to shut, close, and hence the Sept. version *χρυσίῳ συγκεκλεισμένα*.

[6] Ver. 22. [The Sept. and Chald. adopt the single instead of the collective meaning of אֳנִי and render "a ship."

[7] Ver. 22. [The other ancient versions (except that the Syr. and Arab. has *elephants* instead of ivory) concur in the sense of these words given in the English version; but the Vat. Sept. has instead *λίθων τορευτῶν καὶ πελεκητῶν*, stones cut and graved. The Vat. Sept. also here inserts the passage omitted in Chap. ix.

[8] Ver. 25. [The Sept. render נֶשֶׁק (=armour) by *στακτήν*, oil of myrrh.

[9] Ver. 26. [The Vat. Sept. omits the first clause of ver. 26, and both recensions add to the verse the first part of iv. 21. Also instead of 1,400 chariots they read 4,000 (Alex. 40,000) mares.

[10] Ver. 27. [שִׁקְמִים=συκόμορος, συκάμινος, the mulberry-tree, now rare, but anciently very common in the lowlands of Palestine.

[11] Ver. 28. [On the meaning of מִקְוֵה, here translated "linen yarn," see Exeg. Com. The Sept. and Vulg. have taken it as a proper name.—F. G.]

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

Vers. 14–15. **Now the weight of gold,** &c. The 666 talents have been very differently computed. According to Ex. xxxviii. 25 there are 3.000 shekels in one talent, but Thenius reckons the shekel at 10 Thalers, so that the whole sum would amount to "nearly 20 millions of Thalers in gold." Keil, who had formerly reckoned it at 1,900,-875 Marks, calculates it now at "over 17 millions of Thalers," which plainly is too high. According to this, the golden crown which David took from the head of the Ammonite king, and which weighed a talent, not reckoning the precious stones in it (2 Sam. xii. 30), must have weighed 83¼ Dresden pounds, and a talent was about 30,000 Thalers, which is simply impossible. We prefer to reckon the talent at 2,618 Thalers* at present, as Winer (*R.-W.-B.* II. *s.* 562) and Bunsen (*Bibelwerk* I. *Einl. s.* 377) think; this makes 666 talents equal to 1,743,588 Thalers, a still considerable sum. We cannot see why the number 666 should be an "invented" one, in which tradition betrays itself (Thenius). There is, in any event, no allusion in Rev. xiii. 18 to this passage, and this number has no particular signification anywhere else. It only expresses the simple sum of the various receipts. *In one year*, i. e., *per annos singulos* (Vulgate); this suits our calculation very well, but not the 20,000,000 Thalers [or $15,000,-000]. Keil, without any reason, doubts the correctness of this translation, in which all old translators have agreed; for if, as he supposes, the freight of the Ophir fleet, which returned only once in three years, brought the 666 talents, it must mean in every third year. The 666 talents were the regular yearly income; but we must not necessarily suppose, with Thenius, that they were "the income of taxes laid on the Israelites themselves;" for there is no mention anywhere made of a yearly income tax. Ver. 15 tells of other less defined additions to the regular revenue. The Sept. renders the difficult expression אַנְשֵׁי הַתָּרִים by (χωρὶς) τῶν φόρων τῶν ὑποτεταγμένων; it appears also to have read differently. Thenius therefore conjectures it to be מֵעָנְשֵׁי הָרְדוּיִם, and translates: "from the contributions of the subjugated;" but in opposition to this, Bertheau remarks rightly, "הרדוים occurs nowhere else, and ענש (ζημία) can scarcely mean a tribute laid on the conquered lands in David's time, and as such raised by Solomon." The expression is generally understood to mean travelling tradespeople, and as רֹכְלִים, *i. e.*, merchants, follows, the latter "merchants" must mean "the pedlers or inferior shop-keepers" (Keil). But this distinction is destitute of proof. The word תור is never used for trading; הַתָּרִים in Num. xiv. 6 (xiii. 16, 17) means the men that Moses sent out to view and report upon the land. The Vulgate translates the parallel passage in 2 Chron. ix. 14; *legati diversarum gentium*. So also Bertheau, "the ambassadors" by whom the presents of other kings were brought. It is impossible to ascertain the exact income Solomon received from the *traffic of the merchants;* but there could scarcely have been a regular commercial tax (Thenius), and custom duties are still less to be supposed. The *kings* הָעֶרֶב are not "kings of the mixed tribes" (Keil), but could only have been Arabian tributary kings, who were subject to Solomon; probably they belonged to the desert Arabia, or at least to a part of it, which joined the Israelitish territory (Thenius). *Cf.* Jer. xxv. 20; Ezek. xxx. 5. The *governors* are no doubt the same as those mentioned in chap. iv. 7–19. The revenue-sources named in ver. 15 were plainly not gold, but in various kinds of produce.

Vers. 16, 17. **And king Solomon made two hundred targets,** &c. צִנָּה is the large square shield, rounded down upon its length, covering the whole body. It was usually made of wood covered with leather, but these were overlaid with gold. מָגֵן is a smaller shield, either quite round or oval, also of wood or leather covered with gold. The latter was שָׁחוּט, *i. e.*, not: mixed with another metal, nor pure; but: stretched, hammered broad. The word shekel is left out in giving the weight, as often happens (Gen. x. 16; xxiv. 22; xxxvii. 28). The 600 shekels for each large shield should come to 523⅗ Thalers [$392–3]. If a talent is reckoned at 3,000 shekels, and the talent be equal to 2,618 Thalers [see note above], the 3 pounds for each smaller shield would be 261½ Thalers, as 3 pounds are=300 shekels, according to 2 Chron. ix. 16. This calculation appears far more probable than that 17½ pounds of gold, worth 6,000 Thalers, were used for each shield (Thenius); or that the gold-plating of a large shield did not weigh quite 9 pounds, and that of a small one nearly 4½ pounds (Keil). These shields were borne, as chap. xiv. 27 tells us, by the body-guard; but were used probably only on special occasions, for they were more for show than for ordinary use, and served also to adorn the house of the forest of Lebanon (for which see above in chap. vii. 2). Golden shields are also mentioned in 1 Macc. vi. 39, and were used also by the Carthaginians (*Plin. Hist. Nat.*, xxxv. 4).

Vers. 18–20. **Moreover, the king made a great throne,** &c. The throne was not entirely made of ivory, any more than the palaces mentioned in chap. xxii. 39; Ps. xlv. 9; Amos iii. 15, but was only inlaid with it, decorated. The wood of which it was made was overlaid with gold, and between, ivory was inserted. 2 Chron. ix. 17 gives טָהוֹר, pure, for מוּפָז, *i. e.*, purified. *Round behind* can scarcely be that "it had an arched or

* If we reckon the Thaler at 75 cents, 10 Thalers, of course, are $7.50, and 20 millions of Thalers are $15,000,000. And taking the author's estimate of values, *i. e.*, supposing the talent to be equal to 2,618 Thalers, the 666 talents in the text would be equal to $1,306,691.—E. H.

rounded back" (Keil); or, "it terminated in a round crown" (Ewald), but means rather that "it had a round covering attached to the back" (Thenius). Most probably the *lions* as well as the throne itself to which they belonged were made of wood overlaid with gold, as images of gods were made (Jer. x. 3 *sq.*). There was not a "lion on each of the arms" of the throne (Ewald), but on each side of it (אֵצֶל); the twelve others stood on the six steps leading to the throne, each one facing another. The remark, there was not the like made, &c., has reference to the artistic merit of the work as well as its costliness; the statues were at least as large as life. "On the ancient Assyrian monuments there are representations of high chairs with arms and backs, also such, the backs of which were supported by figures of animals (*cf.* Layard, *Niniveh*, *s.* 344 *sq.*), but none of these chairs are like that of Solomon. Later ages only can produce more splendid thrones. *Cf.* Rosenmüller, *Altes und Neues Morgenland*, III. *s.* 176 *sq.*" (Keil).

Ver. 21. **And all king Solomon's drinking vessels**, &c. The account of the great quantity of gold and silver in Solomon's time does not appear in the least exaggerated when we compare those of other ancient writers about the amount of precious metal in the ancient East. Sardanapalus, for instance, had, when Nineveh was besieged, 150 golden bedsteads, 150 golden tables, a million talents of gold, ten times as much silver, and 3,000 talents had been previously divided by him among his sons (Ktesias by Athenæus, xii. p. 529). No less than 7,170 talents of gold were used for the statues and vessels of the Temple of Bel in Babylon (Münter, *Rel. der Babyl.*, *s.* 51, where the passages of the ancients that refer to it are given). Alexander's pillage of Ecbatana was valued at 120,000 talents of gold (Diodor. Sicul. *Bibl.* 17). Cyrus' pillage was 34,000 pounds of gold and 500,000 pounds of silver, besides an immense number of golden vessels (Pliny, *Hist. Nat.* xxvii. 3; *cf.* *Symbol. des Mos. Kult.* I. *s.* 259 *sq.*).

Ver. 22. **For the king had at sea a navy of Tharshish**, &c. תַּרְשִׁישׁ, the ancient Phœnician emporium, Tartessus, on the far side of the pillars of Hercules in south-western Spain; it is described as lying in a district which was rich in silver. Its situation has been much disputed, but the above may be taken as the correct account (see the opinions in Winer, *R.-W.-B.* II. *s.* 603). (*Cf.* Ezek. xxxviii. 13; Jer. x. 9; Isai. xxiii. 10.) That, however, אֳנִי תַּרְשִׁישׁ does not here denote ships *going* to Tharshish, is evident from the passage, 1 Kings xxii. 48, "Jehoshaphat made ships of Tharshish to go to Ophir for gold (*i. e.*, to fetch gold); but they went not, for the ships were broken at Ezion-geber (*i. e.*, on the Arabian gulf)." Wheresoever we may look for Ophir, it was certainly not in Spain, as every one knows, but in the East, that is, in the opposite direction. The ships that Solomon and Hiram had built (chap. ix. 28) in Ezion-geber were also destined to go to Ophir, therefore could not possibly have been intended for a voyage to Spain (which was reached by the Mediterranean sea), because the way around South Africa was then unknown. The productions, too, which ver. 22 tells us the Tharshish ships brought, show beyond dispute that the voyage was not to Tharshish, for though there was plenty of silver in Tharshish, in Spain, there was no gold, and very few apes or peacocks, and but little ivory. Keil now admits this, though he once held the far-fetched idea that Jehoshaphat brought the ships built at Ezion-geber across the isthmus of Suez, transported also over land, to sail thence to Spain. The ships with which the Phœnicians used to go to the distant Tharshish were very large and strong, perhaps the largest trading vessels; and as large ships now that go far are named after the lands they sail to, for instance East-Indiamen, Greenlanders, so in Solomon's time or that of our author, the Phœnicians called large trading vessels Tharshish ships; it had become a regular name, as the following passages show: Isai. ii. 16; Ps. xlviii. 8. Taking everything into the account then, we can regard the formula: ships went to Tarshish (2 Chron. ix. 21) as only a mistaken interpretation of the expression: Tharshish fleet—a mistake that is easily accounted for, as at the time Chronicles was written the voyages of Tyrians as well as of Israelites to Ophir and Tharshish had long ceased, and the geographical position of both places was forgotten by the Jews (Keil). Though the passage under consideration does not say expressly whither the Tharshish fleet was going, chap. ix. 28 and xxii. 49 show that *Ophir* must have been its destination. But much has been written about the situation of Ophir which has been greatly, and is still, disputed (*cf.* Winer, *R.-W.-B.* II. *s.* 183 *sq.*; Herzog, *Real-Encykl.* on the word). This much, however, has been settled by recent researches, that we are to look for it either in India or in South Arabia. In support of India the products named in ver. 22, and which are indigenous thereto, have been urged, and appeal has been made to the fact that the ships returned only every three years, which suggests a greater distance than Southern Arabia. But the chief import, gold, which must have been plentiful in Ophir, is not found on the Indian coast, but is met with, first, north of Cashmere. South Arabia, on the contrary, was famed for its abundance of gold, and Asia Minor imported its gold chiefly thence. The תֻכִּיִּים, rendered peacocks by all the old translations, seem even more than the קֹפִים, *i. e.*, apes, to point to India, for they originally came from there (Oken, *Naturgesch. der Vögel*, *s.* 625); the ivory too, which is in other places simply expressed by שֵׁן reminds us of India. But as Ophir certainly cannot mean India, we decide, with Ewald and Keil, for South Arabia. The former supposes that Ophir, situated on the south-eastern coast of Arabia, since people made voyages thence to India, included, in common parlance, this latter land, just as the name Havilah, Gen. x. 7, 29, denoted lands that lay still farther east. Probably Solomon's and Hiram's ships first went to the original Ophir itself (chap. ix. 27), but later larger ships went farther, and besides the gold of Ophir brought apes, peacocks, and ivory, *i. e.*, Indian products and articles of luxury. We may also suppose that there was even then some commerce between India and South Arabia, and that Indian products reached Ophir, whence the Ophir voyagers brought them to Palestine. This is much more probable than Keil's supposition, which is that the products in question were African, being brought over to Ophir in the trading which took place between Arabia and the

opposite coast of Ethiopia. Though there was a "species of tailed ape" in Ethiopia, there were no peacocks and no sandal-wood. Thenius very unnecessarily supposes that the same writer who wrote chap. ix. 27 *sq.* could not have written this passage, because each passage speaks of the voyage to Ophir in a different manner; whence again the compilatory character of our books must follow. The first account is of the first voyage, and the second account of the later and more extended one.

Vers. 23–27. **So king Solomon exceeded, &c.** From vers. 23–29, by way of conclusion, everything that was to be said of the glory of Solomon is summed up, and at the same time some things not yet mentioned are added. For vers. 23–24 *cf.* chap. iv. 29–34. According to the universal custom in the East all, who came to see and hear Solomon brought him presents, and this was repeated "year by year," so highly had he risen everywhere in consideration. For ver. 26 *cf.* chap. iv. 26, and chap. ix. 19. In ver. 27 *silver* only is mentioned and not gold (which the Sept. unjustifiably adds here from 2 Chron. i. 15), because enough had been said already about gold. The great quantity of silver does not necessarily show that there was a silver trade with Tharshish which was rich in that metal, for there was a great deal of silver in Asia: Sardanapalus in Nineveh (see above on ver. 21), rich as he was in gold, had ten times as much silver, which he certainly did not get from Spain. The *cedar-wood* which came from Lebanon was as plentiful there in Jerusalem as common building timber, which was taken from sycamores (Isai. ix. 10), which did not grow on high mountains but very often in the lowlands of Palestine (Winer, *R.-W.-B.* II. *s.* 62 *sq.*), and were therefore cheap and easy to be had. The mode of expression is hyperbolical and Oriental, and cannot be taken literally any more than chap. iv. 20.

Vers. 28, 29. **And Solomon had horses brought, &c.** Verses 28 and 29 contain supplementary remarks to the account given in ver. 26 of Solomon's war-forces, explaining how he acquired the latter, namely, by sending special merchants to trade with Egypt, which was famous for its breed of horses, and was the country of "horses and chariots" (Ex. xiv. 6 *sq.*; xv. 1; 2 Kings xviii. 24; Isai. xxxi. 1; Jer. xlvi. 2, 4; Deut. xvii. 16). מִקְוֵה, which occurs twice in ver. 28, is difficult; but it can only mean collection, *collexio*, multitude (Gen. i. 9, 10; Ex. vii. 19; Jer. iii. 17). If we adhere to the masoretic punctuation we must render it as Gesenius does: "And a number of royal merchants fetched a number of the same (horses) for money;" the passage would thus contain "a kind of play on the word," which would be here without design or meaning. The Sept. and the Vulgate regard מקוה as denoting locality, and connect it with ממצרים; the departure of horses from Egypt and from Coa (ἐκ Θεκουὲ de Coa); but neither the Bible nor any ancient translator mentions a country or town named Coa or Cawe, and yet as a place of trade it could not have been insignificant or unknown. Thenius arbitrarily and incorrectly changes the first מקוה into מִתְּקוֹעַ; Thekoa, some miles from Jerusalem, was not a trading town but a small place situated on a height and inhabited by shepherds (Winer, *s.* 606). The translation "remainder" (or surplusage) (Ewald) is no better than that given by some Rabbins, woven texture. The second מִקְוֵה can have no other meaning than that of the first; it means "collection" each time, *i. e.*, collection of horses, and the passage becomes quite clear, if, leaving the masoretic punctuation, we join the first מִקְוֵה to the preceding words, making one sentence of them: "Concerning the bringing of horses out of Egypt, and their *collection*, the merchants of the king made a collection of them for a certain price." This shows that the horses were not brought up one by one, but in droves each time. When 600 shekels were given for a chariot and 150 for a horse, the first price of course included that of the harness for two horses belonging to the chariot, and also that of a reserved horse (see above on chap. iv. 26). The single horses at 150 shekels must have been riding-horses. We cannot tell the exact amount of this price in our money, as the value of the shekel is not fixed. If, like Winer and others, we compute it at 26 silver groschen, 150 shekels would be equal to 130 Thlr. [$97.50]; Keil agrees with this, but formerly thought, with others, that it only amounted to 65 or 66 Thlr.; Thenius gives it at 100 Thlr. The traders were called "*king's merchants*," not because they had to give an account of their dealings to the king (Bertheau) but "because they traded for the king" (Keil); as such they were respected, and distant kings employed them in procuring horses. The *Hittites* are not the same as those named in chap. ix. 20, but were an independent tribe, probably in the neighborhood of Syria, as 2 Kings vii. 6 mentions them as in alliance with the Syrians.

HISTORICAL AND ETHICAL.

1. *In the section before us* the delineation of Solomon's glory reaches its climax. No other king's reign is treated at such length in our books as that of Solomon, which alone occupies 11 chapters. But this whole historical representation has the same end in view that this section, referring to the promise, chap. iii.13, expresses in the words: "King Solomon exceeded all the kings of the earth for riches and for wisdom," *i. e.*, all conceivable greatness, might, riches, dignity, fame, and splendor were united to such a degree in Solomon (which never happened to any king before or after), that he was looked on as the very ideal of a king throughout the East; and his "glory" became proverbial (Matt. vi. 29; Luke xii. 26). The reason that this glory, which here reaches its highest point, is depicted just before the account of his deep fall (chap. xi.), is to be found in the theocratic view of the historian, and is, in an historico-redemptive relation, of high significance. In the divine economy the Old-Testament kingdom was destined to reach its culminating point in David's son; but as the old covenant moved generally in the form and covering of bodiliness, visibility, and outwardness, described as σάρξ by the New Testament; so the glory of the Old-Testament kingdom was a visible and external one; its highest point was determined by riches, power, fame, dignity, and splendor. Corresponding with the kingdom of Israel κατὰ σάρκα, it can be but a glory κατὰ σάρκα, *i. e.*, a visible, external, and therefore temporal and perishable, which, like the old covenant, pointed beyond itself, to an invisible, spiritual, and therefore imperishable, eternal glory. The same Old Testament king, under whom the king-

dom reached its greatest degree of glory, prepared the way for its gradual decline, and no one preached more powerfully the vanity and nothingness of all temporal splendor than he when proclaiming, it is all vanity (Eccles. i. 2)! In complete contrast with the Old-Testament glory of Solomon we see the New-Testament glory of the son of David, in the most eminent sense, the true Prince of peace, who had not where to lay his head, and was crowned with praise and honor, not through riches, power, dignity, or splendor, but by the suffering of death; who became perfect through self-abnegation and obedience unto the death on the cross, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of Majesty; Whose Kingdom is everlasting and his glory imperishable (Heb. ii. 9; v. 9; viii. 1; xii. 2; Luke i. 33).

2. *Among the things related to show* the splendor of Solomon's reign, special mention is made of the *throne* as the symbol of royal majesty, and at the same time the centre or seat of this glory; and it is expressly added that there was not the like in any kingdom, which no doubt refers principally to the lions. The number of these lions, twelve, has reference, indisputably, to the number of the tribes of Israel above which the king was elevated and over which he reigned, and for that reason the lions stood below him on the steps of the throne. Ewald gives the following as the reason for this symbol, "indisputably because the lion was the standard of Judah." This, however, does not appear to be so from Gen. xlix. 9, nor from Isai. xxix. 1 and Ezek. xix. 2; and besides, all the twelve tribes could not be ranged under the particular banner of the tribe of Judah. Thenius thinks that the two lions next the throne were "rather the guardians of it," and the twelve others on the steps represented "the power of the twelve tribes united in one throne." But the lion is never mentioned as "keeping watch," and moreover, the signification of those beside the throne could not differ from that of those before and below it. All nations have, from time immemorial, regarded the lion as the king of beasts (*cf.* the numerous passages of the ancients on this subject, in Bochart, *Hieroz.* I. ii. 1), and is therefore a fitting symbol of monarchy, which consists in "reigning and ruling" (see above on chap. iii. 9). The lion "is the strongest among beasts" (Prov. xxx. 30, 31), and his roaring announces the coming of judgment (Am. iii. 8; i. 2; Rev. x. 3). The two lions at the right and left of the king as he sat on the throne, denote his twofold office of governing and judging. If, then, the entire people are symbolized by the twelve lions, the meaning must be that Israel was the royal people among nations; just as the twelve oxen that bare up the molten sea signified that Israel was the nation of priests (see above in chap. vii. 25). The people chosen by God from among all people are a nation of kings and priests (Ex. xix. 6; Rev. i. 6; v. 10); just as it culminates, as a priestly nation, in the high-priest, so it does also, as a royal one, in its king. Here we think involuntarily of the throne of Him who is both lamb and lion (Rev. v. 5, 6), who is the Prince of earthly kings, and has made us kings and priests to His Father, God (Rev. i. 6; v. 6; vii. 10, 17). His people number twelve times twelve thousand (=144,000), and these are represented by the twice twelve of the elders who stand before his throne (Rev. iv. 4, 10; vii. 4; xiv. 1).

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

Ver. 14. (*a*) *The glory of Solomon.* Wherein it lay (Power, dominion, pomp, splendor, glory, and honor, everything that men wish or desire in this world—all these we see before us in the life of this one man. But the glory of man is as the grass of the field, which fades and withers; truly, the lilies of the field exceed it in glory, for even, &c.—and Solomon himself confessed: All is vanity; I have seen all the works, &c., Eccles. i. 2; ii. 11; Ps. xlix. 17, 18. The world passes away, &c.). (*b*) Its significance for us (that we should seek after that other and imperishable glory, prepared for us by him who is greater than Solomon, Jno. xvii. 24. Scarcely one of many thousands can attain to the glory of Solomon, but to the glory of God we are all called, 1 Thess. ii. 12; if our life be hidden with Christ in God, then "shall we when Christ," &c., Col. iii. 3, 4. Therefore shall we rejoice in the hope of future glory, and not only so, but in tribulations also (Rom. v. 2, 3) for our "light affliction, which is but for a moment," &c., 2 Cor. iv. 17, 18). —*Power and dominion.* (*a*) The responsibility involved therein ("to whom much is given, of him shall much be required, and to whom men," &c., Luke xii. 48; singular endowments bring with them singular requirements—authority is power given for the use and benefit of inferiors—wealth is bestowed upon the rich that they may relieve necessity according to their means). (*b*) The perils connected with it (pride and haughtiness, forgetfulness of God, and unbelief), Ps. lxii. 11; lii. 9; 1 Tim. vi. 9; Matt. xvi. 26. Therefore envy not the rich and powerful, for they are exposed to many temptations. But godliness with contentment, &c., 1 Tim. vi. 6. WÜRT. SUMM.: Devout Christians may have and hold gold and silver, lands and possessions, cattle, in short everything, and with a good conscience, if only they do not misuse them by idle pomp or for the oppression of their fellow-creatures; for they are gifts and favors of God, which he lends them. The silver and the gold is mine, saith the Lord of hosts (Haggai ii. 8; Ps. l. 10). The throne of Solomon, stately and magnificent as it was, is long since crumbled to dust, but His Throne, before whose judgment-seat we must all appear, endures to all eternity.—The man to whom God has given great wealth and high position in the world may indeed dwell in splendor; but every man sins whose expenses exceed his income, or are greater than his position in the world requires. Golden vessels are not necessaries of life, nor do they conduce to greater happiness or content than do earthen and wooden ones. It is the duty and right of a prince to bring an armed force to the defence of the country against her enemies, but prince and people must ever remember what the mighty Solomon himself says: "The horse is prepared against the day of battle, but safety is of the Lord (Prov. xxi. 31; *cf.* Ps. xxxiii. 16–19; Is. xxxi. 1).

FIFTH SECTION.

SOLOMON'S FALL AND END.

CHAP. XI.

A.—*The unfaithfulness towards the Lord and its punishment.*

CHAP. XI. 1-13.

1 BUT king Solomon loved[1] many strange [*i. e.* foreign] women, together with
the daughter of Pharaoh,[2] women of the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Zi-
2 donians, *and* Hittites; of the nations *concerning* which the Lord said unto the
children of Israel, Ye shall not go in to them, neither shall they come in unto
you: *for* surely they will turn away your heart after their gods: Solomon
3 clave unto these in love. And he had seven hundred wives, princesses, and
4 three hundred concubines; and his wives turned away his heart. For it came
to pass, when Solomon was old, *that* his wives turned away his heart after other
gods[3]: and his heart was not perfect with the Lord [Jehovah] his God, as *was*
5 the heart of David his father. For Solomon went after[4] Ashtoreth the goddess
6 of the Zidonians, and after Milcom the abomination of the Ammonites. And
Solomon did evil in the sight of the Lord [Jehovah], and went not fully after
7 the Lord [Jehovah], as *did* David his father. Then did Solomon build an high
place for Chemosh, the abomination of Moab, in the hill that *is* before Jerusalem,
8 and for Molech, the abomination of the children of Ammon. And likewise did
he for all his strange [*i. e.* foreign] wives, which burnt incense and sacrificed
unto their gods.
9 And the Lord [Jehovah] was angry with Solomon, because his heart was
turned from the Lord [Jehovah] God of Israel, which had appeared unto him
10 twice, and had commanded him concerning this thing, that he should not go
after other gods: but he kept not that which the Lord [Jehovah] commanded.
11 Wherefore the Lord [Jehovah] said unto Solomon, Forasmuch as this is done
of thee, and thou hast not kept my covenant and my statutes, which I have
commanded thee, I will surely rend the kingdom from thee, and will give it to
12 thy servant. Notwithstanding in thy days I will not do it for David thy father's
13 sake: *but* I will rend it out of the hand of thy son. Howbeit, I will not rend
away all the kingdom; *but* will give one tribe[5] to thy son for David my ser-
vant's sake, and for Jerusalem's sake which I have chosen.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

[1] Ver. 1.—[The Sept. renders here *ἦν φιλογύνης*, which is not borne out by the character of Solomon, as is pointed out in the Exeg. Com. Immediately after this the Vat. Sept. introduces ver. 3, transposed from its place, but omits its last clause altogether.

[2] Ver. 1.—[All the ancient versions class Pharaoh's daughter among the "strange wives," which sense our author, as also Keil rejects. See Exeg. Com.

[3] Ver. 4.—[The Vat. Sept. omits the middle clause of ver. 4, and mixes together vers. 6–8, omitting much of them.

[4] Ver. 5.—[Notwithstanding the arguments in the Exeg. Com. against the personal idolatry of Solomon, it is to be remembered that the phrase הָלַךְ אַחֲרֵי אֱלֹהִים אֲחֵרִים, to go after other gods (vers. 4, 5, 10) is one already established as far back as the Pentateuch as an expression of idolatry.

[5] Ver. 13.—[For one tribe the Sept. have *σκῆπτρον ἕν*, which is, however, probably to be understood in the same sense.—*F. G.*]

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

Vers. 1–2. **But king Solomon loved,** &c. With these words a new and very essential part of the history of Solomon begins; they do not break the thread of the story abruptly, but stand in a connection with the preceding, to be well considered. Our writer evidently had in his mind the command given to kings in Deut. xvii. in which, vers. 16 and 17, it is said: "but he shall not multiply horses to himself, nor cause the people to return to Egypt, to the end that he should multiply horses . . . . neither shall he multiply wives to himself, that his heart turn not away; neither shall he greatly multiply to himself silver and gold." The great riches in silver and gold were mentioned in the preceding section, chap. x. 14–29, and also, finally, the number of horses brought out of Egypt; and mention of the many strange wives immediately follows. If there were danger of turning away from the strict and serious religion of Jehovah connected with the enormous riches, the luxury and splendor of the court, this was much more the case with the large harem. Solomon did not withstand this last danger; what was foreseen in the laws for the kings happened: "his heart was turned away." What we learn from the connection of these two sections is very important: namely, that it was not vulgar, coarse sensuality that gave rise to such a large harem, but the reason was rather, that as Solomon grew in riches, esteem, and power, excelling all other kings in these (chap. x. 23), he wished also to surpass them in what, according to Eastern ideas, even in the present day, especially belonged to the court and splendor of a great monarch; that is, the largest possible harem. But this was the occasion of his fall. It is therefore very arbitrary of the Sept. to describe אָהַב ver. 1 by *ἦν φιλογύναιος καὶ ἔλαβε γυναῖκας ἀλλοτρίας*, and quite wide of the mark in Thenius, who, explaining this for the original reading, says that Solomon was an "enervated slave to his senses." Were this the case, traces of it would have been apparent earlier; but we do not hear, respecting Solomon, the slightest intimation of any previous sexual irregularity; he did not succumb to the influence of his many wives until he had become advanced in years (ver. 4), and had reached the summit of his prosperity and power. For his marriage with the Egyptian, see above on chap. iii. 1; she did not rank among the other strange women, *i. e.*, those whom it was forbidden in the law to marry, as ver. 2 expressly remarks (*cf.* Ex. xxxiv. 16; Deut. vii. 3, 4; Josh. xxiii. 12). It was only through them that strange worship, the Asiatic, was introduced into the land; but there is not the slightest trace of Egyptian worship. The Moabites dwelt east of the Dead Sea, the Ammonites were north of them, and the Edomites south; but the Zidonians and Hittites lived north of Palestine, where Phœnician worship prevailed. *Cf.* Deut. xxiii. 4; Ezra ix. 12; Neh. xiii. 23.

Ver. 3. **And he had seven hundred wives,** &c. Ver. 3. שָׂרוֹת means princesses, women of the first rank; not those who received rank by entrance into the harem, but those who were of noble families. The great number of these women, with all of whom it was not possible for Solomon (now elderly) to hold sexual intercourse, but especially their high rank, shows the reason they were maintained; seven hundred from the noblest princely houses of foreign nations served to add the greatest splendor to the court. Many think it probable that the majority of these wives, although they all were in subjection to him, served rather as singers and dancers to amuse the old and feeble king (Stollberg, Lisco). The opinion is entirely wrong, that (according to Eccle. iv. 8) Solomon was "guided by a theological idea, and intended to furnish a symbolical representation of the kingdom of Christ, and his dominion over all nations" (*Evgl. Kirch.-Zeitg.* 1862, *s.* 691). The numbers 700 and 300 may be only "round, *i. e.*, approximate" ones (Keil), but are not therefore necessarily exaggerated or false. Ecclès. vi. 8 has been quoted in opposition to them: "sixty are the queens, and eighty are the concubines, and innumerable are the virgins," and in order to reconcile the two passages, the supposition is thrown out, that 60 and 80 were the number in the court at one time, and 700 and 300 the number of all the women at the court during Solomon's reign (Ewald, Keil). This Thenius, with some reason, declares to be a "subterfuge;" but when he asserts that the statement in the Canticles is "historically founded," and on the other hand, regards our own statement "as an evidence of the legendary character of the entire section," we answer that Canticles is not historical but is poetic, and cannot be adduced as testimony against our historical books. Finally, the supposition to which Keil inclines, that there may be errors in the numeral-letters (ש=300 instead of פ=80), rests evidently in the consideration that the numbers 700 and 300 appear too large. But this difficulty ceases when we compare our own with other accounts of the harems of Eastern rulers. Curtius relates (III. iii. 24) that Darius Codomanus, on his expedition against Alexander, carried 300 *pellices* with him. Public accounts state that the harem of the present Turkish Sultan contains 1,300 women. The *Augsb. Allg. Zeitung* of 1862, No. 181, says "that the mother of the Taiping, emperor in Nankin, is the head of her son's harem, a great establishment containing 3,000 women," whom the same "lady" has to keep in order. Magelhäus gives the same number, and adds that the emperor had never seen some of them in his life. "The travellers of the seventeenth century reported the number of the wives of the Great Mogul to have been 1,000" (Philippson). In Malcom's history of Persia it is stated that king Kosros had 5,000 horses, 1,200 elephants, and 12,000 wives; this may be greatly exaggerated, but shows the notions that were entertained about the state which a great ruler should maintain. *Cf.* also other instances in Rosenmüller, *Altes und Neues Morgenland*, III. *s.* 181. The evident intention of the narrator is, not to picture these rulers as brutal sensualists, but, on the contrary, to add to their fame. An immense harem is held in the East to be as requisite to a splendid court as a large stud.

Ver. 4. **For it came to pass when Solomon was old, ... after other gods,** &c. By old age is not meant the time "when the flesh obtained mastery over the spirit" (Keil)—sensuality never first begins with old age—but the time when, in consequence of luxury and indulgence, the energy of spirit and heart deserted him, and a relaxing took possession of him more and more. Then first

it happened that the many foreign, well-conditioned women succeeded in turning away Solomon's heart, *i. e.*, in reducing his tone, making him indifferent towards the strict and exclusive religion of Jehovah, and milder and more indulgent towards the worship of their gods, yea, so to insnare him that he favored the latter by the building of altars to idols. When the text adds, *and his heart was not* (any longer) *perfect* (שָׁלֵם=complete) *with the Lord his God*, it says thereby as clearly, as positively, that he did not completely fall away from Jehovah's service, but that he permitted the idolatrous worship of his wives besides. The formula, **he did evil in the sight of the Lord,** is used in speaking of every one who broke the commandment in Ex. xx. 3, 4, because this is the first and supremest will of God. To avoid any misunderstanding, ver. 6 repeats, *he went not fully* (מִלֵּא sc. לָלֶכֶת, as in Num. xiv. 24; xxxii. 11, 12; Deut. i. 36) *after the Lord* (Jehovah). It is therefore difficult to conceive why it is so often asserted that Solomon formally departed from Jehovah, and became an idolater (Thenius, Duncker, Menzel, and others). All the kings of Judah or of Israel who were idolatrous are said to have served (עָבַד) strange gods (*cf.* chap. xvi. 31; xxii. 54; 2 Kings xvi. 3; xxi. 2–6; xxi. 20–22), but this expression is never applied to Solomon either here or elsewhere. Chronicles is never silent in respect of the kings in Judah, when any one of them served idols (2 Chron. xxviii. 2, 3; xxxii. 2 *sq.*; xxxiii. 22; xxxvi. 8), yet it says nothing of Solomon in this respect; but this is inconceivable, were it true that he had wholly forsaken Jehovah, and turned to idolatry. Jesus Sirach complains indeed (chap. xlvii. 12–23) that the great Solomon succumbed to the influence of his wives, but does not say a word of his idolatry. All the Jewish traditions, the Talmud, and the Rabbins (Ghemara Schabb. lvi. 2) know nothing of the idolatry of Solomon. Had he himself, as well as his wives, formally worshipped idols, he would have fallen far deeper than Jeroboam, who only made images to represent Jehovah; and his sin would have been far greater than "the sin of Jeroboam," which is so often alluded to in these books, while there is no mention of the idolatry Solomon is accused of. The statement of the unreliable Josephus (*Antiq.* viii. 7, 5) about Solomon's idol-worship is just as much to be credited as his statement that he was ninety-four years of age, and that he broke the law of Moses in placing twelve oxen around the molten sea, and the twelve lions near the throne. We cannot even admit that Solomon held idolatrous worship *along with* Jehovah's worship (Winer), nor that his fall "consisted in a syncretistic mixture of Jehovah-worship and idol-worship" (Keil), for in so doing he would have placed Jehovah on a level with idols, whereas the very nature of Jehovah's service is the sole and exclusive worship of Him. The לֹא ... שָׁלֵם and לֹא מִלֵּא vers. 4 and 6 does not say: he served Jehovah and the idols both, but: he was no longer wholly and completely with Jehovah; and this is made clear in that he allowed his strange wives to observe idolatrous service in the city which the Lord had chosen to put His name there, and even went so far as to favor it by the building of "high-places" (ver. 36; chap. viii. 16; xiv. 21; 2 Chron. vi. 6). So Hess (*Gesch. Salomo's, s.* 436), and recently Vilmar (*Pastoral-theol. Blätter*, 1861, *s.* 179); Ewald also (*Gesch. Isr.* III. *s.* 378 *sq.*) says: "there is no evidence from ancient documents that Solomon ever left the religion of Jahve, even in his extreme old age, or sacrificed with his own hands to heathen deities; but, on the contrary, all historical evidences of his times are against the idea. Besides, we find it is expressly mentioned that he sacrificed upon the altar of Jahve, built by him, three times a year (according to the order of the three great festivals) with the greatest solemnity, as befitted a king such as he was" (chap. ix. 25). *Cf.* below on ver. 9 *sq.*

Vers. 5–8. **Solomon went after Ashtoreth,** &c. The וַיֵּלֶךְ, &c., ver. 5, means that he served these gods, personally, no more than יִבְנֶה in ver. 7 which follows, means that he built, with his own hands, high-places for the heathen gods; but he allowed it, permitted it to be done. Ver. 8 adds expressly, "and likewise did he (*i. e.*, he built high-places, ver. 7) for all his strange wives, which burnt incense and sacrificed unto their gods." This plainly shows that he did not build the heights for himself and his people, and that he did not burn incense, nor sacrifice on them, but that his strange wives did. He allowed public worship to all, whatsoever divinities they might adore, but did not himself renounce Jehovah-worship. Diestel (in Herzog's *Real-Encyklop.* XIII. *s.* 337) grants that Solomon did not wholly go over into idolatry, but thinks that there is as little question that there was more than mere tolerance. The religious consciousness of the Israelite could not (he thinks) get rid of the idea that certain peculiar powers ruled other nations, dependent indeed upon Jehovah, and a limited service devoted to these foreign inferior gods did not consequently annul the service of the all-ruling Jehovah. This artificial view, in which Niemeyer joins, is contradicted decisively by the fact that the so-called "inferior gods" are mentioned as שִׁקֻּץ, abomination (vers. 5, 7), תּוֹעֵבָה abomination (2 Kings xxiii. 13), הֲבָלִים vanity (Jer. ii. 5) and גִּלּוּלִים, stercora (Deut. xxix. 17), which would not have been possible had "the greatest sympathies" existed "in Israel" for these gods as really "superior beings." We need not stop to refute the frivolous assertion of Menzel (*Staat- und Rel.-Geschichte der Königreiche Israel und Juda, s.* 142), that our author, who was devoted to Jehovah's service, preferred to place the king in an unfavorable light rather than to let it be known how long the strange worship had existed among the people, and in which they took part. For the divinities named in vers. 5 and 7, *cf.* Movers, *Relig. der Phönizier, s.* 560–584, 602–608; Keil, *bibl. Archäologie* I. *s.* 442 *sq.*; Winer, *R.-W.-B.* under the appropriate names. *Ashtoreth* is the highest of the Phœnician (Sidonian) and Syrian female deities, and a personification of the feminine principle in nature. Her form is differently represented, sometimes with a bull's or woman's head with horns (crescents), sometimes as a fish (symbol of the watery element). She was specially adored by women; her worship, which is not exactly known, was most probably associated

with indecency. *Cf.* especially Cassel, in the *Bibelwerk*, on Judges ii. 13. *Milcom* is said to be the chief god of the Ammonites, in ver. 33, and 2 Kings xxiii. 13; 2 Sam. xii. 30; Jerem. xlix. 1, 3; there is no accurate description of his nature or worship. As Moloch is immediately after (ver. 7) said to be the god of the Ammonites, and the two names (מלכם and מלך) are closely related to each other, it is very reasonable to suppose they were different names for the same divinity. The translations also confuse them; the Sept., vers. 5 and 7, gives Μελχὼμ, the Vulg. gives *Moloch* twice; but in 2 Kings xxiii. 13 the former renders Milchom by Μόλοχ, and the latter by *Melchom*. Thenius therefore reads ומלכם in ver. 7 instead of ומלך, but there is no reason for doing so. Keil and Ewald agree with Movers in holding Milchom and Moloch to be different deities, partly because of the different names, and partly because 2 Kings xxiii. 10 and 13 mention that they had different places of sacrifice, and that Moloch was always named in connection with sacrifices of children. Winer, however, justly remarks that each, though not essentially different, had different attributes, and had therefore various altar-places in one and the same town. As for the rest, Molech or Moloch was the divinity which was known and adored throughout Anterior Asia, whose image, according to the Rabbins, was made of brass, with the head of an ox and human arms, in which the children offered were laid. Movers thinks he was the same in part as Saturn or Chronos, and in part the same as Baal the sun-god (*cf. s.* 322 *sq.*). There were certainly no child-sacrifices at Jerusalem in Solomon's time; they were first offered under Ahaz (2 Kings xvi. 3). *Chemosh* or *Chamosh* was the war-and-fire-god, according to Movers; Num. xxi. 9, Jerem. xlviii. 46 call the Moabites the people of Chemosh. That this was the divinity to whom the Moabite king offered his son, 2 Kings iii. 27, is only a matter of conjecture. At any rate, the character of the latter deity seems very similar to that of Milchom or Molech of the Ammonites, as it (the former) appears, in Judges xi. 24, to be the god of the Ammonites; *cf.* Cassel on this passage. We have no exact accounts of them. For the "heights," see above on chap. iii. 4; for the places where they were built, see on 2 Kings xxiii. 13.

Vers. 9–13. **And the Lord was angry.** Solomon, by his conduct, excited the extremest divine displeasure, and deserved punishment the more, as he had been so richly blessed in every respect by Jehovah, and had even been earnestly and emphatically warned in a peculiar vision against leaning towards other gods (chap. iii. 5 *sq.*; ix. 1 *sq.*). The announcement of the subsequent chastisement did not follow in another direct revelation, but was no doubt conveyed by a prophet, who, as Nathan was no longer living, must have been Ahijah the Shilonite (ver. 29). It is well worthy of notice that, in this announcement, the oppression of the people by compulsory labor, and taxes, or despotism, is not given as the reason of the dividing of the kingdom by Jehovah, and of limiting Solomon's dynasty to dominion over one tribe; but only the sin against Jehovah, the "going after other gods." It was just the same in Ahijah's address to Jeroboam, vers. 29–39. For *one tribe* (ver. 13) see on vers. 31, 32. **For David's sake,** *i. e.*, on account of the promise given, for his unchanging fidelity to Jehovah (2 Sam. xvii. 12 *sq.*). *Cf.* that on chap. viii. 15 *sq.* We are not told what impression the prophecy made on Solomon, but we may just for this reason conclude that it was not such as Nathan's discourse made on David (2 Sam. xii. 13).

HISTORICAL AND ETHICAL.

1. *The turn* which, with the events described in the section before us, the reign of Solomon takes, is of the weightiest moment, because it exercised the most wide-spread and lasting influence upon the whole history of Israel: for its immediate result was the rending of the kingdom, which was the beginning of the end. "The happiness to be the most favored people on the earth under a wise king—this happiness which Israel could, as it were, be shown from afar for a brief space, was itself the source of its wretchedness. Wisdom as well as wealth and power were intrusted to a sinful man, who could not keep himself erect upon this dizzy height. Hence this kingdom of peace and of prosperity should be, even in its fall, both a warning example and also a type of the kingdom which, through another, was to bring the blessings of salvation to men which Solomon's reign signified in earthly symbols" (Von Gerlach). "Just in the period of the highest perfection of the worldly kingdom, the insufficiency thereof to satisfy the higher expectations and hopes, the complete faultiness cleaving to it, and the incapacity to meet the deepest needs of the spirit by sensuous splendor and earthly exhibition of power, must, for the first time, have dawned upon the consciousness" (Eisenlohr, *das Volk Isr.* II. *s.* 119).

2. *The change which overtook Solomon in his extreme old age* would be an insoluble psychological riddle if it consisted in his abandonment of the service of Jehovah, and his yielding to the idol-worship practised by his wives. It is impossible that a man who had been brought up in the fear of Jehovah, and had declared this to be the beginning of all wisdom, who up to the fulness of his age had an unclouded and undisturbed knowledge of the one living God, as is shown in the discourse and prayer at the dedication of the temple (chap. viii.), that a man who shone forth upon all sides as light amid the darkness, and throughout the whole Orient was regarded as a living symbol of wisdom (chap. iv. 30; ix. 24), should in his still riper age have fallen into a most gross superstition, and abandoned himself to the crudest, most senseless, and immoral of all forms of worship, namely, that of the Canaanites and the peoples of anterior Asia. We look in vain through all Scripture for an example in the remotest degree like it. Recognizing this, those critics of late, who think that idolatry is actually charged upon Solomon in our text, have adopted the notion, either that the accounts respecting his wisdom and his knowledge of God are false, that in fact he had always before this been given over to idolatry (Gramberg, Vatke, and others)—a view striking all history in the face, and hence needing no refutation—or inversely, that our account about Solomon's idolatry is inaccurate, and rests first upon the later "deuteronomistic elaborators of the history" who misunderstood and represented the facts falsely (Ewald, Eisenlohr, and others), an assumption which is violent and arbitrary, but which, to be sure, is the most convenient way of solving the problem. By

the correct interpretation of the text, according to which Solomon did not himself practise idolatry, but allowed his wives the exercise of public idol-worship, indeed favored it, the difficulty disappears. It is not indeed an unusual psychological phenomenon that a man highly gifted, standing upon a lofty eminence of knowledge and wisdom, decided in his moral and religious principles, should lose, in his old age, in consequence of various influences and relations, and of some especial fortunes of his life, the energy of his spirit and will, or, without abandoning precisely his past convictions, should resign them in respect of decisiveness and exclusiveness, so that towards what he had once regarded as error and had zealously combated it as such, he becomes tolerant and, as it were, indifferent, especially when he hopes thereby to attain ends otherwise pursued by him, as this was the case with Solomon, as we shall see, who therefore furnishes a warning and instructive example in history.

3. *The formal allowance and patronage of different idolatries*, especially in the place where the central Jehovah-sanctuary of the whole people stood, was, upon the part of the king, an actual equalization of the same with the Jehovah-worship; an official declaration of the equal authorization of idol-worship with the service of the one, true, living God who is the God of Israel. But thereby the first and supreme command of the Israelitish law, *i. e.*, of the Covenant (Exod. xx. 2), was directly transgressed, and indeed set aside. The people Israel were chosen by God to be the upholders of the knowledge of the one God, and thereby to act for the healing of all nations. To this end it was necessary that as a people they should "be separated" from all peoples (Lev. xx. 24; 1 Kings viii. 53): participation in the election and in the covenant was made continual through obedience upon the part of the people, and also through race-derivation. Jehovah's kingdom and the people's hence coincide, the religion with the nation, and they stand and fall together. Permission, reception, and introduction of any heathen religion or of different idolatrous worships was not merely an assault upon the religious conviction of individuals, but was also an undermining of the national being inseparably connected therewith. The exclusiveness of the Jehovah-cultus was for the people, in their peculiar life, an absolute necessity. To set aside or remove it was to threaten the existence of this peculiar estate, and to deny its world-historical distinction. If Solomon himself neither offered incense nor sacrificed unto idols, he did yet nothing less than attack the foundations of the kingdom; he brought into the unity of the Israelitish public life the germ of dissolution, and threatened to destroy the covenant and God's plan of salvation. To this extent his conduct and undertaking must be characterized as a real falling away.

4. *The text gives only, as the immediate occasion of this falling away of Solomon, his love for his many foreign wives.* We have already remarked, in respect of these high-bred dames from all the neighboring countries, that reference was had to the splendor of the court rather than to the gratification of a common, ungovernable lust. From their youth accustomed to their sensuous, more or less unchaste worship, they were more reluctant to abandon it as the earnest and severe Jehovah-cultus could not please them. What was more natural than the effort to induce the king, advancing in years, that he would permit them to observe their own native religious rites, and would make the regulations necessary therefor, by means of which his kingdom might become a sort of assembly-place for all religions, and acquire additional splendor and glory? This indeed they succeeded in, but not in the way of gross sensuality.—Niemeyer remarks with great pertinence (*Charakteristik der Bib.* IV. *s.* 487): "We do not find that Solomon gave the strength of his youth to women, and went the way which destroys kings (Prov. xxxi. 3). But even because he did not indulge so much in sensual enjoyment, the more refined voluptuousness became for him the more dangerous: that adhesion of the spirit, that secret enravishment of heart which, unobserved, breaks up the entire independence of the man, and, before he is aware of it, makes him the helpless slave of the woman. It begins far more innocently than that which we call crime, properly speaking, but it leaves behind it usually more melancholy ruins in the soul than the other. In like manner also, Vilmar observes (*s.* 180), it is not so much coarse sensuality as rather 'psychical bondage to the female sex' which wrought the fall of Solomon." Psychical polygamy dissipates, pulls to pieces, and wastes irresistibly the core of the human soul. . . . At a certain stage of "culture," in the intercourse between a man and woman, coarse sensuality by no means prevails, but the psychical pleasure in the woman, and the psychical abandonment to the woman, the desire of the eye, and the desire of the eye for the sex as such, and not for an individual woman." The surroundings or relations were singularly fitted to awaken that kind of spiritual condition and to impart nourishment to it. The long peace, broken neither by war nor other calamity, the great wealth, the extensive trade, the abundance, by these means, of all objects of luxury possible, the voluptuous court-life in consequence, everything conspired to bring about a relaxation; and this was the soil upon which the numerous strange women could carry out their nature without hindrance. It is very probable that Solomon allowed himself to be governed by the political considerations "to give to the strangers flocking to Jerusalem an opportunity for the exercise of their own worship, and make his residence the desirable centre for the commercial peoples of Anterior Asia" (Bertheau, *Zur Gesch. der Israel.*, *s.* 323). Like the crowded, brilliant harem itself, so the secured freedom of worship must needs increase the authority and glory of the great king. But always his polygamy is and must remain the first and chief cause of his downfall; this, as Ewald remarks (*Gesch. Isr.* III. *s.* 215) strikingly, concerning David's adultery, is the "inexhaustible source of evils without number. . . . Here is concealed an inextricable coil of the direst evils, of which scarcely is one put out of the way, when two, three others start up, and each is enough to destroy the peace of an entire kingdom." So long as this evil, "which the whole ancient world did not sufficiently regard as an evil," remained, "the kingdom in Israel was therewith exposed to the same convulsions to which all polygamous kingdoms are to this day exposed: and consequently, in his earliest bloom we see arise in Israel the germ of its destruction, which sooner or later can combine with other causes of dissolution. The evils in the house of David introduced by Amnon, Absalom, and

Adonijah . . . all hang together with the fundamental evil once brought out; many evils also amongst his successors are fastened to the same thread." Although Mosaism even in the history of creation represents Monogamy as the original relation ordained by God Himself, nevertheless polygamy was so deeply rooted in the habits of all peoples, that the strict law-giver was not able to uproot it, but sought, by various limitations, to make it difficult (Deut. xxi. 15 *sq.;* Exod. xxi. 9 *sq. Cf.* Winer, *R.-W.-B.* II. *s.* 662). It was expressly forbidden to a king to have many wives (Deut. xvii. 17), because the dangers which inhered in polygamy were doubly great, and could become dangerous for the whole realm, as Solomon's example conspicuously shows. The temptation was especially great with kings, because a large harem, according to the custom then prevalent, belonged to a royal state. It is, nevertheless, and remains a shadow resting upon the Old Covenant, and under it the sanctity of marriage was not properly understood and secured. Christendom was the first to make holy the band of matrimony. Without taking away the subordination of the woman, which is grounded in nature (Lev. iii. 16), it has given to her her rightful place (Gal. iii. 28), and thereby, in that it represents the relation of Christ to His Church as the examplar of marriage, it sets forth, as a principle, monogamy as the only form and order of the sexual relation (Eph. v. 22–33).

5. *What now, in recent times,* has been set forth as the proximate and co-operating cause or as the chief cause of the fall of Solomon, appears, upon closer examination, untenable. They who are of the opinion that Solomon indeed did not abandon the worship of Jehovah, but worshipped, besides Jehovah, heathen deities also, suppose that he reached this syncretism in the way of comparative reflection. Thus Niemeyer remarks (*s.* 493): "He knew well enough that these wooden and brazen images are nothing, but in them he paid honor to the spirits to whom the Highest, the Unattainable, the Unknowable had intrusted the rulership of the world. The more assuredly that this idea is derived from an oriental source, the more probable is it that Solomon believed that he could find therein the solution of his doubt whether the Creator of the world occupied Himself with what was insignificant, and with the destiny of each particular people." The love for his foreign wives brought him to the pass of "denying his convictions, which had been becoming enfeebled." Von Gerlach expresses himself to the same effect: "It is worthy of note that in respect of Solomon's wisdom, his knowledge of nature is expressly celebrated, and that this wisdom is compared with and placed above that of the Orient and of Egypt (chap. iv. 30 *sq.*). . . . It is easy to perceive that he made an attempt to blend the traditional world-knowledge of the East with the knowledge of the revealed God; that he allowed a certain independence to the powers of creation which he had represented in the figures of the Cherubim in the temple standing far below Jehovah, as His servants, and first tolerated the worship of them, and then in a certain degree himself took part therein." This whole conception rests upon the erroneous presupposition that Solomon had actually burnt incense and had sacrificed to idols (besides to Jehovah), and it disappears with it. The historical text knows nothing at all of Solomon's being misled to idolatry by his own reflection and by the blending of his wisdom with that of the East: it knows no other reason for his toleration of idolatry than that his strange wives "turned away his heart." Lastly, neither in the historical books nor in the writings attributed to Solomon is there the slightest trace of the thought that idols were real living creative-powers, and subordinate deities serving Jehovah. It is a question whether such a view of the relation of Jehovah to gods of the heathen ever obtained in Israel. Certainly this was not the case in Solomon's time, and the later prophets had no occasion to resist this opinion.—Ewald has set forth another view (as above, *s.* xiii. 368, 379 *sq.*). He finds the reason in the direction begun in Solomon's kingdom, and so full of results to the whole history of Israel in the "violence" which cleaved to the kingdom naturally, by virtue of which he sought to make everything depend upon himself and to extend his power to every phase of life—in fact, in political absolutism. The kingdom of Israel, under Solomon, felt the strongest tendency to become a thorough kingdom of the world; but in such a kingdom the toleration of different religions is inevitable. But as this toleration was as yet strange, "so the sheer royal authority introduced the innovation," which to many of strict sentiments was abhorrent. This view has less even in its favor than the preceding. It rests upon an entirely false modern political view of monarchy in general, and of the Israelitish in particular. That which the only historical source in our possession gives as the chief occasion of Solomon's turning is set wholly aside, and in its place something is advanced, of which not a word is said. Neither the announcement of the punishment (vers. 9–12), nor the prophecy of Ahijah to Jeroboam (ver. 31 *sq.*), gives in the remotest degree, as the ground of the division of the kingdom, "violence," *i. e.*, excess of the royal authority, but only Solomon's want of fidelity to Jehovah occasioned through his wives. A world-kingdom, to convert Israel into which, Solomon is supposed to have had the tendency, is established only by means of military conquests, as the history of the world shows. Thus the great Roman power began, yet it ceased with the freedom of all (kinds of) worship. Solomon was "a man of rest" and of peace (1 Chron. xxii. 9), who did not extend the limits of the kingdom, but sought to keep and hold those only as they were under David. He meditated no world-power, and least of all to bring it to pass by the toleration of all religions.

6. *The announcement of the divine punishment* gives, what is well to notice, as the ground thereof, not any sinful passion or any immoral act, not even the possession of many wives or unbridled lust, but only that Solomon had permitted and favored idolatrous worship, and in this had not observed the covenant and the commands of Jehovah. David sinned grievously in the matter of Bathsheba, but his procedure was still simply the immoral act of an individual in relation with an individual. Solomon's deed, on the other hand, concerned the foundations of the theocracy. It was the setting aside and the destruction of the divine law upon which the whole kingdom, the existence of Israel as a people distinct from all heathen peoples, its world-historical destiny, rested. For a king of Israel, whose calling consisted, especially in this, to be a servant of Jehovah, the true king

of Israel, and as such before all things to maintain thoroughly the Covenant, there could be no heavier announcement. In the case of Solomon, moreover, Jehovah had vouchsafed to him special revelations, had answered all his prayers, and had made him the most favored, the richest, and most fortunate king of that time. From the theocratic point of view, the punishment itself, the division of the kingdom and the limitation of the dynasty of Solomon to the tribes Judah and Benjamin, appears even merciful, for in reality Solomon had rendered himself completely unworthy of the theocratic kingdom. For the rest, the punishment corresponded with the offence in so far as it brought to fruit and maturity the germ of the destruction of the kingdom which Solomon by his conduct had planted and tended. And it is true here also that what a man soweth that shall he reap. Solomon, befooled by his wives, believed that he could become still greater by transgression of the Covenant, and that he would make his kingdom more conspicuous and glorious; but this same transgression laid the foundation of irreparable breach and final ruin. From the modern liberalistic point of view Solomon's act has been judged differently. So Ewald says (*s.* 380): "In that he allowed his wives to sacrifice to their deities was the best evidence of a general toleration of religion in his kingdom that he could furnish. In fact the act, a legal toleration of different religions in that early age of the wise Solomon was attempted—a toleration which the true religion must allow as soon as it recognizes its own being, and against which in our land to-day, this side the Niemen, the Jesuits alone are condemned to work. Certainly at that time the religion of Jahve was something too weak to stand alone by itself without any outward protection. . . . If only Solomon's rule had not become gradually distasteful to the popular feeling for other causes, who knows what might have been established in this age for the continuance of the new wisdom!" After his usual fashion, Eisenlohr has adopted this view (*s.* 115). With Solomon, says he, "we see in place of the purely hostile posture towards heathenism a friendly approximation, in many respects even a formal blending, and indeed this took shape in a very natural way. In a great kingdom consisting of diverse nationalities, room must be allowed for the most diverse forms of religion. . . . Every genuine, sound type of religion (*religiosität*), in so far as its element is freedom, the right of individual contemplation and elevation above stiff outward forms in the region of the spirit, carries within itself the germ for the scattering of every exclusive kind." That this way of viewing the subject is in direct contradiction with the biblical, scarcely needs mention. Were general religious toleration a work of wisdom, and the furtherance of true religion as soon as it recognizes its own being, Solomon, by his tolerance of the wild, immodest, and shameful Astarte-and-Moloch cultus, instead of the "wrath" of Jehovah and the punishment of the limitation of his kingdom to one tribe only, would have merited praise only, and the broader extension of his kingdom; and all the great prophets, an Elijah, Elisha, Jeremiah, Hosea, &c., who opposed the toleration of every idolatrous cultus, and were zealous for the exclusiveness of the Jehovah-cultus, should be considered as the "Jesuits" of the old world, who did not know the nature of true religion. Solomon would have then erred only in investing the religion of Israel with too much power, and in his zeal for progress, in anticipating general religious freedom. With incomparably more right, Vilmar has rendered an opposite judgment (*s.* 179 *sq.*). "We have here before us a type of the authorization of all forms of religion within a definite, limited divine sphere of life. . . . Solomon's ideal here is to let each man be saved *à sa façon* . . . the beginning of the (unlimited) "authorization of individuality"—this proposition is thoroughly subversive, belonging, in this form, to the last decades, in virtue of which church-bodies, States, peoples come to an end."

For the rest we need not look for New-Testament views in the Old Testament, nor for Old Testament views in the New. They are distinct economies. Christianity is not like the Mosaic, conditioned by bodily descent and bound up in a given race, and does not impose the obligation forcibly to suppress any other religion within its jurisdiction. It knows no other instrument of its continuance and of its spread than that of the Word, and of the conviction thereby wrought. But if no people can be without religion, and if this have the most decisive, profound influence upon the spiritual and moral formation of the people, then the political power cannot be indifferent in respect of all religions, and cannot simply consider them of equal authority in any relation. Of the Solomonic prototype there remains thus much for all times and peoples, that the introduction and authorization of all, even the most diverse religions and forms of worship within a nation, does not make the same strong, but weak, and carries with it the danger of its national and political division and destruction; for religious indifferentism is the death of all true patriotism, and is more destructive of a people than religious fanaticism.

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

Vers. 1–13. Solomon's fall. The beginning, vers. 1–4; the progress, vers. 5–8; the end, vers. 9–13.—M. Fr. Roos: Here we see plainly how a godly man may gradually fall into sin. He first allows himself too much liberty. He ventures into danger, and then perishes therein. . . . He who scorns danger, who by marriage and by a wilful intrusion upon certain positions exposes himself to it, or who even ventures in his daily course too much into the world, under the pretext of liberty; he who indulges in the lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life instead of enjoying with gratitude and moderation the gifts of God, such an one becomes the slave of sin, and falls under the wrath of God. The heart is first inclined, then wanders upon evil paths, and at last does openly what is displeasing to the Lord. At first we permit in others, through complaisance, sin, which we could and should have checked, and thus we actually assist ourselves to sin. Still we preserve our appearance of wisdom and godliness, and will not have it supposed that we have entirely deserted the Lord. But he whose heart is not wholly with the Lord his God, follows him not at all; he who follows him not wholly, follows him not at all; for "a man cannot serve two Masters." Vers. 1–8. The example given by the Bible in the case of Solomon. 1. What it teaches. (*a*) That for the sinful human heart, a constant outward prosperity is allied to spiritual dangers; for

what profiteth, &c., Matt. xvi. 26. Thus it is that trial and sorrow are often blessings for time and eternity, Heb. xii. 6–12. (*b*) That the most abundant knowledge, the highest education and wisdom are no protection against moral and religious short-comings. Wine and women make foolish the wise man (Ecclesiasticus xix. 2). No wise man commits a little folly, says an old proverb. Therefore, trust in the Lord, &c. (Prov. iii. 5–7). How it warns us. (*a*) Watch. If a Solomon can fall, a Solomon brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, and walking in the ways of God in old age, a Solomon, the wisest man of his time! how necessary is it for us all to watch. Without watching, the greatest wisdom may become foolishness, and the highest spiritual condition may end in the wrath and judgments of God. (*b*) Pray. In the great prosperity and delight of this life, Solomon forgot prayer, as he had so well practised it in earlier years (chaps. iii. and viii.). His wives did not elevate his heart, they debased it. Prayer alone holds watch, and is therefore most necessary in prosperity and success (Ps. lxxvi. 2; cxxxix. 23 *sq.*).—"Let him who stands take heed," &c. (1 Cor. x. 12). (*a*) Solomon did stand in the living knowledge of God, in faith, and in humility (chap. iii. 6; viii. 23), but (*b*) he looked not well to himself, he did not observe that the thorns of wealth and the pride of life were choking the good seeds in his heart, therefore he fell, broke his covenant with God, and was under the just judgment of God. Vers. 1–4. Christian marriage in contradistinction to pre-Christian marriage (see Hist. and Ethic. 4) *ss.* Denial of the existence of marriage as a divine ordinance (Mark x. 6–9) is the source of the greatest and weightiest evils. Solomon sinned in this wise: That, contrary to the Law, he not only took to himself many wives, but foreign, *i. e.*, heathen wives. —OSIANDER: Not without danger is it that a man takes a wife who is not of his own religion (1 Cor. vii. 16).—Lust of the eyes and the pride of life drowse the soul and cripple the will, gradually and imperceptibly influence the heart, so that it loses all sense of holy and earnest things, and all pleasure therein, and becomes stupid and indifferent to everything divine and noble.—A prince who allows himself to be advised and led by women in the affairs of his government, instead of guiding himself by the unchangeable law of God, destroys the prosperity of himself and his kingdom. Confidential intercourse and intimacy with those who know nothing of the living God, and of his word, but rather resist Him—those who well know how to flatter—this is a most perilous position for a God-fearing heart (Eccles. vii. 27).—Ver. 4. Even as in youth exuberance of life and strength opens the door to temptation, so likewise does the weakness of old age. But an old grey-haired sinner is much more abominable in the sight of the Lord than a youth. Therefore, pray ever: Forsake me not in my old age, &c. (Ps. lxxi. 9, 18). —There is no object worthier of compassion than the man who, having served the Lord, and kept the faith from his youth up, when old age has brought him near to his everlasting rest, turns his back upon it, and thus renders useless all his earlier struggles with sin and the world.—VILMAR: The sole condition under which, amid his natural weakness, an old man can maintain his spiritual strength, and guard his honor, is this: that "his heart is purely fixed upon God;" this condition failing, let a man's whole life be influenced by the opinions of others; influenced by such opinions without sharing them, yet still without combating them, then complete wantonness will take possession of his old age.

Vers. 5–8. Although Solomon did not himself practise idolatry, he permitted and encouraged it in others; but the receiver is as bad as the thief. That is the curse resting upon sin, that the very means by which men seek to raise themselves in the world's estimation become the very means for their destruction. By perverted compliance and long toleration, Solomon brought ruin and destruction upon himself and his people for centuries to come. All indulgence which is grounded upon indifference to truth, or founded upon lukewarmness, is not virtue but a heavy sin before God, how much soever it may resemble freedom and enlightenment. In a well-ordered Church and State establishment neither bigotry nor superstition should have equal rights with faith and truth. Where the gate is opened to them, or where they are patronized instead of being resisted, then both people and kingdom are going to meet their ruin (see *Ethical* 6). Vers. 9–13. The punishment that fell upon Solomon shows us (*a*) the holiness and righteousness of God (Ps. cxlv. 17; v. 5; Jerem. xvii. 10; Luke xii. 47). (*b*) His faithfulness and mercy (vers. 12, 13). He knows how to punish, so that His gracious promises remain firm (2 Tim. ii. 13; Rom. iii. 3).—God makes known to us His judgments through His Word, so that we may have time to repent and to turn unto Him (Ezek. xxxiii. 2).—If judgment fell especially upon Solomon, notwithstanding the fact that the Lord appeared to him twice in a dream, and he was honored with distinguished grace, what judgment must we expect, to whom He has appeared tenderly in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, &c. (1 Cor. i. 30; Heb. ii. 3; x. 29).—God knows how, in the proper time, to belittle him who abandons and forsakes the Lord and His cause, in order to become great and distinguished in the eyes of the world (Dan. iv. 34).

Solomon's Adversaries and Death.

B.—CHAPTER XI. 14-43.

14 And the Lord [Jehovah] stirred up an adversary unto Solomon, Hadad[1] the
15 Edomite: he *was* of the king's seed in Edom. For it came to pass, when David
was[2] in [with, i. e. at war with] Edom, and Joab the captain of the host was gone up
16 to bury the slain, after he had smitten every male in Edom; (for six months did
Joab remain there with all Israel [i. e., the host], until he had cut off every male in
17 Edom:) that Hadad fled, he and certain[3] Edomites of his father's servants
18 with him, to go into Egypt: Hadad *being* yet a little child. And they arose out
of Midian, and came to Paran: and they took men with them out of Paran, and
they came to Egypt, unto Pharaoh king of Egypt; which gave him a house, and
19 appointed him victuals, and gave him land. And Hadad found great favor in
the sight of Pharaoh, so that he gave him to wife the sister of his own wife, the
20 sister of Tahpenes the queen. And the sister of Tahpenes bare him Genubath
his son, whom Tahpenes weaned in Pharaoh's house: and Genubath was in Pha-
21 raoh's household among the sons of Pharaoh. And when Hadad heard in Egypt
that David slept with his fathers, and that Joab the captain of the host was dead,
Hadad said to Pharaoh, Let me depart, that I may go to mine own country.
22 Then Pharaoh said unto him, But what hast thou lacked with me, that, behold,
thou seekest to go to thine own country? And he answered, Nothing: howbeit,
let me go in any wise.
23 And God stirred him up *another* adversary, Rezon the son of Eliadah, which
24 fled from his lord Hadadezer king of Zobah: and he gathered men unto him, and
became captain over a band, when David slew them *of Zobah:* and they went to
25 Damascus, and dwelt therein, and reigned in Damascus. And he was an adver-
sary to Israel all the days of Solomon,[4] beside the mischief that Hadad *did:* and
he abhorred Israel, and reigned over Syria.
26 And Jeroboam the son of Nebat, an Ephrathite of Zereda, Solomon's servant,
whose mother's name *was* Zeruah, a widow woman, even he lifted up *his* hand
27 against the king. And this *was* the cause that he lifted up *his* hand against the
king: Solomon built Millo, *and* repaired the breaches of the city of David his
28 father. And the man Jeroboam *was* a mighty man of valor: and Solomon seeing
the young man that he was industrious, he made him ruler over all the charge
29 of the house of Joseph. And it came to pass at that time when Jeroboam went
out of Jerusalem, that the prophet Ahijah the Shilonite found him in the way;
and he had clad himself with a new garment; and they two *were* alone in the
30 field[5]: and Ahijah caught the new garment that *was* on him, and rent it *in*
31 twelve pieces: and he said to Jeroboam, Take thee ten pieces: for thus saith the
Lord [Jehovah], the God of Israel, Behold, I will rend the kingdom out of the
32 hand of Solomon, and will give ten tribes to thee: (but he shall have one[6] tribe
for my servant David's sake, and for Jerusalem's sake, the city which I have
33 chosen out of all the tribes of Israel:) because that they have forsaken me, and
have worshipped Ashtoreth the goddess of the Zidonians,[7] Chemosh the god of
the Moabites, and Milcom[8] the god of the children of Ammon, and have not walk-
ed in my ways, to do *that which is* right in mine eyes, and *to keep* my statutes
34 and my judgments, as *did* David his father. Howbeit, I will not take the
whole kingdom out of his hand: but I will make him prince all the days of his
life for David my servant's sake, whom I chose, because he kept my command-
35 ments and my statutes: but I will take the kingdom out of his son's hand, and
36 will give it unto thee, *even* ten tribes. And unto his son will I give one tribe,
that David my servant may have a light alway before me in Jerusalem, the city
37 which I have chosen me to put my name there. And I will take thee, and thou
shalt reign according to all that thy soul desireth, and shalt be king over Israel.
38 And it shall be, if thou wilt hearken unto all that I command thee, and wilt

walk in my ways, and do *that is* right in my sight, to keep my statutes and my
commandments, as David my servant did; that I will be with thee, and build
39 thee a sure house, as I built for David,[9] and will give Israel unto thee. And I
40 will for this afflict the seed of David, but not forever. Solomon sought there-
fore[10] to kill Jeroboam. And Jeroboam arose, and fled into Egypt, unto Shi-
shak king of Egypt, and was in Egypt until the death of Solomon.
41 And the rest of the acts of Solomon, and all that he did, and his wisdom, *are*
42 they not written in the book of the acts of Solomon? And the time that Solo-
43 mon reigned in Jerusalem over all Israel *was* forty years. And Solomon slept
with his fathers, and was buried in the city of David his father: and Rehoboam
his son reigned in his stead.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

[1] Ver. 14.—[This name is variously written in the printed Heb. text הֲדַד and אֲדַד; in some MSS. and in the Syr. it is uniformly written הדד. The Sept. has Ἀδερ, and the Vulg. *Hadad.* The Chald. follows the variations of the Hebrew. After the mention of his name the Vat. Sept. subjoins a summary of vers. 23–25, omitted in their place.

[2] Ver. 15.— Instead of בִּהְיוֹת the Sept., Syr., and Arab. read בְּהַכּוֹת (when David had slain the Edomites), which Maurer and Thenius consider right. But according to 1 Chron. xx. 5; Gen. xiv. 9 [add Num. xx. 18], the reading of the text is not to be peremptorily rejected.

[3] Ver. 17.—[The Sept., in curious contradiction to vers. 15, 16, has here "all the Edomites," &c.

[4] Ver. 25.—[The Vat. Sept. here resumes the course of the Heb. narrative, but gives quite a different sense: "this is the evil which Hadad did: he abhorred Israel and reigned in Edom." On the true rendering of the verse see Exeg. Com. In regard to the last word, three MSS., followed by the Sept., Syr., and Arab., have אדם for ארם: but, as pointed out in the Exeg. Com., the true reading must necessarily be that of the text. Our author in his translation, in opposition to his own exegesis, follows the Sept.

[5] Ver. 29.—[The Sept. renders or replaces the last clause by "and he took him aside from the way."

[6] Ver. 32.—[The Sept. has *δύο σκῆπτρα*—two tribes. So also ver. 36.

[7] Ver. 33.—[Instead of the peculiar form צִדֹנִין many MSS. read צִדוֹנִים.

[8] Ver. 33.—[The Sept. has evidently understood in מַלְכָּם the final ם as a pronominal suffix, and so translate "their king, the stumbling-block of the children of Ammon." Throughout this verse the Sept. puts the verbs in the singular as having Solomon for their nominative.

[9] Ver. 38.—[The Vat. Sept. omits the clause "and will give Israel unto thee."

[10] Ver. 40.—[וַיְבַקֵּשׁ שְׁלֹמֹה = but Solomon sought. The word "therefore" of the ancient version is not necessary, and connects the attempt of Solomon quite too distinctly with the communication of Ahijah, which may have been known to him (see Exeg. Com.) or may not. The true connection of ver. 40 is with ver. 26, vers. 27–39 being parenthetical.—F. G.]

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

Ver. 14. **And the Lord stirred up an adversary unto Solomon,** &c. It is clear and beyond dispute that the whole section, from vers. 14–40, which treats of the different adversaries that God raised up against Solomon, is intimately connected with the immediately preceding account of his fall, and of the impending and threatened division of the kingdom. The latter was not to occur till after Solomon's death; but the presages of it were already appearing. The peace of the kingdom hitherto undisturbed was endangered from that time on, both by internal and by external adversaries. The two external ones, Hadad and Rezon, had, indeed, always been foes to Israel and Solomon, but they had never ventured to show their animosity in open deed, inasmuch as the kingdom had become powerful and respected under Solomon. But Solomon, in permitting the idolatrous worship, gave great dissatisfaction to all the faithful servants of Jehovah, and with his own hands he shook the foundations of the kingdom. Other measures also, more or less connected with the former, caused him to lose, more and more, the esteem and confidence of his subjects; and then the long pent-up hatred of his old foes began to show itself more; their courage grew, and though they did not proceed to formal attack or to open rebellion (of which our narrative says nothing) Solomon had occasion to fear them more than ever before; the tranquillity and peace of his kingdom was endangered, and the time of prosperity past. Every one will admit that this is what the author meant to convey. But recent criticism reckons him a "later worker-up of Deuteronomy," and accuses him of a shifting of the historical facts. According to Ewald (*Gesch. Isr.* III. *s.* 274–281), uproar and rebellion did not first break out towards the end of Solomon's reign, but immediately after the death of David and of his formidable army-chief, Joab, in the beginning of the reign of the young and inexperienced king, both in the south (Edom) and in the north (Syria), as depicted by Solomon himself in the second Psalm With the divine courage and the admonition supported by prophetic assurance, which this Psalm expresses, together with wonderful firmness of spirit, Solomon met the storm of rebellion, and deprived his foes of their chief weapon of attack by his alliance with Egypt. Against the northern insurgents he himself marched, and stormed Hamath. Thus were the ragings of the people stilled, and in a brief space he became master of the situation. This view has been reiterated in several books (*cf.* for instance Eisenlohr, *das Volk Isr.* II. *s.* 47 and 57; Duncker, *Gesch. des Alt.* I. *s.* 387), and has been accepted as a matter of course; although there are the strongest reasons for rejecting it. (*a*) Our historical book says repeatedly how, and that the kingdom of Solomon became

established (chap. ii. 12 and 46), without making the remotest allusion to rebellion having broken out in the lands David had conquered, and being put down by Solomon; yet this would especially have tended to establish his throne and increase the esteem in which he was held. Even in the chapter we are considering, no mention is made of actual rebellion, but only of adversaries; therefore to say there were certainly such, is not writing history, but making history. (*b*) The rebellion of whole nations which, like Edom, lived far off, could have been put down only by force of arms, and not by "reproof" or "strength of mind;" but the history says nothing of Solomon's marching into Edom. He went indeed to Hamath, but not to conquer it, only to "fortify" it (חזק *cf.* 2 Chron. xi. 11, 12; xxvi. 9), as the short notice stands in 2 Chron. viii. 3, in the middle of the details of the different city-buildings. In fact we do not hear of a single warlike enterprise of Solomon's; he was, as his name denotes, the king of peace, the "man of rest," in distinction from David, the man of war (1 Chron. xxii. 9); and his reign was distinguished by works of peace (building, commerce, intellectual culture), above that of all other kings. (*c*) The 2d Psalm does not contain a history, and our narrative cannot be completed, much less contradicted or corrected by it. It is a mere unproven hypothesis that this psalm was composed by Solomon, and that the rebellion alluded to in it took place during his reign, not in the last years of it, but in the first. What is here said of Hadad and Rezon certainly occurred at an earlier period, but is repeated, "because its influence only began to be felt in the latter part of Solomon's reign, and should have guarded him from over-security from the beginning" (Keil).

Vers. 14–22. **Hadad, the Edomite.** He is called *Ahad* [the English version does not distinguish] in ver. 17. A Hadad is mentioned among the Edomite kings as early as Gen. xxxvi. 35; who evidently belonged to an earlier period. It is quite uncertain whether our Hadad was the grandson of the last king of Edom, whom 1 Chron. i. 50 wrongly calls Hadad instead of Hadar (Gen. xxxvi. 39) (Ewald, Thenius). Details of his former fortunes are no doubt designed to show how firmly he clung to his native land, and therefore how much more he was to be dreaded. For David's war with the Edomites *cf.* 2 Sam. viii. 13 *sq.* "The slain, whom Joab came out to bury, cannot be the Israelites who fell in the battle of the valley of salt, but those killed on the invasion of the country by the Edomites, and who lay yet unburied. After performing this act Joab defeated the Edomites in the valley of salt, and dwelt six months in Edom, till he had extirpated all the males (*i. e.*, all those capable of bearing arms that fell into his hands, and especially those of royal blood") (Keil). *Midian*, ver. 18, cannot certainly be the town Madian mentioned by Arabian geographers, but a district; it is not very well defined, but it must have been between Edom and the desert, south-west of Palestine, *Paran* (Num. xiii. 3, 27; x. 12); the road from Egypt still leads across the latter, through Aila to Mecca. The people whom the followers of Hadad took from Paran with them, were to lead the way across the desert. The Pharaoh who entertained the fugitives with such friendliness, and not only supported Hadad himself, but gave land to those with him, could scarcely be Solomon's father-in-law, but his predecessor. His consort is here named הַגְּבִירָה, the Queen-mother's usual appellation (chap. xv. 13; 2 Chron. xv. 16); but it does not always necessarily mean that; and consequently we are not obliged to accept Hitzig's and Thenius' reading of הַגְּדוֹלָה, *i. e.*, the elder. The weaning of a child (ver. 20) usually took place the second or third year (2 Macc. vii. 27), and was observed as a family feast (Gen. xxi. 8). Genubath was thus adopted among the royal children, and brought up with them (Winer, *R.-W.-B.*, I. *s.* 657). Hadad's petition (ver. 21) was not so much because he had now no longer any fear for his life, but because he, as a royal prince, hoped to ascend the throne, and free his land from the Israelitish yoke; this was the only reason why he is named an adversary. Pharaoh's question, ver. 22, contains the counsel to remain where he was, where he was well off, rather than undertake a dangerous and uncertain enterprise. This advice of his near relative was well meant, and did not spring from the policy of seeking to acquire or keep Solomon's friendship. Hadad, however, remained firm in his resolve; we are not told of his actual departure, but it is to be understood; so that the Sept. addition, καὶ ἀνέστρεψεν Ἀδερ εἰς τὴν γῆν αὐτοῦ, considered as original by Thenius, is unnecessary. It appears from chap. ix. 26 *sq.*; x. 11, that Hadad was not able to carry out his plans at once, but the fire smouldered under the ashes, and threatened to break out as soon as Solomon began to be less respected. Ewald continues Hadad's history further. He says the Egyptian king received him in so friendly a manner, "evidently intending to make use of him in the future against the growing power of Israel." Genubath must have "acted an important part in Asia, later, or he would otherwise not have been named at all." When the feeling of the Egyptian court changed towards Israel's kings, "an evasive answer" was returned to the Idumæan prince; he would "not be detained, however, but fled secretly to his ancestral mountains, was there acknowledged by many of his people as king, and caused Solomon much perplexity, though he was never completely victorious." Every one who can read may see that there is not a single word of all this in the text, and yet Eisenlohr has blindly followed the writer (*l. c.*, *s.* 58). *Cf.* also on chap. xxii. 48.

Vers. 23–25. **And God stirred him up. . . . Rezon . . . the son of Eliadah,** &c. Ver. 23. 2 Sam. viii. 3 *sq.* mentions that David smote Hadadezer, king of Zobah, in Syria, whereupon Rezon forsook his master, gathered together an army from the remains of the Syrian host, and proceeded later to Damascus, settled there, and usurped the chief power. This may have occurred in David's time, or in the beginning of Solomon's reign. It is nowhere said that he rebelled on Solomon's accession, and was conquered by him, and there is nothing to show "that he was at least twenty or thirty years older than Solomon" (Ewald). It is not impossible that he survived Solomon, for had he died sooner it could not be, as in ver. 25, that "he was an adversary to Israel all the days of Solomon." He did not undertake any enterprise against the powerful king, but as he had always entertained hostile feelings to him, he now became a more dangerous and open

enemy, as the power and fame of Solomon were declining. The words וְאֶת־הָרָעָה אֲשֶׁר הֲדָד are difficult, but can be translated only as many old translators give them, and among the recent ones, De Wette, Gesenius, Keil, Philippson; and "beside the mischief that Hadad (did)." וְאֵת is as in ver. 1 and Ex. i. 14. We are not told what the mischief that Hadad did really was; the writer only means that Rezon's enmity was added to that of Hadad. This view, which suits the context, relieves the following sentence of all difficulty: "and he (Rezon) abhorred Israel, and reigned over Syria." Whilst Hadad agitated the south, Rezon rebelled from Solomon in the north, and took the supreme power. The Sept. translates as if it read זאת instead of ואת and אֱדֹם instead of ארם: Αὕτη ἡ κακία ἣν ἐποίησεν Ἀδέρ. καὶ . . . ἐβασίλευσε ἐν γῇ Ἐδώμ, *i. e.*, this is the mischief which Hadad did; he abhorred Israel and was king in Edom. Thenius asserts that this was the original text. But in this case the whole sentence could not be here, where the question is about the second adversary, Rezon, but should have followed ver. 22. It is incomparably less probable that it was there passed over by the oversight of a copyist (Thenius), and inserted here, than that the Sept. misunderstood the ואת, &c., and translated wrongly as it so often does, and was then obliged to change ארם to אדם because it did not suit Hadad. The Sept. has arbitrarily mixed the two accounts of the adversaries together (it puts vers. 23 and 24 into ver. 14), so that we should be very foolish to follow it in this case. Ewald translates, "as for the mischief which Hadad did, he was hostile to Israel and reigned over Edom;" but then the sentence should be back of ver. 22 and not here. It is not right to change ארם into אדם, because the two foregoing verses absolutely require that Rezon should be considered as subject to וַיָּקָץ. *Cf.* Keil on the place.

Vers. 26, 27. **Jeroboam the son of Nebat.** Hadad and Rezon were dangerous "adversaries" to Solomon, but Jeroboam, though a subject and servant of Solomon, lifted up his hand against the king, *i. e.*, he actually rebelled. His personal circumstances are given more at length because of his vastly greater importance. Zereda is not Zarthan, as Keil thinks (chap. vii. 46); the latter is not in Ephraim; but Zereda is Zerira in the mountains of Ephraim (*cf.* Thenius on chap. xii. 2). The second half of ver. 27 says, like chap. ix. 15: "to build Millo and the walls of Jerusalem;" there is, therefore, no question here of stopping "a gap in the city of David" (Luther), but of the closing up of a ravine (Vulgate, *vorago*) in the city, which was done by walls. By פֶּרֶץ is meant the once very deep ravine of what was subsequently the Tyropœon, which separated Zion from Moriah and Ophel. This ravine became part of the interior of the city through these walls, and was made inaccessible to enemies (Thenius). The words, *he made him ruler over all the charge of the house of Joseph*, are not in contradiction with chap. ix. 22; for slave-levy is not spoken of here (מַס־עֹבֵד), but that of the Israelites (מַס מִכָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל) chap. v. 13, who worked alternately. It is not, therefore, necessary to suppose that the "*house of Joseph*," *i. e.*, the Ephraimites (Josh. xvii. 17) were obliged to work at Millo, as a punishment for their rebellion under Sheba (2 Sam. xx.). But the Ephraimites, who had an old and irrepressible jealousy of Judah, submitted very reluctantly to labor in the king's citadel and the royal city of Judah; their compulsory work increased their dislike to hatred, so that it was easy to fan the flame of insurrection among them.

Ver. 29. **And it came to pass at that time**, *i. e.*, not at the time Jeroboam made the insurrection, but—taken with ver. 28—the time when he entered upon the office of superintendent over all the Ephraimite levy; therefore, before he lifted his hand against the king, and proceeded to acts, but still he was brooding over insurrection. The notion that vers. 29–39 is a section taken from another source and inserted here (Thenius) is, to say the least, unnecessary; it contains an explanatory and needful account, which is closely connected with ver. 28. Jeroboam's banishment from Jerusalem was probably the occasion for preparations of rebellion. The prophet *Ahijah* was of the same tribe as Jeroboam, for *Shiloh* was in the tribe of Ephraim, north of Bethel, south of Lebonah (Jud. xxi. 19), and was the seat of the tabernacle from Joshua to Eli (Josh. xviii. 1; 1 Sam. xxi. 3). They no doubt knew each other well. The Sept. adds to the words *in the way* (for explanation): καὶ ἀπέστησεν αὐτὸν ἐκ τῆς ὁδοῦ.

Vers. 30–39. **Ahijah caught the new garment.** שַׂלְמָה (for שִׂמְלָה) is "probably similar to the Arabian burnou; a large square piece of cloth, thrown over the shoulders and almost covering the whole person in the daytime, and used at night for a coverlet" (Keil). Hess wrongly imagines it to have been a "new mantle which Jeroboam had on;" and Ewald thinks it was his "new and splendid official uniform." It was the prophet's own cloak, as ver. 30 plainly says. The prophet himself explains the meaning of this symbolic act. Le Clerc says that the repetition of the word *new* shows that the prophet did what he did, *non temere*. Thenius thinks the new garment denoted the young and powerful kingdom; but both these explanations are strained. A new garment is one that is whole and complete, *integer*, without a rent or hole; the kingdom was hitherto without split or division, but was now to be torn and divided. קָרַע is usually applied to tearing the garments in sign of mourning (Gen. xxxvii. 29; xliv. 13; 2 Sam. xiii. 21; 2 Kings xviii. 37), *i. e.*, of inward rending. Now when the prophet tore the cloak into twelve pieces, and gave Jeroboam only ten pieces instead of eleven, we must of course infer that neither Benjamin nor Judah alone was meant here, or in ver. 13, by "one tribe," but both together (*cf.* chap. xii. 20 and 21; 2 Chron. xi. 3; xii. 23). Little Benjamin, over against Judah, came scarcely into consideration; and as, besides, the capital of the kingdom (Jerusalem) lay on the borders of both tribes, they might very well be reckoned as one. If, as Keil says, the number ten represents the total sum here, in distinction to the one part (all Israel fell away from the house of David, only a single portion remained to it), the prophet would have torn

off only one small piece. For ver. 32 see above on vers. 12, 13; and for ver. 33 see on vers. 5–8. The plural in ver. 33 is remarkable (all translations, except the Chaldee, have the singular, which we expect here); perhaps it only means our vague word "one;" it is plain, however, that Israelites had already abandoned themselves to the licensed heathen worship. In the words in ver. 36, *that David may have a light always before me*, "light" is not a symbol of prosperity (Keil), and נִיר certainly does not mean breaking forth afresh (Hitzig), but it means simply the continuance of his race, as in chap. xv. 4; 2 Kings viii. 19; 2 Chron. xxi. 7. As a house (dwelling) is dark (uninhabitable) without a light, so also is a house (family, race) without posterity; this is why we speak of the dying out of a race, at the present day, as its extinction. The same expression, ver. 37: *and thou shalt reign according to all*, &c., is used in 2 Sam. iii. 21, about David; it does not mean *pro lubitu tuo imperabis Israelitis* (Dathe), but, thou shalt have the dominion thou now strivest for, &c., &c. Ver. 38. Jeroboam's dominion then was connected with the condition upon which all dominion in Israel was based.

Vers. 40–42. **Solomon sought therefore to kill Jeroboam.** The immediate connection of these words with Ahijah's address can scarcely mean otherwise than this: that Solomon heard of it, and sought to get Jeroboam out of the way by some means. Jeroboam could but know of this, and he lifted up his hand against the king, *i. e.*, he proceeded to actual rebellion (vers. 26, 27). But not succeeding, he fled to Egypt. The king then reigning was not, of course, Solomon's father-in-law, nor Sesostris, as older commentators think, but was probably Seconchis or Sesonchusis, the first king of the twenty-second dynasty (*cf.* Winer, *R.-W.-B. s. v.* Sishak). The reception he gave Jeroboam shows his feeling towards Solomon. Chap. xiv. 21 *sq.* speaks of his open hostility to the kingdom of Judah.

Ver. 43. **Solomon slept with his fathers,** at about sixty years of age, as he very early succeeded to the throne (chap. iii. 7). Josephus thinks he was eighty or even ninety-four years old, but this is quite wrong, and was caused, probably, by confusion of the ciphers. All copies and translations give *forty*. Our author gives, in a general way, *the* "*book of the acts of Solomon*," as the original source of his history; but 2 Chron. ix. 29 names, with more exactness, the "book (דִּבְרֵי) of Nathan the prophet, the prophecy of Ahijah the Shilonite, and the visions of Iddo the seer against Jeroboam." But it does not follow that these three writings are only extracts from one historical one (Bertheau), but it certainly does appear that each one wrote down his own experience. When Solomon fell away, and Ahijah appeared, Nathan must have been dead. *Cf.* the Introduction, § 2. *Rehoboam* was not a son of the first and real consort of Solomon, the Egyptian princess (chap. iii. 1; ix. 24; vii. 8), but the son of the Naamah the Ammonitess (chap. xiv. 21, 31). He appears to have been the only living son, as no children, especially sons, of Solomon are named (though he had so many wives), except the two daughters mentioned, chap. iv. 11 and 15; and no brothers disputed the succession of Rehoboam, which was the case with Solomon. For his age at his accession see on chap. xiv. 21.

HISTORICAL AND ETHICAL.

1. *The appearance of the various adversaries of Solomon* seems to have been a special act of divine retributive justice; God is named as the direct agent. He is said not only to have permitted them, but to have "stirred them up," called them to it. The word הֵקִים means, as here, the stirring up of enemies and rebels, also of deliverers, helpers, prophets (Jud. ii. 18; Deut. xviii. 15, 18; 1 Sam. ii. 35; Ezek. xxxiv. 23; Jer. xxix. 15), where there is no allusion to mere permission. It is not indeed the absolutely Holy One who excites hatred, enmity, and revenge in one man towards another, for he tempts no man to evil (Jam. i. 13); but the Almighty Ruler of the world can use the hatred that He sees in the hearts of sinful men, to fulfil, without their knowledge or wish, the purposes of His retributive justice and the chastisements of His love; and in so far, the stirring up is no passive permission, but the act of God. Thus Nathan announces to David, after his grievous sin, this word of the Lord, "behold I will raise up evil against thee out of thine own house" (2 Sam. xii. 11), and David himself says of Shimei who was cursing him, "so let him curse, because the Lord hath said unto him" (2 Sam. xvi. 10, 11). The Assyrian is, without knowing it, the rod of His anger in the hand of Jehovah (Isai. x. 1, 5), and Solomon's adversaries also served for instruments of divine justice. This expression of stirring up shows clearly that the appearance of the adversaries did not take place, as recent commentators say, in the beginning of Solomon's reign, for up to that time Solomon had given no occasion for any act of retribution or discipline. Though he did not lose his throne through them, during his lifetime; yet it was very humiliating to him, whose power and splendor had been a spectacle to the world, and whose wisdom people of all nations had come to hear (chap. iv. 14; x. 24), to be obliged to fear these men, who were far inferior to him, and whom he had once despised.

2. *While Hadad and Rezon did not affect materially the destiny of Israel*, the third opponent of Solomon was of vastly greater significance. *Jeroboam* does not disappear, like them, without leaving a trace in the history of the kingdom. His entrance on the scene was felt profoundly for centuries; the breach and partition of the kingdom take place with and through him; a partition which was no temporary one, but lasted about three hundred years, and ended with the dissolution of the kingdom. In this respect he is one of the most important of the characters in the history of Israel. Witsius, in reference to his whole career says (*Decaphylon, p.* 307): *vir sagax, inquietus et dominandi avidus atque ab ineunte ætate iis eruditus artibus, quibus ingenia ad magnæ fortunæ cultum incitantur.* Here where he is first mentioned the question properly arises, how it came to pass that he lifted up his hand against the King. The text certainly says nothing explicit about it, but gives some distinct clues. It says, first of all, he was an Ephraimite, thus being a member of the largest, most powerful, and warlike tribe, that had always vied with Judah for pre-eminence; and that,

even when David had subdued them, never renounced their deeply rooted jealousy and love of independence and dominion over the other tribes (2 Sam. ii. 9; xx. 21). After the division of the kingdom, Ephraim stood at the head of the ten tribes, so that the kingdom of the ten was called Ephraim (Hos. iv. 17; v. 9; xii. 1 *sq.*; Isai. vii. 2). Dislike of the supremacy of Judah was in the very blood of so young and powerful a man as Jeroboam, and it needed not much to excite thoughts of rebellion and independence in him. The fact that Solomon employed the Ephraimites not so much in the matter of levy-works as in building Millo, and in stopping up the ravine which served to fortify the city of David and to secure the supremacy of Judah, was calculated to increase the ancient jealousy and dislike to Judah, and to excite discontent and disgust. Recognizing the distinguished ability of young Jeroboam, Solomon made him overseer of his own people; thus feeding the ambition of this man who was born to rule. He now first became conscious of his powers, and soon acquired the confidence of his already discontented tribe by his prudence and energy, so that he could hope to succeed in placing himself at their head, and lifting his hand against the Judah-King. Perhaps he also perceived that the splendor of Solomon had lost its ground through the influence of his wives, the open introduction of idol-worship side by side with that of Jehovah, and the luxurious court life, and that his rule gave great dissatisfaction to the most worthy of the people. When we consider all this we readily conceive that a man like the Ephraimite, Jeroboam, should, without being especially influenced by any one, think of breaking loose from Solomon's rule. The later critics have therefore no grounds for asserting that "the prophet Ahijah, who appeared at the head of a (discontented) faction," induced Jeroboam to rebel against the king (Winer, *R.-W.-B.* I. *s.* 544). Thenius is quite right when he says, "Ahijah did not incite Jeroboam, but he knew the thoughts he cherished, and when Ahijah addressed him he was about taking steps to realize these thoughts, as ver. 37 says: the prophet then appeared, for he saw that the deed would infallibly follow the resolve in this case, and recognized in Jeroboam a capable man, knowing also the promise of success under condition of continuance in a God-fearing mind. This relation is quite in the spirit of prophecy, and is totally different from an intentional and forcible introduction." The text says distinctly that Ahijah met Jeroboam when the latter "went out of Jerusalem" (ver. 29) to lift up his hand against the king.

3. *The prophet Ahijah stands in a relation to Solomon and Jeroboam* analogous with that of Samuel to Saul and David (1 Sam. xv. 16). "As Saul's sentence of rejection was accompanied by the calling of David, so the prophetical announcement to Solomon was accompanied by the prophecy to Jeroboam" (v. Gerlach). Ahijah opened to him the same divine decision which he had first made known to Solomon (*cf.* vers. 11–13). In doing so he emphasizes two things particularly, and these are worthy of notice; the first is, that Solomon was to remain king of all Israel to the end of his life, and the division of the kingdom was to take place under his son (ver. 31 *sq.*); the second, that Jeroboam only received dominion over the ten tribes, on the presupposition and condition that he would walk in all the commandments of Jehovah, as David did, and not sin like Solomon (ver. 37 *sq.*). It is added also that David's seed was to be humbled, but not forever (ver. 39). We should not overlook the circumstance that the prophet met Jeroboam on the way as he came out of Jerusalem, and was proceeding to carry out his intentions, and that the prophet took him aside (as the Sept. at least has it) so that they "two were alone in the field" (ver. 29). Ahijah's communication was, therefore, not intended for the public, but was confidential, thus intimating to Jeroboam that he ought not to proceed to rebellion at once, but keep quiet, and wait till it might please the Lord to bring about circumstances to fulfil the purpose He had announced. The prophet, so far from counselling him to rebellion, warned him rather, and recommended patience as long as Solomon lived. But when Jeroboam, nevertheless, lifted up his hand against the king, he committed an inexcusable, sinful deed on his own responsibility, and anticipated divine providence. His conduct was just the opposite of David's, who, though anointed to be king, and persecuted by Saul, endured every wrong, never revenged himself on the king, though the latter was often in his power, even mourned his death, and had the Amalekite who killed him executed as a traitor (2 Sam i. 11–16). He believed that the Lord knew the right hour to fulfil his promise. It cannot, therefore, be accounted a crime in Solomon to strive to kill a man whom he had raised from nothing, and who then rebelled against him. From all this it appears that it is quite erroneous to account for Jeroboam's appearance by saying that "the ancient prophetical estate wished, by the forcible introduction of a new royal house, to stand directly under the Lord and above the human monarchy;" so that the kingdom of the ten tribes was "the birth of this prophet-power," and the latter "a retarded error" (Ewald). And it is equally untrue that the rebellion of the ten tribes was "an enterprise which the prophet had encouraged, to bring back the old national constitution, and restore the consideration in which his class was held in Samuel's time, when he, their founder and representative, deposed a king who disobeyed him, and raised up another in his place" (Menzel, *l. c. s.* 152). When will men cease to compare the old prophets with modern demagogues and ambitious priests!

4. *The symbolic procedure of the rending the garment into twelve pieces* preceded the prophecy delivered by the prophet. It could not, therefore, have been intended to make that prophecy clear, but rather inversely, the prophecy explained the transaction. This was the case not only here, but the prophets generally performed a preliminary symbolic action which represented the substance of the meaning of the solemn prophecy which followed; and they performed this act on the impulse of the divine spirit, just as they proclaimed the word following in their divine commission. *Cf.* Isai. xx. 2 *sq.*; Jer. xiii. 1 *sq.*; xix. 1 *sq.*; xxxv. 2 *sq.*; xliii. 9 *sq.*; Ezek. iv. 1 *sq.*; v. 1 *sq.*; xii. 3 *sq.*; xxiv. 2 *sq.*; xxxvii. 15 *sq.*; 2 Kings xiii. 15 *sq.* From these passages we see that the performance of such actions was as much a part of the prophetic calling and office as the proclamation of the word. All revelation of God is in the way of act as well

as of word: God's deeds as well as His words are signs that testify of Him. His acts are also, as it were, speech, *i. e.*, a revealing of Himself. The speaking of God is a sign-language, and therefore a symbol-language. The entire cultus has, hence, symbolic form as the real expression of the divine-human relation. When the prophets, therefore, appeared as such, *i. e.*, as "men of God," as mediators and instruments of divine revelation, they did not communicate it in words only, but in solemn acts, which were signs; and thus they proved themselves the servants of God, speaking in His language. Their prophetic acts, as well as their prophetic words, were announcements and revelations of the divine purpose. When they anticipate their words by an act commanded by God, this act is not to be viewed as a mere image, according to their own pleasure, but it represents the future which they had to reveal as a fact, as it were, a present deed of God, and therefore as something which would assuredly happen. The action, then, was an assurance and pledge of the fulfilment of the prophecy; and it was entirely natural that it should precede the word explaining and interpreting it. Besides, every thought which is embodied in a deed produces a much greater and more lasting impression than if only expressed in words. Of Christ, in whom all that is prophetic culminates, the disciple says (Luke xxiv. 19): "which was a prophet mighty in deed and word," thus proving that not words only, but actions also belong to the essence of the calling of the prophet. The people concluded from his deeds that "a great prophet is risen up among us" (Luke vii. 16). His prophetic deeds were "signs" (John vi. 26; xx. 20), not mere evidences of power, but of divine authority; and they spoke of divine things as loudly and, if possible, more loudly than His words. He himself says, "Though ye believe not me, believe the works" (John x. 38); "the works that I do in my Father's name they bear witness of me" (John x. 25).

5. *The rending of the ten tribes* appears, in the prophet's prediction here as in vers. 11–13, to be a punishment ordained and determined by Jehovah for Solomon's falling away, not, therefore, as an event merely permitted by God but designed; and therefore announced beforehand. The question arises, in what relation did this partition, determined on by Jehovah, stand to His plans regarding Israel considered as one people composed of twelve tribes? The whole nation was His inheritance, for He had called them from among all nations to be a divine kingdom (Ex. xix. 5, 6), *i. e.*, a theocracy. The one God, Jehovah, was, as the true King and Lord of that people, so also the root and principle of their unity—the bond binding together all the tribes into one whole. The human monarchy afterwards established by the desire of the people did not destroy the theocracy but served rather to sustain and preserve it (see above). But it was not now absolutely necessary that all the tribes should have one head; in fact they might each have had a head, had they only acknowledged Jehovah as the one true king of all Israel, and held fast to the covenant, *i. e.*, the law of God. "It was not contrary to the Mosaic constitution for Jehovah to weaken—not destroy—a royal house that had turned to idolatry; to rend away some tribes from it, and to place them under the government of another king. It was rather the fittest thing to be done; for otherwise the principles that lay in the very nature of the constitution—namely, that disaster should follow idolatry, and prosperity the fear of God, would have been violated. One of these two things must (according to these principles) have come upon David's house after a lapse into idolatry, viz. either expulsion from the throne (which could not be on account of the promise of perpetual succession), or weakening such as was foretold by Jehovah, ... a falling away of some tribes" (Hess, *Von dem Reiche Gottes*, I. *s.* 301). As Jehovah had heretofore governed his people by one king (David and Solomon) he could also do it by two without destroying the theocratic principle. The new kingdom is offered to Jeroboam and continuance is promised to his dynasty on the express condition that he should, "like David," faithfully adhere to the law; with the explanation, nevertheless (ver. 39), that the humiliation of the house of David would be but temporary. Thus it is indicated that the promise of the everlasting kingdom would not be realized in Jeroboam's race, "but in that of David" (Oehler). The prediction of Ahijah does not imply a partition of the theocracy or of Israel, but only of the human monarchy under two kings. The double nature of the kingdom was not the cause of the permanence of the division, nor of the commencement of the destruction of the kingdom; these were the results of the continued falling away from the supreme commandment of the theocratic law on the part of the ten tribes.

6. *There are no accounts of Solomon's end*, nor of his life and acts from the time of his lapse till his death; all is reduced to the notice that he sought to kill Jeroboam, and that he died and was buried. This is the more remarkable as the life and acts of this king are more minutely narrated than those of any succeeding one, and that the last days and end of David in particular are recorded with such evident care both in our books and in the Chronicles. Had Solomon ended his life like David, who with joyous heart blessed the Lord to the last (1 Chron. xxix. 10 *sq.*), and charged his son and successor most emphatically to remain faithful to Jehovah (chap. ii. 1 *sq.*), and been anxious that the prosperity of the kingdom should endure on the basis of the covenant with Jehovah (2 Sam. xxiii. 1 *sq.*), such a circumstance would not have been passed over. We must therefore conclude, from the entire silence of the history, that Solomon did not die as David died, that he remained in the state of mind into which he had fallen in his later age. The question whether Solomon was finally converted and saved was formerly discussed extensively (Buddeus, *Hist. Eccl.*, II. p. 237 *sq.*), but we see no occasion to introduce it here. Both Hess and Niemeyer have endeavored to ascertain from Ecclesiastes what Solomon's state of mind was in his last days; but apart from the mistaken presupposition that this treatise was composed by Solomon, no one could prove his conversion from it; and Niemeyer concludes his character-sketch with these words: "the cheerful peace of his soul was gone. Gloomy was his retrospect of life, and gloomy was his view of the near and of the distant future." It is worthy of remark, that while Solomon (Suleiman) is held in high honor in the East at the present day, his memory is far less revered among the Jews than that of David, which could not have been the case had his reign ended as

gloriously as it began. Bertheau justly remarks that Solomon "did more towards undermining the distinctive peculiarity of his people than any other king." We are not, however, to seek the cause of this simply in his making a people who were adapted to agriculture, commercial, and in his splendid buildings, his harem, and his court, all hitherto unknown in Israel, but the real specific reason was that by the introduction and the toleration of foreign idolatrous forms of worship he undermined the religion of his people, forth from which religion flowed all the characteristics which distinguished them over against all other peoples; *that* was the worm at the root of the kingdom and the national life.

[7. It is extremely difficult to give a portraiture of Solomon which can harmonize at once both the demand for historic truth and the general estimation which tradition assigns to him. The story is extraordinary. David the father of the wise king founded and consolidated the kingdom. His life was stormy and checkered. His character was romantic and chivalric and generous. He showed himself capable both of great self-sacrifice and of revolting criminality and treachery. He was tender and he was brave. His soul rested upon the covenant-keeping Jehovah, yet he dared to violate all the duties of the decalogue which concern man's dealings with his brother man. Solomon did not inherit the personal traits of his father. He was not warlike; he was a man of peace. He sought wisdom, and he sought it from Jehovah. He desired to administer his government according to the law and will of God. He had fine talent for observation. He was a naturalist of rare attainments. He knew much of the earth; he knew much of men. He was a man of understanding, expressing his thoughts and observations in proverbs. He was splendid in his tastes. He sought wealth by commerce and by trade with heathen nations. He made Israel a kingdom of this world; at the same time, he built the temple, lavishing upon it untold sums of money, and aiming to make it, according to Eastern conceptions, splendid in all respects. Certainly at its dedication he is one of the most imposing and majestic figures in all history. But by degrees, enervated by luxury, by pleasure, by plenty, he lost the strength of his convictions. He became wise in this world. The law of Jehovah lost its hold upon his conscience. He began to justify idolatry. "He that built a temple to the living God for himself and Israel, in Sion, built a temple to Chemosh in the Mount of Scandal for his mistresses of Moab, in the very face of God's house. No hill about Jerusalem was free from a chapel of devils: each of his dames had their puppets, their altars, their incense; because Solomon feeds them in their superstition, he draws the sin home to himself, and is branded for what he should have forbidden."—Bp. Hall. And by degrees the splendor passed away, and darkness and weariness, and hopelessness, and an ignoble old age came on. He forsook the noble path of his youth, and his glory was lost. See Stanley, *Jewish Church*, second series, Lect. xxviii., and F. D. Maurice, *The Prophets and Kings of the Old Testament*, Sermon on the Wise King. The sun of his life rose in all splendor, and shone brilliantly, to go down at last amid the heavy darkness of impending storm and night. The people lost their sense of the exclusive sovereignty of Jehovah; their burdens were heavy—and the brief glory of Israel as a kingdom of this world passed away forever. —E. H.]

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

Vers. 14–40. Solomon's enemies. 1. They are roused against him by God, so that he may know and confess what heart-suffering it brings to forsake the fear of the Lord his God (Jer. ii. 19). CRAMER: So marvellously does God bring it about, that he who will not fear him, must needs fear his fellow-men. Once the man of rest, and the Prince of Peace (chap. v. 4), now he is pressed sore by enemies from the north, from the south, and from his midst; they are the scourges with which the Lord chastises him. When foes and opponents rise against thee, and cause thee care and anguish, then think: The Lord has summoned them on account of thy sins, and unfaithfulness. The hostility of men is a sermon of repentance from thy God to thee. 2. They were in God's hand, and could do no more than he permits; they rebelled, but they were powerless to take from Solomon the throne and kingdom during his lifetime. The Lord commands our foes: So far shalt thou go, and no further.—J. HEERMANN: If thou speakest the word, they soon become friends: they must needs lay down arms and defences, and stir no finger.—P. GERHARDT: If I am beloved of God, and have the *Head* for my friend, what can troops of foes and opposers do to me? For he can humble the proud (Dan. iv. 35). Formerly all kings did homage to Solomon, and brought him gifts, and journeyed from all countries to see and to hear him; his power was as great as his kingdom. But now his power and might are abased before those who hitherto ranked far below him, whom he had regarded as the least of his slaves and vassals. Humiliation coming through weak and inferior *means* is much more bitter than the same humiliation through strong and powerful means; the latter we can ascribe to men, but in the former we must recognize the will and power of God.

Vers. 14–22. The fate of Hadad is recounted to us not so much on his account as on our own, in order that we may learn to regard the ways of God with man, and order our own ways by Him, who is ever mercy and wisdom (Ps. xxv. 10). If God brought back the heathen Hadad by mysterious ways to his native land, how much more will he lead those who keep his covenant and testimony to the true native land, and to the eternal rest, how dark and inscrutable soever may be the ways by which he leads them. Ver. 21. Let me go into mine own country. The power of love of country. Not *ubi bene, ibi patria*, but *ubi patria, ibi bene*. Yet must we not in the earthly country forget the heavenly "Fatherland." Vers. 23–25. Though vanquished and cast down, tyranny and ambition do not forget; they think perpetually of vengeance, and seek to satisfy it, now by rough means now by subtle ones, whenever an opportunity offers. Therefore, warns the apostle so earnestly (Rom. xii. 19) against those secret and mighty motives in the natural heart of man.

Vers. 26–28. God is wont to chastise the rebellion of princes against his will, by means of the rebellion of their own subjects; as Solomon raised

his hand against Jehovah, so did his servant Jeroboam against him. Destruction from above unites with ruin from below. Whatever Solomon undertook after his fall, was deprived of God's blessing. By the building of Millo he intended still further to strengthen his dominion over all his enemies, and to render impregnable his dwelling-place, but this very building was the cause why his throne began to totter, and why he lost the greater part of his kingdom. Here applies Ps. cxxvii. 1. It was by divine decree that Solomon himself, without his own will or knowledge, should raise from the dust to high places the very man appointed by God to abase him, and to dismember his kingdom. Conspiracies and rebellions are chiefly led by those who have to complain least of injustice or oppression, but have been pampered and favored until ambition incites them to suppress every feeling of gratitude (John xiii. 18).

Vers. 29-39. *cf.* above vers. 9-13. The prediction of the prophet Ahijah announces 1. the division of the kingdom as a consequence of the going astray to the worship of strange gods (vers. 31-33); 2. the preservation of the kingdom of Judah on account of the promise given to David (vers. 34, 36, 39); 3. the choice made of Jeroboam, on condition of inflexible fidelity to Jehovah and to his law (vers. 37, 38). Ver. 31. All the world must confess, upon beholding the abasement of the house of David and the elevation of Jeroboam, that the Most High has power over the kingdoms of men, and bestows them upon whom he will (Dan. iv. 29; 1 Sam. ii. 7, 8; Luke i. 52). Ver. 36. Even in the midst of his just anger the Lord is merciful, and the inconstancy of man can never shake His fidelity. The fulfilment of 2 Sam. vii. 14, 15, is seen in Solomon's history. The house of David remained a light "forever," until that Son of David came who is the light of the world, which lighteth all men who come into the world (Joh. i. 9; Rom. xv. 12).

Vers. 40-43. These three truths are nowhere more powerfully exemplified than in the life of Solomon: What availeth it a man, &c., (Matt. xvi. 26); Vanity of vanities, &c. (Eccl. i. 2), and The world passeth away, &c. (1 John ii. 17; *cf.* 1 Peter i. 24). Ver. 40. Roos: Sin obscures the soul. He who turns aside from God departs from wisdom; and let those who, instead of bowing and submitting with resignation to the chastisements of God, haughtily strive against them, contemplate the fate of Jeroboam, who, doubtless, stirred up the plot against Solomon, since he afterwards eagerly abetted the desertion of the ten Tribes. Even as Solomon, when he sought to slay Jeroboam, must have felt that in vain he resisted the divine decrees, and was powerless to hinder them, so likewise Jeroboam, compelled to fly to Egypt, must have become conscious that in vain he strove rashly and insolently to anticipate the execution of the divine decrees. We must even make bitter expiation when we haughtily resist and oppose the Lord, or when we strive to hasten his designs, or to appoint time and place for their fulfilment. The life of Solomon closes with the words: Therefore Solomon sought to kill Jeroboam. Instead of seeking forgiveness from Him who forgiveth much, and himself granting forgiveness, he is thinking of murder and vengeance. How great and noble the contrast between this and the Figure of Him who in the face of death upon the cross cried: Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do. Let us strive to become like unto his image, and that our last thought in life may be of love and reconciliation, and not of revenge and hatred. Solomon possessed the fairest and noblest crown that mortal can wear, yet it was perishable, not enduring beyond death and the grave. The Lord promises an immortal crown to those who love and follow Him. Be faithful unto death, then He will give thee the crown of life; blessed is he who endureth unto the end.

SECOND PERIOD. (975 TO 722 B. C.)

THE DIVIDED MONARCHY IN JUDAH AND ISRAEL.

(1 Kings XII.—2 Kings XVII.)

FIRST EPOCH.

FROM THE DIVISION OF THE KINGDOM UNTIL THE REIGN OF AHAB.

(1 Kings XII.–XVI. 34.)

FIRST SECTION.

THE DIVISION OF THE KINGDOM.

(1 Kings XII.)

A.—*The renunciation of the house of David by the ten tribes.*

Chap. XII. 1–24 (2 Chron. X.–XI. 4.)

1 And Rehoboam went to Shechem: for all Israel were come to Shechem to
2 make him king. And it came to pass, when Jeroboam the son of Nebat,
who was yet in Egypt, heard *of it*,[1] (for he was fled from the presence of king
3 Solomon, and Jeroboam dwelt in Egypt;[2]) that they sent and called him.
And Jeroboam and all the congregation of Israel came, and spake unto Reho-
4 boam, saying, Thy father made our yoke grievous: now therefore make thou
the grievous service of thy father, and his heavy yoke which he put upon us,
5 lighter, and we will serve thee. And he said unto them, Depart yet *for* three
days, then come again to me. And the people departed.
6 And king Rehoboam consulted with the old men that stood before Solomon
his father while he yet lived, and said, How do ye advise that I may answer
7 this people? And they spake unto him, saying, If thou wilt be a servant unto
this people this day, and wilt serve them, and answer them, and speak good
8 words to them, then they will be thy servants for ever. But he forsook the
counsel of the old men, which they had given him, and consulted with the
9 young men that were grown up with him, *and* which stood before him: and
he said unto them, What counsel give ye that we may answer this people, who
have spoken to me, saying, Make the yoke which thy father did put upon us

10 lighter? And the young men that were grown up with him spake unto him,
saying, Thus shalt thou speak unto this people that spake unto thee, saying, Thy
father made our yoke heavy, but make thou *it* lighter unto us; thus shalt thou
11 say unto them, My little *finger* shall be thicker than my father's loins. And
now whereas my father did lade you with a heavy yoke, I will add to your
yoke: my father hath chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with
scorpions.[3]
12 So Jeroboam[4] and all the people came to Rehoboam the third day, as the
13 king had appointed, saying, Come to me again the third day. And the king
answered the people roughly, and forsook the old men's counsel that they gave
14 him; and spake to them after the counsel of the young men, saying, My father
made your yoke heavy, and I will add to your yoke: my father *also* chastised
15 you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions. Wherefore the king
hearkened not unto the people; for the cause was from the Lord [Jehovah], that he
might perform his saying, which the Lord [Jehovah] spake by Ahijah the Shilon-
16 ite unto Jeroboam the son of Nebat. So when all Israel saw that the king heark-
ened not unto them, the people answered the king, saying, What portion have
we in David? neither *have we* inheritance in the son of Jesse: to your[5] tents,
O Israel: now see to thine own house, David. So Israel departed unto their
17 tents. But *as for* the children of Israel which dwelt in the cities of Judah,
18 Rehoboam reigned over them. Then king Rehoboam sent Adoram,[6] who *was*
over the tribute; and all Israel stoned him with stones, that he died. There-
fore king Rehoboam made speed to get him up to his chariot, to flee to Jeru-
19 salem. So Israel rebelled against the house of David unto this day.
20 And it came to pass, when all Israel heard that Jeroboam was come again,
that they sent and called him unto the congregation, and made him king over all
Israel: there was none that followed the house of David, but the tribe of Judah[7]
21 only. And when Rehoboam was come to Jerusalem, he assembled all the house
of Judah, with the tribe of Benjamin, a hundred and fourscore[8] thousand chosen
men, which were warriors, to fight against the house of Israel, to bring the king-
22 dom again to Rehoboam the son of Solomon. But the word of God[9] came
23 unto Shemaiah the man of God, saying, Speak unto Rehoboam, the son of Solo-
mon, king of Judah, and unto all the house of Judah and Benjamin, and to
24 the remnant of the people, saying, Thus saith the Lord [Jehovah], Ye shall not
go up, nor fight against your brethren the children of Israel: return every
man to his house; for this thing is from me. They hearkened therefore to
the word of the Lord [Jehovah], and returned to depart, according to the word
of the Lord [Jehovah].[10]

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

[1] Ver. 2.—[It is better to omit the italicized words *of it*, which are not in the Heb. and which must refer to the Assembly at Shechem, whereas what Jeroboam heard of was the death of Solomon, as is expressed in the Vulg. See the Exeg. Com. The Vat. Sept. omits here the whole of ver. 2 and the greater part of ver. 3, having given the substance of them (with some addition) at xi. 43. The Alex. Sept. follows the Heb. Our author, in his translation, has omitted the part of ver. 2 enclosed in brackets, evidently by an inadvertence.

[2] Ver. 2.—Instead of וַיֵּשֶׁב בְּמִצְרָיִם must be read, with 2 Chron. x. 2, וַיָּשָׁב מִמִּצְרָיִם. See the comment. [The text may be preserved without change (for which the Vulg. is the only authority) by considering the statement that Jeroboam dwelt in Egypt as merely the completion of the statement of his flight: he had fled to Egypt and remained there. The change was proposed by Dathe, but is rejected by Maurer and by Keil.

[3] Ver. 11.—עַקְרַבִּים, scorpions, *flagelli genus globulis plumbeis cum aculeis incurvis munitum, a scorpii similitudine dictum* (Gesen. *Thes.* 11, 1062).

[4] Ver. 12.—[The Sept. omits here the significant mention of Jeroboam.

[5] Ver. 16.—[The Heb., Sept., Chald. and Syr. have the pronoun in the singular, *thy* tents. In the next clause the Sept. translates *νῦν βόσκε τὸν οἶκόν σου, Δαυίδ.*]

[6] Ver. 18.—[The Sept., Syr., and Arab. read Adoniram.

[7] Ver. 20.—[The Sept. here inserts "and Benjamin."

[8] Ver. 21.—[The Vat. (not Alex.) Sept. reduces this number to 120,000.

[9] Ver. 22.—[Many MSS. followed by the Sept., Vulg., Chald., and Syr. read here יְהוָֹה instead of אֱלֹהִים.]

[10] Ver. 24.—[The Vat. (not Alex.) Sept. here inserts a passage quite equal in length to the whole chapter, containing many particulars whose utterly unhistorical character may be seen from the opening statement that Rehoboam was six teen years old at his accession and reigned twelve years. *Cf.* chap. xiv. 21.—F. G.]

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

Ver. 1. **And Rehoboam went to Shechem.** The city of Shechem was about eighteen hours' distance north of Jerusalem, and lay at the foot of Mount Gerizim, in the mountain range of Ephraim (Judg. ix. 7). It is often mentioned in the history of the Patriarchs (Gen. xii. 6; xxxiii. 18; xxxiv. 2; xxxvii. 12), and Joshua had intended it to be a free Levite city. He likewise gathered all the tribes together there, and held that important diet in which all the people pledged themselves to the observance of Jehovah's covenant (Josh. xx. 7; xxiv. 1, 25). In the time of the Judges, Abimelech made Shechem the capital of his kingdom (Judg. ix.); he destroyed it, indeed, but it was soon rebuilt, and continued to be one of the chief cities of the northern part. Chap. xii. 1 gives us the reason why Rehoboam left Jerusalem, where he had been made king, and went to Shechem; *for all Israel were come to Shechem.* By כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל we are not to understand all the twelve tribes (Ewald), but only ten, as vers. 12, 18, and 20 clearly show; under David even those tribes had claimed the name of the entire people (2 Sam. ii. 9, 10, 17, 28). בָּא is not the imperfect but the pluperfect, for the ten tribes did not go to Shechem because the king was there but just the reverse: because (כִּי) they had gone to Shechem, the king went thither. He therefore did not call them together there, but they, *i. e.*, their elders, judges, and representatives, had assembled in this old Ephraimitic capital, as they had once done in Joshua's time (Josh. xxiv. 1; *cf.* 2 Sam. v. 1, 3), and this induced the king to journey to Shechem. Their design in meeting was *to make him king*, *i. e.*, to recognize him as king, as Judah had done, though he had already ascended the throne; to pay him homage, on the condition, however, that he would agree to their wishes and demands. This was why they did not assemble in Jerusalem, as they were in reality bound to do, and as they had done to David when they went to Hebron, the place of David's residence, to do him homage (2 Sam. v. 1 *sq.*), but in Shechem. It was a "a significant hint, if Rehoboam had properly understood it" (Ewald). It is very improbable that they summoned him to their assembly, as they did Jeroboam; he seems to have gone unsummoned with his whole retinue (vers. 6, 8). That the 10 tribes had assembled "to assert their ancient right of choice" (Gramberg) is an entire mistake. For there is no mention anywhere of such a right; and the text does not say they went to Shechem to choose a king, but to make him—Rehoboam—king, *i. e.*, to confirm him as such.

Vers. 2–3. **And it came to pass, when Jeroboam . . . heard of it, &c.** Ver. 2. If we retain the reading וַיֵּשֶׁב יָרָבְעָם בְּמִצְרָיִם we must, like Maurer, take ver. 2 to be properly the antecedent sentence, and begin the conclusion with וַיָּבֹאוּ, ver. 3, and translate like De Wette: "When Jeroboam heard of it (he was still in Egypt, whither he had fled from Solomon the king, and Jeroboam dwelt in Egypt, and they sent and called him), then Jeroboam and the whole assembly came, and they spake to Rehoboam." Apart from the crude form of this sentence, the words following "he was still in Egypt," namely, "and Jeroboam dwelt in Egypt," appear to be quite superfluous; we must in this case supply, after he had returned from Egypt, before "then Jeroboam came;" and, finally, it would follow that the people assembled at Shechem sent messengers thence to Egypt to bring back Jeroboam, which is not to be supposed, because the journey there and back required several weeks, and "all Israel" would have been compelled to wait during this time, without accomplishing anything, in Shechem, for Jeroboam's arrival. But all these difficulties fall away if we read, like 2 Chron. x. 2, וַיָּשָׁב יָרָבְעָם מִמִּצְרָיִם, *i. e.*, and Jeroboam returned from Egypt. According to this, the case was simply so: On the news of Solomon's death Jeroboam returned from Egypt to his tribe-land Ephraim, and, we are to imply, to his native place Zereda (chap. xi. 26), or, as the Sept. says, Sarira, which could not have been very far distant from Shechem. They sent thither for him; he came, and took the lead in the negotiations which those assembled at Shechem made with Rehoboam. The Vulgate also translates ver. 2: *At vero Jeroboam, cum adhuc esset in Ægypto profugus a facie regis Salomonis, audita morte ejus reversus est de Ægypto. Miseruntque et vocaverunt eum; venit ergo Jeroboam et, etc.* The [Vatican] Sept., which places this verse in chap. xi. 43, translates: κατευθύνει καὶ ἔρχεται εἰς τὴν πόλιν αὐτοῦ εἰς τὴν γῆν Σαριρὰ τὴν ἐν ὄρει Ἐφραίμ. It is easy to see what thoughts those who composed this Assembly were revolving when, before Rehoboam's arrival, they called the man who had lifted up his hand against Solomon, and was just returned from Egypt, and made him their leader and speech-maker to Rehoboam. Rehoboam having come to them, instead of they to him at Jerusalem, only made them bolder. From the long sentence which the Sept. places after ver. 24 we can glean nothing certain regarding Jeroboam and his conduct after he returned from Egypt; everything is mixed together and the different personages confused; for instance, Jeroboam is confounded with Hadad the Edomite, and the prophet Ahijah with the prophet Semaiah; Jeroboam's mother is called γυνὴ πόρνη, &c. Keil is right in denying all historical value to this sentence, out of which Thenius strives to complete the story.

Vers. 4–5. **Thy father made our yoke grievous, &c.** Ver. 4. The word עֹל does not mean every kind of heavy load, but the yoke laid on the neck of beasts designed for labor (Numb. xix. 2; Deut. xxi. 3; 1 Sam. vi. 7); it is the yoke of labor, and, as such, the symbol of servile work (Deut. xxviii. 48; Lev. xxvi. 13; Jer. xxvii. 8, 11); it is, for this reason, parallel with עֲבֹדָה here. The grievance, therefore, is nothing—it is well to notice this—but the levy-work for Solomon's public buildings, and we see this plainly enough by vers. 11 and 14, where Rehoboam's answer is recorded. That the complaint was well founded, that Solomon had really exacted too heavy servile work from his people, as the Egyptian king once did in Moses' time (Ex. xi. 1, 23), is generally taken for granted, although the complaint comes from the mouths of a number of people who were excited with thoughts of secession, and who were jealous of Judah. At their head stood a man, too, who had already tried to raise an insurrection, and had

not renounced his ambitious plans in exile. Complaint from the mouths of such cannot be taken as testimony, nor can it ever weigh under such circumstances, except joined to other and purely historical evidence. We have none such, however. Solomon was not the first to adopt the measure of a conscription for working at the public buildings as well as for war-service. This was customary throughout the ancient East. Everywhere, from Egypt to Babylon, the immense buildings were raised, not by paid workmen, but by conscriptions. There were, for instance, the 360,000 men who worked twenty years at one pyramid (see above on chap. v. 13). Even David had, among his five chief officers, one who was specially "over the tribute" (2 Sam. xx. 24), which was then a standing regulation. We find the tribute brought into system in Solomon's time, and the people were, as contrasted with conquered foreigners, treated with gentle consideration (chaps. v. 13 *sq.;* ix. 20 *sq.*). Nowhere is the voice of complaint heard about it, and our author is far from representing Solomon's conduct as hard and blameworthy, but rather relates it to his praise. As the tribute-work was distributed by turns amongst "all Israel," Ephraim or the ten tribes received no more proportionately than the two remaining tribes, and there is not the most indirect allusion anywhere that Solomon exacted more from the Ephraimites than from the others. For this reason, the complaint of the "yoke" being "grievous," which they alone make, seems to be only a welcome excuse suggested to them by their former superintendent Jeroboam. The real motive came to light later (ver. 16). If we cannot admit the complaint of too hard tribute-work to be well founded, still less have we any right to add other things to the complaint of which it makes no mention. The grievous yoke and heavy service are not generally taken to mean, as the plain expressions do, the tribute-work alone, but all burdens laid on the people, *i. e.*, the taxes and produce which they had to pay and deliver; not their powers of labor alone, but their "capacity of paying taxes," are thought to have been too much tested by Solomon (De Wette, Ewald, Eisenlohr). "Discontent grew with the oppression of the people by ever new burdens and tributes, that were quite contrary to the original freedom of the community" (Diestel); the monarchy had become "a despotism, a sultanate" (Duncker), and the speakers for the people had therefore laid before Rehoboam "the terms of capitulation, which were to lighten the universal oppression under which Israel had sighed since Solomon's reign began" (Winer, *R.-W.-B.* II. *s.* 311). This view, almost universally current, stands in direct contradiction with the historical evidence. As to the taxes and deliveries, they are not once mentioned in the complaint, as we have already said; neither is the poverty or other misery resulting from them once named anywhere. It is difficult to conceive how any one can appeal to such places as chap. x. 25 (De Wette), for there is no mention there of what the people brought, but of the presents which strangers brought the king. Ewald himself admits that there is no evidence that there was an income tax, and it by no means appears, as Winer supposes, from chap. x. 15, that "custom duties" had been introduced. There is still less historical proof of the universal oppression of the people under Solomon. All that our author relates, from chap. ii. to x., is to show the unwonted prosperity and splendor of Solomon's kingdom; its immense wealth, its peaceful condition, and its thriving commerce are described in the strongest terms, and just by those passages which have been quoted to prove the heaviness of the taxation and the supposed oppression, is it specially manifest how happy and peaceful the people were under Solomon's reign (chap. iv. 20; iv. 25; *cf.* viii. 66), so that the prophets took the kingdom of Solomon as a type of the Messiah's (see above). Even after chap. xi., in which Solomon's fall is recorded, there is nothing to show that Israel "sighed" under universal oppression; and when the people as well as king became degenerate in the latter part of his reign, it was rather in consequence of too great prosperity and luxury than of great burdens and poverty. Finally, Solomon is threatened, in both addresses of the prophet Ahijah (chap. xi. 11 and 31 *sq.*), with the partition of his kingdom, not because he had oppressed the people with servile labor and heavy taxations, but solely because he had suffered his strange wives to persuade him to introduce idolatrous forms of worship. It would have been a just and well-founded complaint had they alleged that Solomon had broken the supreme command in the fundamental law of Israel by the toleration of idol-worship, and had thus undermined the strength of the kingdom. But the complainants are wholly silent on this, and the sequel shows how little they or their speaker Jeroboam cared for the observance of that fundamental law.

Vers. 6–14. **Rehoboam consulted, &c.** Ver. 6. The זְקֵנִים are not old people, but the elders (*senators*) who constituted the administration-college of Solomon [or council] (chap. iv. 2–6). Rehoboam had retained them as such, but had not, as Thenius thinks, "placed them on the retired list," for in that case he would not have taken them with him to Shechem, and he certainly would not have heard their counsel before that of the young men. The expression, *that stood before Solomon*, shows that they were in immediate attendance on the king. In their advice, vers. 7, הַיּוֹם stands next to כָּל־הַיָּמִים, and עֶבֶד at the beginning, over against עֲבָדִים at the conclusion; and as עֶבֶד is strengthened by the immediately following וַעֲבַדְתָּם, we have no right to weaken it, and to take it in another sense from עֲבָדִים that stands opposite to it at the conclusion; this is generally done, and עֶבֶד is translated "complaisant," but עֲבָדִים, on the contrary, is translated "subject." The elders not only advised the king to compromise, but that he should "serve" the people at least "this day," and assured him that the people would then be his "servants" "for ever;" they proposed that he should for the present moment reverse the existing relation: the king was to be "servant" and yield to the will of the people, in the expectation that the people would afterwards be his "servants." We can easily imagine that such a proposal (which would not perhaps have succeeded) was not very agreeable to the rash and imperious young king, in whose veins Ammonite blood flowed (chap. xiv. 21). The word יֶלֶד, ver. 8, is used for

a child at any age from its birth (Ex. ii. 3, 6, 7) to youth; יְלָדִים are not, therefore, real counsellors, like the זְקֵנִים, but young people who were in attendance upon the king ("stood before him"). The words, that were grown up with him, show that Rehoboam was himself still יֶלֶד (*cf.* 2 Chron. xiii. 7). The proverbial expression ver. 10, *my little finger*, &c., means, I am much mightier than Solomon; his power was as the little finger to the body, compared with mine; if my father had power to compel you, I have still more. From this general way of speaking they proceed in ver. 11 to allude to the particular grievance of the forced labor. The yoke and whips belong together, and are the signs of laboring servants (Ecclesiasticus xxx. 26 or xxxiii. 27). The king was to use instead of the whips for servants the thorn-whip used for criminals alone, and which was called *scorpio* by the Romans (*Isidor. Origg.* v. 27, 18: *Virga, si est aculeata, scorpio vocatur, quia arcuato vulnere in corpus infigitur*). The meaning is, my father used ordinary means to keep you at work, but I will do it with extraordinary and severer means. The answer says as little of taxes as the complaint itself; it only refers to the enforced work, and it does not even admit that Solomon exacted too much, but it is only now proposed to do so. The pleasure with which Rehoboam accepted this advice is very indicative of his disposition.

Vers. 15–17. **The cause was from the Lord.** Ver. 15. Inasmuch as the inconceivably foolish and perverse resolve of Rehoboam carried with it the irremediable division of the people and kingdom, the verse asserts it to be a course of things (סִבָּה from סבב) from Jehovah; not that Rehoboam was *forced* unwillingly to speak so, but in the same sense in which it is said of Pharaoh (Ex. xiv. 4; Rom. ix. 17) and of Judas (Matt. xxvi. 25). Witsius (Decaphyl. i. 3) says: *Ipsa Rehabeami stolida imprudentia consilio Dei inservivit, ut quod accidit etiam merito accidisse videtur.* We find here an application of the proverb: *Quem Deus vult perdere, prius dementat.* Every case of a hardened heart is a righteous judgment of God.

Vers. 16–17. **What portion have we,** &c. Ver. 16. This was the old Ephraimite watchword of rebellion, of which Sheba availed himself against the house of David (2 Sam. xx. 1). The first member of the sentence means this, What concern have we about David and his house, when the question is who shall be king over us? We have no fellowship with each other (Deut. x. 9). *Neither have we inheritance in the son of Jesse* is not equal to we can hope for and expect nothing from him; but, we do not belong to him, as Judah, by race-derivation. In the "son of Jesse" there is an allusion to David's humbler descent, just as in the New Testament to the "carpenter's son" (Matt. xiii. 55). *To your tents, O Israel!* is a proverbial call which originated in the time of the march through the wilderness, where the camp was arranged according to the tribes. Let every one return to his tribe and his home, without acknowledging Rehoboam. *Now see to thine own house, i.e.,* see how you can reign over your own tribe in the future; you have no right to us any more. In this whole cry "the deeply rooted dislike to David's royal house is strongly expressed, and we can perceive a more potent cause for the partition than the alleged oppression of Solomon" (Keil). Ver. 17 means that only those individuals belonging to the ten tribes remained under Rehoboam who were settled in Judah or had gone to settle there (2 Chron. xi. 3). The verse does not mean, then: "the tribe of Judah chose Rehoboam, who was one of them, to be king" (Ewald); for Judah had already acknowledged him such before he went to Shechem.

Vers. 18–19. **Adoram, who was over the tribute,** &c. Ver. 18. No doubt the same who is called *Adoniram* in the list of Solomon's chief officers (chap iv. 6), as also the Sept., Syr., and Arab. call him in this passage. Thenius thinks he was the son of Adoram, the chief of the tribute officers, who is mentioned in the lists of David's officials (2 Sam. xx. 24). If he was identical with this person he must certainly have been about eighty years of age, since David could not have given the office in question to quite a young man, and Solomon reigned forty years. It is evident that Rehoboam sent him to treat with the rebels, and to appease them, as Josephus expressly says. As the question was about lightening the tribute work, the chief officer over the tribute seems to have been selected by Rehoboam as the fittest person to mediate; probably Adoram was one of the "elders" who gave the advice to yield. But the people were highly incensed at the sight of this officer, and instead of listening to him, in their rage they stoned him. Bertheau has no grounds for his supposition that he came with an armed force (however small) to force the rebels to submission. For: unto this day, see on chap. viii. 8; ix. 21.

Vers. 20–21. **And it came to pass when all Israel heard,** &c. Ver. 20 closes the narrative, vers. 1–19, and is also the connecting link with the following vers. 21–24. The independence of the ten tribes had been achieved by their representatives in Shechem, who now returned to their different tribe-territories (end of ver. 16), and announced to "all Israel" what had happened, especially also the part that Jeroboam, just arrived from Egypt, had acted there. The latter, no doubt, also returned to his native place after the event. But when a king was to be chosen for the rebels he was called back and made king. This exasperated Rehoboam to make war on Israel. We cannot be surprised at the number he brought into the field, as the tribe of Judah alone had 500,000 men of war in the census that David took (2 Sam. xxiv. 9).

Vers. 22–24. **But the word of the Lord came,** &c. Ver. 22. The prophet Shemaiah did not belong to the tribe of Ephraim, like Ahijah (chap. xi. 29), but doubtless to Judah, and from the present passage as well as from 2 Chron. xii. 5, it seems that he must have lived in Jerusalem. As here, so also he had great influence through his preaching, when king Shishak came from Egypt to war against Rehoboam; he also wrote a history of Rehoboam (2 Chron. xii. 5–8, 15). *The thing is from me,* ver. 24. This prophet of Judah, as well as the Ephraimite prophet, declares the separation of the ten tribes to be a divine dispensation, which, humiliating and painful as it was to the house of David and Judah, might not be opposed by force of arms; for the separated tribes were still "brethren." Thus he recognizes a higher bond of union in spite of all separation, and wishes that

union held intact. The king and army follow his advice; they probably saw that a war with the numerically greater and just now bitterly excited ten tribes would bring them into a worse condition still.

HISTORICAL AND ETHICAL.

1. *The rebellion of the ten tribes against David's house, and the consequent partition of the kingdom*, was the most important and pregnant event in the history of Israel since it became an independent State. The divisions that took place in the time of the judges were only temporary, but this lasted for hundreds of years, and only terminated with the fall of both the separated kingdoms. An event that formed such an epoch, and had such a marked influence on sacred history, cannot possibly be traced to one fact alone, or to the defiant and thoughtless answer of Rehoboam; it must have been produced by deeper and more general causes, lying in the character of the people and in the mutual relation of the tribes. The tribe of Judah and the double one of Joseph (Ephraim and Manasseh, Josh. xvii. 17), whose progenitors were especially favored in the blessing (Gen. xlix. 8–12, 22–25), were from the beginning the most numerous, and therefore the most powerful, of all the twelve tribes. Judah numbered seventy-six thousand and five hundred before the entrance into Canaan; the double tribe of Joseph numbered eighty-five thousand and two hundred men (Numb. xxvi. 22, 28, 34, 37); this tribe claimed the largest territory at the division of the land (Josh. xvii. 14 *sq.*; 1 Chron. v. 1) on account of its number, and because it had inherited Reuben's birth-right. But the "sceptre" was promised to Judah, and the leaders in the march through the desert as well as in the conquest of Canaan headed that tribe (1 Chron. v. 2; Numb. ii. 3; x. 14; Judg. i. 2; xx. 18); both tribes were warlike (Jud. i. 4, 10; viii. 1 *sq.*; xii. 1 *sq.*; Ps. lxxviii. 9). In consequence of these relations, each tribe regarded itself as equal in powers with the other tribes, but also as evenly matched with each other. But added to this there was a difference in the character and pursuits of the tribes; whilst Judah was the leader and head of the theocracy and the covenant, therefore of higher religious life (Gen. xlix. 10; Ps. lx. 9; lxxviii. 67 *sq.*; cxiv. 1, 2), Ephraim represented the nature-side of the people's life; and the consciousness of natural, material strength and earthly abundance appears with it in the foreground (Gen. xlix. 22 *sq.*; Deut. xxxiii. 13; Ps. lxxviii. 9 *sq.*). There was, therefore, in the latter more receptivity for nature-religion, and a tendency to independence of any other tribe, and especially of one not entirely its equal. There was, then, the germ of a dualism very early in the nation, and this germ grew more and more in the distracted times of the Judges, asserting itself sometimes with more, sometimes with less energy. After Saul's death the two chief tribes formally separated under different kings (2 Sam. ii. 4–11); this, however, only lasted seven years and a half, after which the revolted tribes went over to the king of Judah, *i. e.*, David (2 Sam. v. 1 *sq.*). But the more the power and authority of Judah increased under David and Solomon, so much the more did the old jealousy and love of independence grow in Ephraim; the tribute-labors, and especially the structures which served to strengthen the dominant authority of Judah which Solomon had achieved by Ephraimites, were calculated especially to increase those feelings. Jeroboam's attempt to raise an insurrection miscarried, but the desire for independence was not extinguished thereby. It broke out again the more violently after Solomon's death, as there was hope of getting rid of Rebohoam more easily, who did not in the least resemble his father. The great event of the partition of the kingdom had its roots in a primitive characteristic of the tribe, which characteristic had existed over four hundred years, and now broke out at last with violence, creating a double State. Rehoboam's answer was only the spark which fell into the powder magazine. The recent historical criticism admits the agency of the Ephraimite character in the revolt, but finds the especial and chief cause in the essential nature of the kingdom. Ewald is of this opinion (*Gesch. des V. Isr.* III. *s.* 393 *sq.*). The monarchy had, in its very nature, a tendency to extend its power further and further, and to restrict every other power in the nation more and more, or else to absorb it. It reached a very high stage in Solomon's time, but it was ever growing, and it made more and more severe exactions upon the people in labor and taxation. A further strengthening and one-sided growth of the monarchy was held by the best men in Israel to be ruinous and dangerous to the ancient freedom of the people. There might have been, indeed, a way of reconciling the claims of the monarchy and of the nation without a revolution, *i. e.*, "having what is now called a constitution drawn up, which, when well devised, is the safeguard of the best modern Christian nations." But there was no such remedy at hand; the heads of the tribes only assembled when a new king was to be declared. All the best of the people, and particularly the prophets, had agreed that the government could not continue as it was at the close of Solomon's life. As the prophets had founded the kingdom, and advanced it so much by the elevation of David's house over that of Saul, they now expected furtherance by another change of dynasty; impressed by their counsel, it was forthwith achieved in consequence of the voice of the people and the folly of Rehoboam, &c., &c. This whole mode of explanation, already adopted here and there, rests on the utterly unproved supposition that Solomon's government constantly grew more absolute and despotic, till, at last, it seriously threatened the liberty of the people. We have not the slightest historical proof of this. Where is it said that Soloman oppressed his people, in every way, by taxation and tribute-labor? Where is it said that the prophets believed the liberties of the people to be threatened, and that they announced this publicly? How happens it that Solomon, who advanced his realm to a degree of prosperity it never before and never again enjoyed, is made to be a despot and oppressor? Just when the text has been treating exclusively of the tribute to the splendid court, it says: "Judah and Israel were many, as the sand which is by the sea in multitude, eating and drinking, and making merry," &c.; "Judah dwelt safely, every man under his vine and under his fig-tree, from Dan to Beer-Sheba, *all the days of Solomon*" (chap. iv. 20, 25). That he demanded too much of this tribute-labor, which was customary among all ancient

nations, and had been exacted before his time, there is no other evidence than the complaint of the angry revolutionary assembly of Ephraimites at Shechem, and this cannot be regarded as impartial and historical testimony. So little did Solomon interfere with the liberty of his people, that there was an unprecedented commerce with all the neighboring nations in his reign; he even allowed freedom of worship—allowed too much rather than too little liberty. This and not despotism was what the prophets apprehended danger from. There is not in the whole history of Solomon a single act that can be called despotic or tyrannical, like those of later kings, for instance, Ahab or Jehu; and yet the former is said to have ruled with such intolerable severity that the prophets and the best among the people were compelled to think of a change of government. Of all kingdoms, that of Israel should be the last to be judged from a modern political point of view. The theocratic constitution was not revoked when the human monarchy began: Jehovah continued to be the true king of Israel, and the human king was the "servant of Jehovah;" as such he had to do Jehovah's will, not his own. There was, therefore, no such thing as absolutism, which we are told clung to this monarchy by virtue of its nature. But we cannot comprehend how any should think that the best remedy against the supposed despotism of Solomon would have been a representative government, after the pattern of the constitutions of our nineteenth century.

2. *The revolt of the ten tribes from the house of David* (ver. 19) is often represented as justifiable. J. D. Michaelis (*Mos. Recht* I. § 55) saw nothing more in it than a new capitulation of a people still free; De Wette (*Beiträge* I. *s.* 129) went further, and asserted that, "according to 1 Kings xii., these tribes were fully justified in what they did; they demanded fair concessions, and there is only Rehoboam's folly to be blamed." Duncker says (*Gesch. des Alt. s.* 402), "the Israelites remembered their right to choose and anoint the king." But we find nothing said anywhere of such a national right: the law for kings (Deut. xvii. 14 *sq.*) says nothing of it; it recognizes no conditions of election; and the history mentions no king except Jeroboam (ver. 20), either in Judah or Israel, who was elected by the free choice of the people. The monarchy was hereditary in Judah, and continued in David's house till the dissolution of the kingdom; in Israel, also, the son succeeded the father, or usurpers arose who gained the throne by force; but the people never once chose the king. In the present instance, Ephraim with its confederates had no right, certainly, to reject a king who was such by birth, and to choose another by themselves alone, without Judah. Ephraim had solemnly acknowledged the brotherhood of all the twelve tribes, and had willingly submitted to David (2 Sam. v. 1 *sq.*); and all the tribes had acknowledged Solomon to be, in right of being David's son, the true king of "Judah and Israel" (chap. iv. 20; v. 5). At the great festival of the dedication they had all gathered around Solomon, who announced to them the divine promise that David's house should never want a man to sit upon the throne of David (chap. viii. 1, 24, 25); they united together in a solemn bond, by a common thanksgiving sacrifice to Jehovah at the temple, which was the central point, as it were, of the kingdom, and this bond joined them all together as well as with David's house; as the king blessed them, so, also, they blessed him (chap. vi. 62–68). Solomon's son was therefore the rightful heir of the throne for all the tribes, and none had a right to revolt from him. Even granted that Solomon had given his subjects cause of complaint, by exacting too much tribute-labor in the latter part of his reign, yet this did not justify any one of the tribes in breaking the bond of national union, and severing themselves from the hereditary dynasty, especially, too, as Rehoboam had not as yet shown in acts what his government would be. The revolt of the ten tribes was not brought about first by his foolish wilful answer, but the latter "only offered them a wished-for opportunity to carry out their already purposed revolt" (Keil). Hence they did not want to treat, but gave free vent to their hatred, and murdered the innocent ambassador of the king. The division can therefore be regarded as nothing else than a revolutionary act, which cannot by any means be excused, much less justified. A right of resistance lies only in cases where the chief ruler arbitrarily violates the fundamental law upon which the material and also the spiritual and moral existence of a people rests. But the rebellion is then the act of the government itself, and not of the subjects. But single grievances, even if real, can never justify revolt from lawful authority (especially when only brought forward by a part of the nation) or form sufficient ground for rebellion and deeds of violence (*cf.* Rothe, *Theol. Ethik* III. *s.* 977 *sq.*). Solomon had certainly attacked and undermined the fundamental law of Israel, by permitting and favoring idolatry, but the ten tribes made no complaint of this, but solely of the alleged excess of tribute-labor, which Judah and Benjamin shared with them, but which they did not bring forward as a grievance.

3. *That Rehoboam returned an answer to the people, with which the storm that had* threatened the house of David burst forth, is emphatically said (ver. 15) to have been from the Lord; and the prophecy of Ahijah (chap. xi. 11 and 31) was thereby fulfilled. At the same time the prophet Shemaiah warns them not to make war on the seceders, saying, "*this thing is from the Lord.*" This does not justify the conduct of the ten tribes any more than that of Rehoboam, but intimates indeed that the partition of the kingdom determined on in the counsels of God happened in such a way as to make it evident that it was the fault of Rehoboam. According to the word of Ahijah the partition appeared to have a double design: to "afflict the seed of David, but not forever" (chap. xi. 39), to be as such a chastisement (2 Sam. vii. 14); and also to afford to the inborn instinct of Ephraim for independence the opportunity of free development, yet on the indispensable condition of unchanging fidelity to the fundamental law that David had held; the express restriction was added, that David's seed was not to be afflicted forever. We already remarked above (Hist. and Ethic. 5, on chap. xi. 14–43) that such a temporary division of the kingdom was not inconsistent with the higher unity of the divine monarchy. But as neither of the kingdoms adhered to that higher unity, Ephraim forsaking the law continually from the beginning, and Judah only sometimes faithful, the division became, through the guilt of both kingdoms, the germ of their destruction (Matt. xii.

25). Because the higher unity was forsaken, the history of the divided kingdom is nothing but a slow process of dissolution of the human monarchy in Israel, and with it of the outward, earthly kingdom, limited by natural race and to a given land. That unity was designed, in the divine counsels, to be an eternal heavenly kingdom, an inward kingdom of God, to embrace all nations, a *βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν* in which "Ephraim shall not envy Judah, and Judah shall not vex Ephraim" (Isai xi. 13); in which "they shall be no more two nations, neither shall they be divided into two kingdoms any more at all," but shall be "one nation," and "one king shall be king to them all" (Ezek. xxxvii. 15–22). The fact that the partition of the kingdom, this beginning of its end, immediately followed its culmination of earthly dominion under David and Solomon, shows how frail and perishable it was; the more it approached its dissolution, the more ardent became the longing for an enduring and eternal kingdom, the more definite and significant prophecy became. Well may Witsius exclaim, referring to the above-mentioned sentence in ver. 15: *O sapientia et occulti miranda potentia fati! quæ res omnes ita dirigit et flectit, ut tamen ipsi illuc ivisse videamur, et consiliis fatisque nostris gradum nobis struamus ad fatalem illum lapsum sive adscensum.* The apostle's exclamation about the ways and judgments of God, though universally applicable, is so especially here (Rom. xi. 33).

4. *In the conduct of the various important personages* concerned in bringing about the partition of the kingdom, all the sins and weaknesses appear which lie at the bottom of all such events; so that we behold, in this history, a reflection of every revolution in its nature and course, and it may serve as a picture of future ones in every age (*cf.* especially the striking treatise of Vilmar, *Die Theilung des Davidsreichs. Pastoral-theol. Blätter*, 1861, *s.* 177 *bis* 193), which we cited above on chap. xi. 4. A complete lack of religious feeling and manner is first observable in these two opposite parties; both move upon a purely outward, secular, and political-worldly soil, though in Israel the national and religious consciousness coincide principally. There had been hitherto no assembly of the whole people or of their representatives, for weighty affairs, in which the religious element had failed. When Joshua called the elders together in Shechem, before his end, "they presented themselves before God" (Josh. xxiv. 1 *sq.*). When Samuel did the same at Mizpeh, he said to them, "present yourselves before the Lord" (1 Sam. x. 19). When all the tribes came to David in Hebron, after Ish-bosheth's death, and acknowledged him as king over all Israel, they call to mind Jehovah's word, and David "made a league with them before the Lord" (2 Sam. v. 1–3). When Solomon assembled all the heads of the tribes and the elders at the dedication, the ceremony not only began with divine worship, but ended by the "king and all Israel with him offering sacrifice before the Lord" (chap. viii. 1, 5, 62). In the present instance, however, nothing was done "before the Lord," but everything was done without Him. No one, neither one of the tribe-heads nor Jeroboam nor Rehoboam nor his counsellors and companions, inquire after Him. No one names Him. That He is their true sovereign before whom they must all bow does not occur to them. They think only which of the two parties should rule the other. This conduct reveals a state of things which always and everywhere precedes revolutions; which are made ready inevitably when, in a nation and kingdom, high and low alike ask no longer for the holy and living God, and where infidelity and indifference have entered. The breaking of religious ties brings with it, sooner or later, that of the State also; hence we generally find, in the present day, that those who plan the overthrow of the government, as a rule, seek also to undermine the church foundations.—When we look particularly at *the conduct of the people of the ten tribes* we see that they had all forgotten the great benefits and blessing they had received through the house of David, especially during the forty years of Solomon's prosperous reign; they forgot that each had dwelt securely under his vine and fig-tree as long as Solomon lived, that they had eaten and drunken and been merry; they only thought of the dispute about tribute-labor, hence ingratitude and discontent. They agreed to go to Shechem instead of Jerusalem, and only to do homage under certain conditions; this was already mutiny and rebellion. Hereupon they called a man who had lifted his hand against Solomon, and proved himself a foe of David's house, to be their speaker and leader; with him at their head, they went to the king in the consciousness that they formed the majority of the nation, and laid before him their complaint of excessive labor and want of freedom. When their stormy petition was rejected, there arose wild and scornful cries, and a regular rebellion broke out; they rushed in blind rage at the innocent mediator for the king, and murder him, whereupon the king has to flee in great haste; and they conclude by making their leader and spokesman king. If, on the other hand, we contemplate *the conduct of the government*, we find everything here, too, that was calculated to call forth rebellion and insurrection instead of avoiding or appeasing it. First, utter ignorance of the feeling among the people, and therefore no sort of precaution for the threatened danger; the king goes thoughtlessly to the discontented people, thus falling into the snare set for him. When surprised in Shechem with the demand made, he is irresolute, asks time for reflection, and keeps the people in suspense, which must only have increased their excitement. He then consults his immediate attendants; the elders advise him to descend from the throne, for the time being, and to humor the people; the young men advise him to the opposite course. Thus there was want of unity in the higher circles, and views in direct antagonism one over against the other. The high-sounding advice of the courtiers pleased the weak and headstrong monarch best, and he delivered an answer which supposes a power which no longer existed, and shows equal folly, arrogance, and contempt of the people. Thereupon the storm broke loose, and Rehoboam then wished to make concessions, and to treat with them. But instead of going himself courageously to face the excited throng, this arrogant and imperious man sent an old and faithful servant to be exposed to their rage. It was "too late;" Adoram was killed, and he himself had to flee in haste. When such perverted ways, faults, and sins are found in the government, the way for revolution is already formed, and when it has once begun, soldiers are as useless as concessions; what is lost by a person's own fault is lost forever.

5. *The appearance of the prophet Shemaiah* after the partition seems like the rising of the sun after a dark, stormy night. Whilst sin and wickedness reign in both parties, and none of them cares about the living God, "the man of God" appears with undaunted courage; armed only with the sword of the Spirit, the word of God, he confronts the blinded, wilful king and an army of 180,000 men. He commands them in the name of the Lord to lay down their arms, and to go home; standing on the rock of his strength (Ps. lxii. 8), he calls to the surging waves, Thus far and no farther! and no one dares to offer opposition. Thus the prophets again come forth in majesty, as the admonishing and avenging conscience of Israel, as the divine corrective of all human actions; and this shows, too, how erroneous the assertion is that the partition of the kingdom was the result of a series of conflicts that went on, especially under Solomon, between the two powers of the monarchy and of the prophets, which existed side by side in Israel. It was not monarchy and the prophets which were in conflict, but Ephraim and the house of David. Both these took purely secular and political ground, and they had no other aim than to lord it over each other. The prophets take a stand-point above both; and the prophet speaks and contends for the divine monarchy in Judah as well as in Israel. As for the rest, Judah appears here in a much more favorable light than Ephraim; it faithfully adheres to David's house, and knows nothing of complaint of tribute-labor, which had borne as heavily on it as on Ephraim; while Ephraim, which well knew the promise given to David's house, disregards that promise completely. Judah, knowing the word of the Lord by the prophet, rises against his brethren at the call of his king; but Ephraim listens to a Jeroboam, and if a prophet in Shechem had warned them against insurrection he would doubtless have fared no better than Adoram.

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

Vers. 1–20. The departure of Israel from the house of David: 1. The grievances. 2. The decision. 3. The rebellion.—The division of the kingdom. 1. A consequence of manifold sins (of Solomon, Jeroboam, Rehoboam). 2. A divine dispensation (for their humiliation and chastisement, and for a direction toward the heavenly eternal kingdom, v. Ethical).—The sources and causes of the rebellion. 1. In general (estrangement from God, indifferentism, and unbelief). 2. In particular, these sins on the part of the people (Prov. xiv. 34), and on the part of the princes (Prov. xx. 28). Where prince and people fear God, there will be no rebellion; but where no covenant with God exists, all human considerations fall in pieces.

Ver. 1–5. The assemblage of the people at Shechem. 1. Who were present (the ten tribes with Jeroboam, returned from Egypt, at their head, ostensibly to do homage, but really to stir up revolt; the assembling together was unlawful, unbidden, and arbitrary. Warning from such courses. Prov. xxiv. 21–22). What the people sought. (Murmurs and complaints against the pretended oppression of Solomon, instead of gratitude for great benefits, and the well-being of the State. These complaints were rather a pretext than the truth, and were an exaggeration of the grievances; they demanded not the maintenance of the law and the covenant; but merely material elevation, less labor, and more outward freedom and independence. Admonition of 1 Pet. ii. 17–19).—PREISWERK (in the periodical, *Morgenland*, 1839): The assembling together of great idle crowds in a small space is a device of all demagogues; these crowds mutually excite each other, masses of men, like-minded, inspire each other with confidence, peaceful councils vanish, men become accustomed to the shouts of the insurgents, imbibe their principles, venture no contradiction against the outburst of passion, especially when swelled by numbers, and, thus inflamed, are dragged onwards in paths from which later repentance can never bring them back.—Ver. 1. It is never advisable to go where men are assembling themselves together, who testify by their choice of a meeting-place that they have no good end in view. (Shechem recalls the story in Judges ix.)—Vers. 2–3. Experience teaches that those who have once set up an opposition to legitimate authority will ever persist in their resolve, even if their design fail or is pardoned; they only await another opportunity to carry out their plans; therefore they should never be trusted.—Vers. 3–4. Rebellious people easily seek and find in public circumstances means which they amplify and exaggerate in order to give an appearance of justice to their wickedness, and to have some pretext for their criminal designs.—CRAMER: It is an universal fact that men exclaim more concerning oppression than concerning godlessness and other sins; are more careful for the body than for the soul; and, so they are free in action, give little heed to the soul's nurture (Ex. xvi. 3).—A people which prescribes to its lawful sovereign the conditions of its obedience to him, and directs him how to govern, assumes to itself royal authority, and overturns the appointed order of God, thus rushing surely on to its own destruction.—Ver. 5. A prince who, upon his accession to the throne, requires time to decide if his rule shall be mild and merciful or harsh and despotic, cannot have assumed his high responsible post in the fear and love of God; therefore he must expect no divine blessing. It is well and good, indeed, in all weighty matters to take time for reflection, but in time of sudden danger, rapid, firm decision is equally necessary. One accustomed to walk in God's ways will at such times take no step which will afterward cause him bitter repentance.

Vers. 6–11. Rehoboam holds a council. 1. With whom? (With his own servants, old and young, but not with the Lord his God, and with his servants. In difficult and grave matters we should not neglect to take counsel with men, but chiefly should we go to Him for counsel of whom it may be said: He has the way of all ways, and never fails in counsel, and "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, &c. (James i. 5). For, saith the Lord, Woe to the rebellious children who take counsel, but not of me, &c. (Is. xxx. 1). If He sit not in the council, in vain do young and old advise. Had Jeroboam sought light from above in those three days, and prayed as once his father did (1 Kings iii. 9), or as Jeremiah (Jer. xxxii. 19), or entreated like Jehoshaphat (2 Kings iii. 11), then he would not have been like a reed shaken by the wind, but his heart would have been

strong.) 2. The advice given him. (Neither counsel was divine, but both merely human (Matt. xvi. 23). The old men, out of their fear and apprehension, advised: renounce for the present thy royal prerogative, and bow before the will of the people; later thou canst act quite differently. This advice ran counter to his pride and despotism, so he refused the counsel of the old men. Through flattery and insolence combined, the young men counselled a course actually inhuman, viz.: to abuse his royal prerogative, to care nothing for his people and their wishes, but simply to treat them with violence. This advice suited him well, because it corresponded with his rough, harsh, selfish and violent character. But this produced the exact reverse of what he wished and hoped. When you receive conflicting counsels from men, apply to both the test of God's word, for: Ps. xix. 8; cxix. 104 *sq.*) Ver. 6. It is the first privilege and duty of a king to seek to surround himself with men, who, fearing no man, either high or low, and regardless of their own profit or advantage, shall advise him as befits men responsible before a just and holy God. One such man alone outweighs whole hosts of soldiers, for: Prov. xx. 28. Ver. 7. A king who refuses to be a "servant of God" readily finds himself in a situation where he is compelled to be a servant of the people. The splendor of majesty is enhanced by benevolence, goodness, and mercy, but never by timid yielding and submission to the popular will. Ver. 8. Where the counsels of the aged are rejected, be it in a kingdom or in a house, and those only of the youthful followed, there men pursue an unhallowed path. For to a true wisdom of life experience is necessary, and this youth cannot have (Lev. xix. 32; Ecclesiasticus viii. 11). Those who grow up with us have, unconsciously and involuntarily, a vast influence over our modes of thought and views of life, therefore parents must have a watchful eye over the intimacies of their children. Ver. 10, 11. A vaunting speech is by no means a proof of courage; the more boastful a man's speech the less resolute he will be in peril and temptation; a truly strong, firm, and calm man is silent. Time-serving and flattery are most dangerous for a prince; they wear the garb of fidelity and devotion, and in reality are the greatest treachery. Chiefly distrust those who counsel thee to do what gratifies thy vanity, thy selfishness, and thine own desires, and costs thee no sacrifice.—OSIANDER: One should rather distrust all harsh judgments, because they accord chiefly with the disposition of the flesh, and not of the spirit, which inclines to mercy.

Vers. 12-15. The answer of the king to the people. (*a*) It is hard—not merely a refusal, but imperious, tyrannical, unbecoming in any sovereign, but especially one who ought to be the servant of the compassionate and merciful God, with whom is great truth and loving-kindness (Ex. xxxiv. 6). Authority is the handmaid of God, to thee for good (Rom. xiii. 4), and not a terror. Government is not built upon whips and scourges, but upon justice, love, and confidence; that rule alone is thoroughly right where "mercy and truth are met together, righteousness and peace have kissed each other" (Ps. lxxxv. 11). How entirely different is David's example of sovereignty (Ps. ci.). (*b*) A rash and inconsiderate counsel, that of the young men, throwing oil on the flames instead of quenching them, and exciting uproar and revolt instead of disposing to submission and obedience. Passion always blinds. When the heart is perverted the head is likewise dulled, and those who are generally shrewd become unwise and unreasonable; for it is not the head which rules the heart, but, on the contrary, the inclinations and desires of the heart are stronger than the thoughts of the head (Prov. xv. 1: xxx. 33; James i. 19, 20; Eph. v. 15-17). "He that liveth many days, let him keep his tongue from evil," &c. (Ps. xxxiv. 13). Ver. 14. Midway between weak concessions and timid neutrality on the one hand, and selfish persistence in presumptive rights on the other, lies a course always pointed out by the Lord to those who bow before Him, pray to Him for wisdom, and long earnestly to do what pleases Him alone. Not only do great lords give harsh answers, but likewise petty rulers; those who moan and complain most bitterly against the tyranny of the great are frequently the greatest tyrants in a small way; they perceive the mote in their neighbor's eye, but not the beam in their own.—STARKE: The voice of the King of kings comes to us utterly unlike that of Rehoboam; therefore should we listen the more submissively and obediently to it.—WÜRT. SUMM: The Most High is ever at hand to change the darkest prospects of the children of men to a happy termination, and the accomplishment of His all holy will, even as Joseph said to his brethren (Gen. l. 20). God disposes not the thoughts of man to folly and sin, but brings them to judgment by their very perverseness, and thus makes it serve to carry out His own designs.

Vers. 16-19. The rebellion. (*a*) Its causes, sin, and folly, in high and low places: amongst the people, ingratitude, jealousy, envy, hatred, and thirst for independence; with the king, tyranny, violence, and folly. (*b*) Its consequences. (Disunion, which was in no wise advantageous, but the beginning of every species of ill-fortune, and of the final dissolution of the kingdom, followed deeds of violence. murder, and death-struggles. A people in rebellion is like a fierce dog unchained. The evil consequences of rebellion are often felt for a century.)—Ver. 16. As is the question, so is the answer. He who makes an unprincipled speech must not wonder if he receive a like reply. The same people who once came to David and said: See, we are thy bone and thy flesh, thou hast led us, thou shalt be our king (2 Sam. v. 1-2), now said: We have no part in David; what is the shepherd's son to us? This is the way of the multitude. To-day they cry: Hosanna, blessed be he who cometh in the name of the Lord! To-morrow it is, "Crucify him, we will not that he reign over us!" To-day, if fortune smile, they are fawning and bland, to-morrow, if misfortune threaten, they cry: "Look to thyself." Their cry is: We will be free, and servants of no man—not seeing that they are the blind tools of one or more leaders, who seek to reign over them. With the house of David, Israel flung aside the great promise (2 Sam. vii. 10-16; xxiii. 5), which depended on that house. For us has come that Son of David, whose kingdom shall have no end (Luke i. 32 *sq.*). Let us hold steadfastly by Him, and not be led astray by the uproar of the world: "We will have no part in him." He will finally destroy all enemies under his feet. Thus went Israel to his tents, but not as formerly, blest by the king and blessing him, rejoicing over the goodness of the Lord

to David, and to his people Israel (chap. viii. 66). He who has not a good conscience cannot return in peace.—Ver. 18. The people desired freedom, but a tree of liberty, watered with innocent blood, can only bear poison fruit. He who asks nothing of God can only lead others to folly,—he who cannot stand in the gap can never protect others. It is a judgment of God when a monarch, instead of being able to repose in the bosom of any one of his subjects, must needs fly before him to save his life. To yield to superior force is no disgrace, but shameful is the flight which is the result of arrogance and overbearing pride.

Vers. 19, 20. The great majority fell away, and the small minority remained faithful; the first was ruined and had no future; from the latter came forth the One before whom every knee bowed down, and whom every tongue acknowledged to be the Lord (Matt. ii. 6; Phil. ii. 11). In the kingdom of God there is no question of majorities and minorities, but it is simply, are we steadfast and faithful unto death? The pretended deliverers of the masses well know how to manage, so that they will become rulers of the people; they allow themselves to be summoned, and apparently persuaded to the very object which was the sole aim of their efforts.—Ver. 21. What Rehoboam had lost through insolence and weakness, through wickedness and folly, he now sought to regain by violence and battle; instead of humbling himself beneath the All-powerful hand of God, he is haughty and depends upon his own arm of flesh. The natural heart of man is a froward and timorous thing (Jer. xvii. 9), without safe resting-place or firm support, now buoyed up, now cast down, the football of every storm of fortune. But blessed is the man whose trust and confidence are in the Lord. It is a precious thing, &c. (Heb. xiii. 9). Faith is the victory, &c. (1 John v. 4.) In the renewed heart is no pride and no fear.—Vers. 22–24. The word of the Lord to the king and to the host; (*a*) the command: Ye shall not, &c.; (*b*) the cause of the commandment: For this thing is from me; (*c*) the obedience to the command: And they hearkened, &c. The lives and property of subjects are not to be used to compensate for the sins and follies of their rulers. Civil wars are the most unnatural, and likewise the fiercest and bitterest; he who stirs up strife between brethren commits a crime which never goes unpunished.—Shemaiah, a type of the Lord's servants. He is a man of God, and as such he brings good tidings of peace (Is. lii. 7); he has no other arms than the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God (Eph. vi. 17); with His word he comes, strong and fearless, before the king and his whole host (Acts iv. 20; ix. 15). It is said here of hundreds of thousands: "They hearkened to the word of the Lord, and returned, &c." How many thousands to-day hear this word, but, burying it beneath cares, riches, and the pride of life, live on without obedience and without repentance, bringing forth no fruit (Luke viii. 14).—Würt. Summ.: We see here with what great might the God of Truth maintains his word. By the prophet Ahijah he announced to Jeroboam that he should rule over ten tribes of Israel: that is accomplished here. He has promised to leave one tribe to the house of David: that is accomplished here. He promised to Ephraim or to his father Joseph, that kings should proceed from them (Gen. xlix.; Deut. xxxiii.), and that is fulfilled here, since Jeroboam becomes king through Ephraim. Thus nothing remains unfulfilled of all that God has spoken, promised, or threatened. Solomon and Rehoboam strove to prevent the fulfilment of God's word in Jeroboam, for which purpose Solomon planned to kill Jeroboam, and Rehoboam assembled a great army against him, but all in vain. Therefore let all men believe and seek after the word of God, and not strive to resist it (Luke xxi. 33).

[F. D. Maurice: "He (Jeroboam) did not trust the living God. He thought not that his kingdom stood upon a divine *foundation*, but that it was to be upheld by certain divine props *and sanctions*. The two doctrines seem closely akin; many regard them as identical; in truth there is a whole heaven between them. The king who believes that his kingdom has a divine foundation confesses his own subjection and responsibility to an actual living ruler. The king who desires to surround himself with divine sanctions, would fain make himself supreme, knows that he cannot, and therefore seeks help from the fear men have of an invisible power, in which they have ceased to believe. He wants *a* God as the support of his authority; *what* God, he cares very little."—E. H.]

B.—*The establishment of the kingdom of Israel by Jeroboam.*

Chap. XII. 25–33.

25 Then Jeroboam built Shechem in mount Ephraim, and dwelt therein; and
26 went out from thence, and built Penuel. And Jeroboam said in his heart, Now
27 shall the kingdom return to the house of David: if this people go up to do sacrifice
in the house of the Lord [Jehovah] at Jerusalem, then shall the heart of this people
turn again unto their lord,[1] *even* unto Rehoboam king of Judah, and they shall
28 kill me, and go again to Rehoboam king of Judah. Whereupon the king took
counsel, and made two calves *of* gold, and said unto them, It is too much for
you[2] to go up to Jerusalem: behold thy gods,[3] O Israel, which brought thee up
29 out of the land of Egypt. And he set the one in Beth-el, and the other put he
30 in Dan. And this thing became [was[4]] a sin: for the people went *to worship*
31 before the one,[5] *even* unto Dan.[6] And he made a house[7] of high places, and

made priests of the lowest [mass[8]] of the people, which were not of the sons of
32 Levi. And Jeroboam ordained a feast in the eighth month, on the fifteenth day
of the month, like unto the feast that *is* in Judah, and he offered[9] upon the altar.
So[10] did he in Beth-el, sacrificing unto the calves that he had made: and he placed
33 in Beth-el the priests of the high places which he had made. So he offered[9]
upon the altar which he had made in Beth-el the fifteenth day of the eighth
month, *even* in the month which he had devised of his own heart[11]; and ordained
a feast unto the children of Israel: and he offered[9] upon the altar, and burnt
incense.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

[1] Ver. 27.—[The Sept. has "to the Lord and (or even) to their lord." The Syr. omits this word *Lord* altogether. The Vat. Sept. omits the last clause of the verse.

[2] Ver. 28.—[Our author prefers the sense of the Sept., Chald., and Vulg., "let it suffice you," "do not any longer go up." Keil argues that the Heb. cannot be so translated, and prefers the sense of the A. V.

[3] Ver. 28.—[The Heb. אֱלֹהֶיךָ may be taken either in the plural, as in the A.V. and the ancient VV. generally, or in the singular, as in our author's translation, according to the common Heb. usage. For reasons for the latter see the Exeg. Com.

[4] Ver. 30.—[The translation of וַיְהִי *became* may seem to ignore the fact that Jeroboam's deed already *was* a sin in itself.

[5] Ver. 30.—[Our author's translation inserts in brackets "or the other." See Exeg. Com.

[6] Ver. 30.—[The Vat. Sept. adds, "and forsook the house of the Lord."

[7] Ver. 31.—[בֵּית־בָּמוֹת correctly rendered in the A. V. in the singular, since the contrast is with the בֵּית־יְהוָֹה at Jerusalem. The Sept. in translating οἴκους ἐφ᾽ ὑψηλῶν, and the Vulg. *fana in excelsis*, have overlooked the point.

[8] Ver. 31.—[The Heb. מִקְצוֹת does not mean so much "from the lowest of the people" as, "from all classes," "from the mass of the people promiscuously," in contradistinction to the especial Levitical family. *Cf.* Gen. xlvii. 2; Ezek. xxxiii. 2, and see Exeg. Com. The A. V. is sustained by the Vulg. alone among the ancient VV.

[9] Ver. 32.—[The A. V. is here sustained by the Vulg. and Arab. The other VV. give the sense preferred by our author in the Exeg. Com. "Went up to, or upon (*i. e.* upon the approach to) the altar," thus translating the last words of ver. 33, "to burn incense."

[10] Ver. 32.—[The Sept. must have read אֲשֶׁר instead of כֵּן since it translates "—the altar which he made in Bethel."

[11] Ver. 33.—Neh. vi. 8 clearly shows that the k'ri מִלִּבּוֹ is the true reading. All the translations are in accordance with this. The k'tib מִלְּבַד gives no sense, since it does not mean *seorsum* sc. *a Judæis* (Maurer, Keil); but *except, beside*. [Keil takes the opposite view of the meaning, and denies the necessity of the change.—F. G.]

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

Ver. 25.—**Then Jeroboam built Shechem.** The first thing which Jeroboam undertook after his accession was the building of fortresses to protect his realm. בָּנָה means fortified here, as Shechem and Penuel were built long before. He chose Shechem immediately as his residence (וַיֵּשֶׁב), no doubt, for the same reason that the ten tribes had assembled there (see on ver. 1). It does not follow from וַיֵּצֵא, that he at once removed to Penuel (Ewald, Thenius), for it only says: he built, and it is not added that he lived there. Penuel, too, did not belong to the tribe of Ephraim, but was in Gad, beyond Jordan, according to some, northward, and others, southward of Jabbok. There was a tower there formerly, which Gideon destroyed (Judg. viii. 17). Jeroboam can scarcely be supposed to have fortified the place on account of the caravan road to Damascus passing by it (Keil), or to subdue the Ammonites and Moabites again (Duncker), but to secure the territory beyond Jordan against any attacks from Judah. There is no doubt that he built these fortifications by tribute-labor, like Solomon (chap. ix. 15 *sq.*); the "grievous service" (ver. 4) did not, therefore, cease under him, and the complaint against Rehoboam appears all the more like a pretext.

Vers. 26–28. **And Jeroboam said in his heart,** &c. Ver. 26. Jeroboam did not seek to establish his kingdom outwardly only, but also inwardly; and to attach the people permanently to himself. The political union with Judah was indeed broken, but the religious one still remained. The people still went up to the yearly feasts at the central place of worship in Jerusalem; this practice seems, from 2 Chron. xi. 16 *sq.*, to have extended even, so that Jeroboam became anxious lest his people should turn to Rehoboam and dethrone him. He therefore sought to break this bond also. We can scarcely admit that וַיִּוָּעַץ ver. 28 ought to be supplemented thus: "With his counsellors or the heads of the people, who had helped to make him king" (Keil), for the text would certainly not have passed over so important a circumstance as that the representatives of the people concurred with him in changing the place of worship. He reflected about it alone, and came to the following resolution—Vulgate: *Et excogitato consilio fecit duos vitulos;* Dereser: "it occurred to him to make two golden calves." *Two golden calves, i. e.*, young bulls, as appears from Ps. cvi. 19 *sq.;* they were molten (chap. xiv. 9), probably of brass, and then overlaid with gold (Isai. xl. 19). The expression רַב־לָכֶם is never used in the sense of: it is desiring too much from you; *i. e.* it is too hard for you, but: it is (now) enough, *i. e.* you have gone up to Jerusalem long enough, cease doing so. The Sept. translates ἱκανούσθω, the Vulgate has: *Nolite ultra adscendere in Jerusalem. Cf.* Deut. i. 6; ii. 3; Ezek. xliv. 6; 1 Kings xix. 4; 2 Sam. xxiv. 16. The words, Behold thy god(s) which, &c., are exactly the same as the people used when setting up the golden calf in the wilderness (Ex. xxxii. 4–8) and

refer unmistakably to them. They are not plural (thy gods which, &c.) any more than when used in the former case, for they only refer to one calf, and Nehemiah (ix. 18) uses them in the singular; אלהים, moreover, is construed with the plural of the predicate (*cf.* 2 Sam. vii. 23 with 1 Chron. xvii. 21). It is certain that Jeroboam did not wish to introduce the worship of two or more gods; but the plural being used in this place may indicate that "the knowledge of the unity of God is lost in every form of nature-worship" (Von Gerlach), and that image-worship is closely related to polytheism (Ewald). The bringing them up out of Egypt was God's act, by which he made Israel a separate nation, creating it, as it were, and choosing it at the same time for his own, from out all peoples. This was the real historical proof that the Almighty God, who has no equal either in heaven or earth, was Israel's God; therefore the God who brought Israel out of Egypt is contrasted, as the only true God, with the vain gods of the heathens (Josh. xxiv. 17; Judg. ii. 1, 12; vi. 13). The people Israel only knew him to be God who brought them out of Egypt; and should they worship the golden calf as their God, they must, as Aaron and Jeroboam did, before everything else, attribute to it the deliverance out of Egypt. We cannot endorse the ordinary explanation, that Jeroboam meant to say: *Non est nova religio, hoc cultu jam olim patres nostri in deserto usi sunt auctore ipso Aharone* (Seb. Schmidt); for if the history of the golden calf were known to the people, and Jeroboam reminded them of it, he must also have known that Jehovah's wrath waxed hot on account of that sin, that Moses ground the calf to powder, and that all the worshippers were destroyed (Ex. xxxii. 10; xx. 28). Nothing could be more ill-advised than an appeal to this event, and it would have been the direct opposite of any recommendation of the new worship. It appears rather that the narrative, giving as it does Jeroboam's praise of the golden calves in the words the people had used at the sight of the golden calves in the wilderness, wishes to convey the idea that those images were a renewal of the sin committed in the wilderness, and that, therefore, Jeroboam's undertaking would, sooner or later, have a similar end. Ver. 30 also implies this, and 2 Kings xvii. 7 *sq.* expressly declares it.

Vers. 29–30. **And he set the one in Bethel,** &c., ver. 29. Bethel was on the southern, and Dan on the northern boundary of the kingdom. The situation of these places explains why Jeroboam chose them. He wished to make things easy for the people; the northern tribes could readily reach one place of worship, and the southern tribes the other, and they would so much the sooner become habituated to the new regulation. At the same time also it was in opposition to the Judah-centralizing of worship. This was another reason for having two calves instead of one. It is generally thought that he chose both places, because they had been regarded before as sacred places for worship. This may have influenced him in choosing Bethel, but scarcely in respect of Dan, for the narrative in Judg. xviii. by no means proves that the latter place was looked on with respect by the people as a place of worship. Had Jeroboam sought only sacred places, there were several (*e. g.* Shiloh) that were much more esteemed as such than Dan. *This thing became a sin,* ver. 30. Jeroboam was guilty of great sin in making images of oxen, contrary to the fundamental law, and in setting them up in two places remote from each other, and thus destroying the unity of worship which has been the bond of union for the whole people. The text means what is afterwards always spoken of as "the sin of Jeroboam, who made Israel to sin" (chap. xiv. 16; xv. 26, 30, 34; xvi. 2, 19, 26, 31; xxi. 22; xxii. 53; 2 Kings iii. 3; x. 29, 31; xiii. 2, 6, 11; xiv. 24; xv. 9. 18, 24, 28; xvii. 21, 22; xxiii. 15). *The people went to worship before the one, even unto Dan.* לִפְנֵי הָאֶחָד clearly refers to the הָאֶחָד twice repeated in ver. 29, and cannot therefore be translated as Ewald gives it: "the people, as it were one man;" neither does it mean that the people only went to one image, that at Dan, chap. xiii. 1. "Unto Dan," moreover, cannot be joined to הָעָם and translated, "the people unto Dan; *i. e.*, the people in the whole kingdom as far as Dan" (Keil). The sentence is evidently abbreviated, and לִפְנֵי האחד is only put once instead of twice, because the repetition after the double אחד in ver. 29 is understood; "האחד is *alter* here in the sense of *alteruter*" (Cassel). The people went to both, even to the distant Dan. Vulgate: *ibat enim populus ad adorandum vitulum usque in Dan.*

Vers. 31–32. **And he made an house of high places,** &c., ver. 31. For the so-called high places, see above on chap. iii. 2. As the "high places" in 2 Kings xxiii. 15 is simply הַבָּמָה, and the high places are contrasted with Jehovah's house in chap. iii. 1, 2, the word here certainly does not mean a temple, properly speaking, but probably a kind of cell for the image. Ewald makes it out "a splendid temple," and says: "this temple evidently lasted many years and probably rivalled that at Jerusalem; later too, this temple was regarded as the great sanctuary of the kingdom." We find not a single word of all this in the Scripture, however. Jeroboam made *priests* of the מִקְצוֹת of the people; this does not mean, from the lowest of the people (Luther), but, from all classes of them (Gen. xix. 4; Ezek. xxxiii. 2; Jer. li. 31); he made any one that wished a priest. Thus he broke the law which gave the right to the tribe of Levi alone (Num. xvi.). He did this either because he wanted to abolish the institution of the Levitical priesthood, or because the Levites and priests, not willing to participate in the service of the golden calves, left the kingdom (2 Chron. xi. 13). *And Jeroboam ordained a feast,* ver. 32. חַג alone, or הֶחָג signifies the feast of tabernacles, because it was the greatest and most frequented of the yearly feasts (the feast of harvest, *cf.* on chap. viii. 2). This feast fell on the seventh month, as the law commanded (Lev. xxiii. 34; xxxiv. 41). Jeroboam changed the time to prevent the ten tribes meeting the other two, or having any intercourse with them. He fixed it in the eighth month, because the northern and more distant tribes would thus have time to complete their harvest, and could more easily take the journey to Bethel, where he himself also kept the feast (we need not say that the harvest was later in the northern than the southern parts; see Thenius on the place). The feasts were al·

ways announced beforehand (Lev. xxiii. 4); if this were done after the feast at Jerusalem was over, it could not possibly be celebrated there. Jeroboam did not observe the same day of the month, the 15th, "on account of the weak, who were offended at his innovations" (Keil), for in that case he would have kept it a month sooner, but he did so because the months and weeks were counted by the new and full moons, and the 15th was the day of the full moon. Thus there was simply a reason derived from the calendar why that day was retained.

Ver. 33. **And he offered upon the altar, &c.** וַיַּעַל עַל־הַמִּזְבֵּחַ three times in vers. 32 and 33 cannot be translated (as Thenius gives them) once (ver. 32) by: "he sacrificed upon the altar," and two other times (ver. 33) by: "he went to the altar;" they must mean the same each time. עלה means here, as usual, to go up, to mount; the Sept. correctly gives ἀνέβη three times, the Vulgate has *ascendens* ver. 32, and *ascendit* twice, ver. 33. The altar had a raised part in the middle, to which an ascent [incline?—E. H.] led up (*Sym. des Mos. Kult.* I. *s.* 480). It is clear that יעל cannot be translated every time, as Luther, De Wette, and Keil give it, he sacrificed, for in ver. 32 it is distinctly distinguished from זָבַח, and in ver. 33 לְהַקְטִיר is added at the end; this does not mean: *and* he offered incense (De Wette), or *while* he offered incense (Philippson), but only *to* offer incense; there is no sense in: he sacrificed to offer incense. The first יעל, ver. 32, means, that Jeroboam took part in the feast; the second signifies especially his presence at the first feast in Bethel, and the third is only to be connected with the second, on account of the long intermediary clause in ver. 33, joining להקטיר with it, and so leading on to להקטיר chap. xiii. 1. In fact ver. 33 forms the transition to the next section chap. xiii., which is evidently derived from another source, and relates what happened at the celebration of the festival at Bethel. Jeroboam ascended the altar to burn sacrifice, and just as he was about to do so, a man of God came, &c. (chap. xiii. 1). What ver. 33 repeats from ver. 32, as well as the words, "which he had devised of his own heart," shows the writer's intention, *i. e.*, to display the arbitrary nature of Jeroboam's proceedings, which called forth the occurrence of chap. xiii. 1 *sq.*

HISTORICAL AND ETHICAL.

1. ***The religious institutions*** which, next to the fortifications, served to establish Jeroboam's kingdom are of the greatest importance, for they formed the real and lasting wall of separation between the two kingdoms Israel and Judah, that existed side by side for hundreds of years. Through these institutions the division mentioned in the above section became an incurable schism for all future generations, thus determining the whole of the after-history of the people. To understand it thoroughly in all its bearings, we must, at the outset, take into consideration Jeroboam's point of view, and the motives which impelled him. The history makes him utter these himself clearly enough in vers. 26 and 27; they were of a purely political nature. He took those measures from no religious convictions, not to do away with abuses, in short, not for the sake of God and conscience, but to secure to himself and his dynasty the dominion over the newly founded kingdom, and to withdraw it forever from the house of David. He well knew that a political separation without a religious one too would not be lasting with a people whose distinct existence from other nations only depended on their common religious basis. To introduce a completely new religion, which should displace the faith of their fathers, would have been very dangerous to his dominion; so he thought of modifying it in such particulars as he was sure would be agreeable to the people, who were disposed to build a strong, impregnable wall of separation between Israel and Judah. All the kings of Israel inherited the principle on which Jeroboam acted, however much the dynasty changed, until the dissolution of the kingdom. We have here, then, the type of that political absolutism which makes the national religion subservient to the interests of a dynasty, which holds that the secular power is justified in prescribing the faith and form of worship for the subjects. This absolutism is found not only in monarchies but in republics—among crowned heads as among democrats—it can be traced through the entire history of the world, and has appeared in Christendom as Cæsaro-papism. In Israel the prophets opposed it, and as it was firmly adhered to from the beginning in that kingdom, we find, accordingly, the prophets were engaged in a perpetual struggle with it.

2. *The germ of all the changes Jeroboam wrought was the erection of two golden calves.* They were not actual idols, *i. e.*, images that were supposed to have real connection with the divinity they represented, as among the heathens (*cf.* my treatise, *Der Salomonische Tempel*, *s.* 270 *sq.*), but symbols of Jehovah, the God of Israel; the whole history of Israel shows that Jeroboam did not intend to introduce idolatry or polytheism. The God who had brought Israel out of Egypt, thus showing Himself to be the true God (*cf.* Cassel, *König Jeroboam*, *s.* 6), was to remain, but he did not wish Him to appear to have His throne and dwelling-place in Jerusalem alone, but also in the new kingdom, and to be visibly present there. He wishes to attach the people to his kingdom by a visible representation of Jehovah. But this visible representation was in direct opposition to the fundamental Mosaic law, which just as expressly forbids the making an image of Jehovah, as the worshipping of other gods beside Him (Ex. xx. 3, 4). If God be one, and everything in heaven and earth, and in the water under the earth, only his creature, it follows necessarily that He can have no similitude; nothing out of Him can represent Him. Every image is a practical denial of his incomparable and therefore invisible being, an untruth which, as such, can never make Him known, but, on the contrary, destroys the knowledge of Him and leads to idolatry. For the nearer man comes to the life of nature the less power he has to abstract himself from the natural and visible, and to comprehend the spiritual and invisible by itself, *i. e.*, to distinguish the sign from the thing signified. If God be worshipped in an image, it is scarcely possible to avoid worshipping the image itself as God, hence there is but a short step from a representa-

tion of God to idolatry, which again, in spite of everything, leads to polytheism (Rom. i. 23). This is why the Mosaic fundamental law places the prohibition of every likeness of God in immediate juxtaposition against that of idolatry. To violate this command was to lay the axe at the root of the tree of spiritual life planted in the chosen people. This was "the sin of Jeroboam, wherewith he made Israel to sin." When he sought to give his kingdom durability by erecting images, contrary to the condition so emphatically laid before him by Ahijah, namely, keeping Jehovah's laws (chap. xi. 38), he brought this very germ of destruction and dissolution into it; this our writer expressly notices in his account of the fall of the kingdom of Israel (2 Kings xvii. 7 *sq.*). The question whether the Old-Testament law against every representation of God extends unconditionally to the New-Testament economy, has, as is well known, been answered variously. While the reformed church stretches the Old-Testament law still further, and in contradiction with the Mosaic worship, which consisted wholly in symbols, rejects every symbol and representation in the churches, the Lutheran and Roman Catholic churches not only allow representations of Him who walked on earth in the form of a servant, but of God himself, only claiming that they be not worshipped or prayed to. Though we do not approve of an exaggerated spiritualism, yet the representations of God as an invisible being are of very questionable worth, and should at least not be placed in buildings for public worship. *Cf.* Isai. xl. 18; 1 Tim. vi. 16.

3. *It is almost universally acknowledged that Jeroboam's long* residence in Egypt (chap. xi. 40; xii. 2) led him to choose images of *bulls* to represent Jehovah, and that there was reference to the Egyptian cultus of Apis and Mnevis. But we have the clearest evidence of the contrary. The images were to represent (according to ver. 28), that God who "brought Israel out of Egypt," *i. e.*, out of the "house of bondage," from service to an idolatrous people, by great judgments on the latter, even the destruction of their entire army, and had separated them as from all nations, so especially from Egypt (Ex. vi. 6; vii. 5; 1 Kings viii. 51–53). To choose a specifically Egyptian divinity in order to represent *this* God would have been the greatest contradiction; for it would have meant so much as: the God who overthrew the Egyptians and brought you out of Egypt was an Egyptian deity; but the clause, "who brought thee out of Egypt," contains the most emphatic opposition to any Egyptian idol. Had the bull-images of Jeroboam been borrowed from Egypt, we should find other traces of Egyptian worship in that of the ten tribes, but none are to be found. All the gods that were worshipped by them, or afterwards by Judah, were without exception those of anterior Asia. Besides this, Apis and Mnevis were different gods, while Jeroboam wished to make symbols of one and the same deity; and, moreover, they were not images, but living idols, belonging to the Egyptian animal worship, which had always been despised in Israel, and looked on as an abomination (Ex. viii. 26). The material and the workmanship of the golden calves remind us of anterior Asia, not of Egypt; for the Egyptians had only stone images; they had no images that were cast, golden, or overlaid with gold. There is no necessity for seeking the original of Jeroboam's golden calves in any particular ancient nation. The bull was, according to the view common to all ancient peoples, especially to those who were agricultural, a symbol of the creative power, and consequently of the highest divinity, from which all life and being emanated. There was no type of divinity so universal in the ancient world as the bull (*cf.* Creuzer, *Symbolik* I. *s.* 318, 505, 747; iv. *s.* 128, 240; Baur, *Symbolik* I. *s.* 177 *sq.*; Movers, *Relig. der Phöniz. s.* 373 *sq.*). If Jeroboam wanted to give an intelligible and acceptable symbol of Jehovah to the people, he could have scarcely chosen anything but the bull, especially as the God who had brought Israel out of Egypt, and thus chosen them as His own (Isai. xliii. 15–17), was adored by them as the Creator of heaven and earth. (The command that refers to the Sabbath day in the decalogue is founded upon the creation in Ex. xx. 11, and upon the exodus in Deut. v. 15). That which is true of Jeroboam's image is also true of Aaron's (Ex. xxxii. 4), which was much nearer the time of the Exodus from Egypt, and therefore was still less likely to be an imitation of the Egyptian idols.

4. *All the changes that Jeroboam made in the worship were calculated*, on one hand, to serve his political ends, and likewise, on the other, to be agreeable and desirable to the people of the ten tribes. By setting up images of the deity he gratified the deep-seated instincts of this portion of the people, who, more inclined to nature-life (see the Hist. and Ethic. on above section), in their rudeness and sensuousness, even in the wilderness were not satisfied with an invisible God, but wanted one they could see. He drew the people from the imageless temple at Jerusalem by the erection of two images, and at each extremity of the kingdom; and he not only withdrew them from the one central point of worship which was necessary to the theocratic unity of the people, but he made it easier for the people to attend the new places of worship. By giving the priesthood to any one, not confining himself to the priestly tribe, he destroyed this sacred institution of a tribe of priests, who, being dispersed among all the tribes, were the guardians of the divine law, and of spiritual and religious culture. At the same time he flattered the people thereby, because any one could aspire to the dignity of the priesthood and obtain its emoluments. These he may have lessened in the interests of the people. There would scarcely have been a surer method of destroying the organization of a "kingdom of priests" (Ex. xix. 6), which had, as such, its central point in the priestly tribe, than this procedure of the king. He retained the feast of tabernacles because it was the most liked and the most frequented, and he held it necessary for the separated tribes to gather regularly around him as their lord, and unite in a common attitude over against Judah. To make this meeting, however, as easy as possible, he fixed on a later month, and thus broke the order of the feast-cycle, arranged according to the number 7. This, then, was the supposed deliverer of his country who, once he had the reins in his hands, was not content with controlling secular things, but so altered the religion of his people as to serve his own political ends, and introduced "what he had devised of his own heart" as the State religion. What was the alleged disposition of Solomon, from which he pretended to free the

people, compared with this for which Jeroboam overthrew the fundamental law of the entire nation? "This," remarks Vilmar (*s.* 191), "is the way with demagogues and Cæsaro-papalists, who have in all times said, and are still at it, so many criminal and senseless things, now of their care for the people, then of the rights of the 'community,' just as Jeroboam here;" and he remarks before (*s.* 189): "the departure (from political motives) from spiritual principles, which surely leads to destruction, is here portrayed for all times."

5. *The modern historical presentation of the elevation and ordinances of Jeroboam* sketches quite another picture from that of the bibilical history. Duncker (*Gesch. des Alterthums*, I. *s.* 404) thinks the rebellion of the ten tribes in Shechem was not separation from Judah, but the reverse: "they perpetuated the kingdom and name of Israel, while one single tribe in the south separated themselves from the whole body. . . . As soon as Jerusalem ceased to be the capital of the State, the Temple ceased to be the place of worship for all the tribes. Jeroboam dedicated anew the old places of sacrifice at Bethel and Dan, and placed priests at both. He built a temple on the height at Bethel, which temple was to be instead of that at Jerusalem for his kingdom. Those beginnings of image-worship of Jehovah, which we may observe in the preceding period of the kingdom, and which continued in David's time, were now universally and officially recognized. Jeroboam set up a golden bull-image to Jehovah in Dan and Bethel. In this restoration of the Jehovah worship we may also perceive a national reaction against the foreign worship that Solomon introduced in the last years of his reign." Menzel takes the same view (*Staats- und Rel.-Geschichte der Königreiche Israel und Juda*, *s.* 156 *sq.*): "In the deliberation of Jeroboam in respect of the institutions of public worship, there seemed, doubtless, a right to restore its sacred character to the old national sanctuary (of Bethel) which the new Temple-service at Jerusalem had deprived it of, or at least lessened. This restoration, strictly speaking, took place at Bethel only." That the people worshipped images is said to have no other proof than "the eloquent representation of the foes of image-worship, who in all ages have tried pretty much in the same way to enforce their views (colored by their own feelings) against the representation of what is thought," as, for instance, "the prophet Hosea" (Hos. viii. 6). According to this, there can indeed be no "sin of Jeroboam, wherewith he made Israel to sin;" he seems rather to have done a service to his people; so far from breaking the law, he was rather a reactionist and restorer. And when all the prophets denounced Jeroboam's form of worship, they only spoke from their peculiar, subjective "manner of feeling," for Israel always had images of the Deity, and even David "carried the image of Jehovah about with him in his marches" (Duncker, *s.* 408). We need no proof to show that this is turning the history upside down; it is an example of the unwarrantable style of writing history, which, under the semblance of scientific criticism, utterly ignores the text of the only historical source we have.

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

Vers. 25–33. How Jeroboam sought to establish his sway, (*a*) outwardly, by the erection of fortifications; but these alone do not protect and guard a kingdom. A mountain fastness is our God (Ps. lxxi. 3; cxxvii. 1); (*b*) inwardly, by ordinances for public worship, which can protect a kingdom only when they are conformable with the word and command of God and are not designed to subserve selfish purposes. ["Jeroboam king of Israel, to the destruction of him and his, did change the ceremonies which God had ordained, into his own, that is, into men's inventions and detestable blasphemies." BULLINGER.—E. H.].—WÜRT. SUMM.: We should trust ourselves not to fastnesses, but to God, and God wills not to be served otherwise than as He has commanded in His revealed word; our worship and service, therefore, must proceed from faith, and we shall be blessed of Him.—Ver. 26. As soon as Jeroboam obtained the wish of his heart, namely, the rulership, he asked no longer about the condition under which it was promised to him and with which it was bound up (chap. xi. 38). How often we forget, when God has granted to us the desire of our hearts, to walk in His ways. He who obtains rulership by the path of rebellion, must always be in fear and anxiety lest he lose it again in the same way, for the populace which today cries Hosanna will, on the morrow, shout crucify, crucify! An evil conscience makes the most stout-hearted and the strongest timid and anxious, so that he sees dangers where there are none, and then to insure his own safety devises wrong and evil instruments. One false step always requires another.—Vers. 28–33. The sin of Jeroboam wherewith he caused Israel to sin. (*a*) He erected images of God against the supreme commandment of God (Exod. xx. 4). (*b*) He set aside the prescribed order of the servants of God, and made his own priests. (*c*) He altered the feast which was a reminder of the great deeds of God, and made it a mere nature-and-harvest feast. That is the greatest tyranny when the ruler of a land makes himself the master also of the faith and conscience of his subjects.—CRAMER: In the estimation of the people of the world this policy of Jeroboam is held to be proper, because they consider that religion is to be established, held, and altered, as may be useful and good for the land and the people and the common interest, and that the regimen is not for the sake of the religion, but the religion for the regimen. Consequently Jeroboam acted well and wisely in the matter. But God says, on the other hand, All that I command you, that shall ye observe, ye shall not add thereto (Deut. xii. 32). For Godliness is not to be regulated by the common weal, but the common weal is to be regulated by Godliness. Every government which employs religious instrumentalities, and interferes with the faith of the people, not for the sake of God and the salvation of souls, but for the attainment of political ends, shares the guilt of the sin of Jeroboam, and involves itself in heavy responsibilities.—Ver. 28. CALW. B.: To the perverted man, what he shall do for his God is forthwith too much. In matters of faith and of the homage due to God we should not consider what is convenient and agreeable to the great mass, but should inquire only for what God prescribes in His word. He who conciliates the sensuousness and the untutored ways of the masses, and flatters their unbelief or their superstition, belongs to the false prophets who make broad the way of life. Doc-

trines and institutions which depart from the revealed word of God are often praised as progress and seasonable reforms, while in truth they are steps backward, and corrupting innovations. In Christendom we pray no longer to wood and stone, and to golden calves, and think ourselves thereby raised far above a darkened heathenism, but, nevertheless, we often place the creature above the Creator, and abandon ourselves to it with all our love and consideration and service. Behold, the things and persons thou lovest with thy whole heart and strength, these are thy gods. What use of typical representations in the worship of God is permitted, and what is forbidden?—Ver. 30. Starke: As a great tree in a forest, when it falls drags down many others with it, so also are many others carried along by the bad example of those who rule, when they fall away from their religion, or sin otherwise grossly against God.—Ver. 31. We have in the new covenant no Levitical priesthood indeed, but a pastoral and preaching office which the Lord has instituted, so that, thereby, the body of Christ may be edified (Eph. iv. 11). He who despises this office, and thinks that any one without distinction and without a lawful calling may exercise it, is a partaker in the sin of Jeroboam. "No one," says the Augsburg Confession, "shall teach or preach publicly in the church, or administer the sacraments, without due calling."—Ver. 32. The festivals which an entire people celebrate in remembrance of the great deeds of God for them, are the support of their faith and of their life of fellowship. It is to destroy this life when, from prejudice and for the sake of outward wordly considerations, arbitrarily they are altered or abandoned.—Ver. 33. As it is good and praiseworthy when kings and princes engage in the service of God along with their subjects, and set them a good example, so also is it blameworthy when they do it only to win the people over to themselves, and to secure their authority over them.

SECOND SECTION.

JEROBOAM'S GOVERNMENT IN ISRAEL.

Chap. XIII. 1—XIV. 20.

A.—*The admonition of Jeroboam by a Prophet, and the disobedience and end of the latter.*

Chap. XIII. 1–34.

1 And behold, there came a man of God out of Judah by the word of the Lord
2 [Jehovah] unto Bethel: and Jeroboam stood by the altar to burn incense. And
he cried against the altar in the word of the Lord [Jehovah], and said, O altar,
altar, thus saith the Lord [Jehovah]; Behold, a child shall be born unto the house
of David, Josiah by name; and upon thee shall he offer the priests of the high
places that burn incense upon thee, and men's bones shall be burnt upon thee.[1]
3 And he gave a sign[2] the same day, saying, This *is* the sign which the Lord [Jeho-
vah] hath spoken; Behold, the altar shall be rent, and the ashes[3] that *are* upon it
4 shall be poured out. And it came to pass, when king Jeroboam heard the saying
of the man of God, which had cried against the altar in Beth-el, that he put forth
his hand from the altar, saying, Lay hold on him. And his hand, which he put
5 forth against him, dried up, so that he could not pull it in again to him. The
altar also was rent, and the ashes poured out from the altar, according to the sign
6 which the man of God had given by the word of the Lord [Jehovah]. And the
king answered and said unto the man of God, Intreat now the face of the Lord
[Jehovah] thy God, and pray for me, that my hand may be restored me again.
And the man of God besought the Lord [Jehovah], and the king's hand was
7 restored him again, and became as *it was* before. And the king said unto the man
of God, Come home with me, and refresh thyself, and I will give thee a reward.
8 And the man of God said unto the king, If thou wilt give me half thine house, I
9 will not go in with thee, neither will I eat bread nor drink water in this place: for
so was it charged me by the word of the Lord [Jehovah], saying, Eat no bread,

10 nor drink water, nor turn again by the same way that thou camest. So he went
another way, and returned not by the way that he came to Beth-el.
11 Now there dwelt an old prophet in Beth-el; and his sons[4] came and told him
all the works that the man of God had done that day in Bethel: the words
12 which he had spoken unto the king, them they told also to their father. And
their father said unto them, What way went he? For his sons had seen[5] what
13 way the man of God went, which came from Judah. And he said unto his
sons, Saddle me the ass. So they saddled him the ass: and he rode thereon,
14 and went after the man of God, and found him sitting under an oak [the
terebinth[6]]: and he said unto him, *Art* thou the man of God that camest from
15 Judah? And he said, I *am*. Then he said unto him, Come home with me, and
16 eat bread. And he said, I may not return with thee, nor go in with thee:
17 neither will I eat bread nor drink water with thee in this place: for it was said to
me by the word of the Lord [Jehovah], Thou shalt eat no bread nor drink water
18 there, nor turn again to go by the way that thou camest. [And[7]] he said unto him,
I *am* a prophet also as thou *art;* and an angel spake unto me by the word of the
Lord [Jehovah], saying, Bring him back with thee into thine house, that he may
19 eat bread and drink water. *But* he lied unto him. So he went back with him, and
20 did eat bread in his house, and drank water. And it came to pass, as they sat at the
21 table, that the word of the Lord [Jehovah] came unto the prophet that brought him
back: and he cried unto the man of God that came from Judah, saying, Thus saith
the Lord [Jehovah], Forasmuch as thou hast disobeyed the mouth of the Lord
22 [Jehovah], and hast not kept the commandment which the Lord [Jehovah] thy
God commanded thee, but camest back, and hast eaten bread and drunk water in
the place, of the which *the Lord* did say to thee, Eat no bread, and drink no water;
23 thy carcass shall not come unto the sepulchre of thy fathers. And it came to pass,
after he had eaten bread, and after he had drunk, that he saddled for him the ass,
24 *to wit*, for the prophet whom he had brought back.[8] And when he was gone, a lion
met him by the way, and slew him: and his carcass was cast in the way, and the
25 ass stood by it, the lion also stood by the carcass. And, behold, men passed by,
and saw the carcass cast in the way, and the lion standing by the carcass: and they
26 came and told *it* in the city where the old prophet dwelt. And when the prophet
that brought him back from the way heard *thereof*, he said, It *is* the man of God,
who was disobedient unto the word of the Lord [Jehovah]:[9] therefore the Lord
[Jehovah] hath delivered him unto the lion, which hath torn him, and slain him,
27 according to the word of the Lord [Jehovah], which he spake unto him. And
28 he spake to his sons, saying, Saddle me the ass. And they saddled *him*. And
he went and found his carcass cast in the way, and the ass and the lion stand-
29 ing by the carcass: the lion had not eaten the carcass, nor torn the ass. And
the prophet took up the carcass of the man of God, and laid it upon the ass, and
brought it back: and the old prophet came to the city, to mourn and to bury him.
30 And he laid his carcass in his own grave; and they mourned over him, *saying*,
31 Alas, my brother! And it came to pass, after he had buried him, that he spake
to his sons, saying, When I am dead, then bury me in the sepulchre wherein the
32 man of God *is* buried; lay my bones beside his bones:[10] for the saying which
he cried by the word of the Lord [Jehovah] against the altar in Beth-el, and
against all the houses of the high places which *are* in the cities of Samaria,
33 shall surely come to pass. After this thing Jeroboam returned not from his evil
way, but made again of the lowest [mass] of the people priests of the high
places: whosoever would, he consecrated[11] him, and he became *one*[12] of the
34 priests of the high places. And this thing[13] became [was a] sin unto the house
of Jeroboam, even to cut *it* off, and to destroy *it* from off the face of the earth.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

[1] Ver. 2.—[The Alex. Sept. omits the last clause of this ver.

[2] Ver. 3.—[On the meaning of מוֹפֵת=*τέρας* see the Exeg. Com. It is to be remembered, however, that any portent must have had the significance of a "sign" and hence this meaning appears in the Vulg., Chald., and Syr., as well as in the A. V. The Vat. Sept. curiously puts the verb in the future *δώσει*.

[3] Ver. 3.—[דֶּשֶׁן from the root דָּשֵׁן to be or become fat, primarily meaning *fatness* (*Cf.* Jud. ix. 9; Ps. lxiii. 6, &c.), and hence translated here and in ver. 5 by the Sept. πιότης, is used for the ashes of animals offered in sacrifice, in contradistinction to אֵפֶר, common ashes. *Cf.* Lev. i. 16; iv. 12, &c.

[4] Ver. 11.—[The Heb. has here בְּנוֹ in the sing., followed by the sing. verb. With this agree the Chald. and Arab., and our author, like Luther, so translates. On the other hand the Sept., Vulg., and Syr., like the A. V., have the plural.]

[5] Ver. 12.—ויראו according to the understanding of all the VV. (except the Arab.) is to be pointed וַיַּרְאוּ [*i. e.* in the Hiphil = showed], and so we have translated: "they looked on" or "after the way" gives no proper sense. [The A. V. has followed the masoretic punctuation וַיִּרְאוּ in the Kal, but by taking it in a pluperfect sense has avoided the difficulty.

[6] Ver. 14.—[הָאֵלָה is usually rendered in the A. V. *oak*; in Isa. vi. 13 it is translated *teil tree*, because אַלּוֹן, also rendered *oak*, is in immediate connection with it; for the same reason, in Hos. iv. 13 it is rendered *elm*. The Sept. have δρῦς, the Vulg. *terebinthus*, which is the interpretation of most moderns. The article is by all means to be retained, as pointing out some well-known tree.

[7] Ver. 18.—[There seems no good reason for omitting the conjunction of the Heb., which is retained by the Sept. and Vulg.

[8] Ver. 23.—[Our author translates "the ass of the prophet who had brought him back." The VV. differ from one another, the Vulg. and Chald. understanding "the ass of the prophet whom he had brought back;" the Syr. and Arab. simply "the ass for the prophet of God;" while the Sept. omits the words altogether.

[9] Ver. 26.—[The Vat. Sept. omits from this point to the end of ver. 27.

[10] Ver. 31.—[The Sept. adds ἵνα σωθῶσι τὰ ὀστᾶ μοῦ μετὰ τῶν ὀστῶν αὐτοῦ doubtless with reference to 2 Kings xxiii. 18, when the bones of the Samarian prophet were left undisturbed with the bones of the prophet from Judah.

[11] Ver. 33.—[Lit. "filled his hand," a figurative expression for consecration, but rendered literally in the Sept. and Vulg.

[12] Ver. 33.—[The Heb. noun is in the plural כֹּהֲנֵי בָמוֹת, and is rendered in the plural by the Chald. and Arab.; the Sept., Vulg., and Syr. use the sing. as in the A. V.—F. G.]

[13] Ver. 34.—Instead of בַּדָּבָר we must read here הַדָּבָר with all the VV. and several [eight] of the MSS., as it is also in chap. xii. 30. The translation: "The reason for sinning was in this thing (through the same)" (Keil) is forced.

PRELIMINARY.

This section, over against the preceding and following chapters, bears an unmistakably peculiar character, and is doubtless inserted here from some other source. Nevertheless it is closely connected with chap. xii. and chap. xiv., as is sufficiently obvious from its beginning and conclusion. The words, ver. 1: עֹמֵד עַל־הַמִּזְבֵּחַ לְהַקְטִיר clearly refer to the concluding words of the former chapter (ver. 33); וַיַּעַל עַל־הַמִּזְבֵּחַ לְהַקְטִיר refer back and connect the present section completely with the foregoing. When Jeroboam ascended the altar at the feast he had instituted, and stood on it to offer incense, behold! there came a man of God out of Judah, &c. The man of God did not appear at an ordinary sacrifice, but on a solemn public occasion, most probably at the first of the new festivals. This gave peculiar significance to his appearing; "Jeroboam's dreadful apostasy was not to escape severe chastisement from God" (v. Gerlach). With the appearing of the man of God (vers. 1–10) the full account of his conduct and fate is conjoined (vers. 11–32). That this account, though it says nothing of Jeroboam, is not a mere episode, but bears upon the principal subject, namely, "the sin of Jeroboam," which had such a marked influence on all Israel's future history, is obvious from the conclusion of the narrative (vers. 33–34): "After this thing Jeroboam returned not from his evil way, but made again," &c. These words form the connecting link with the 14th chap. The connection is, briefly, this: Jeroboam not only entered on an evil way (chap. xii. 28–33), but let nothing turn him from it, neither the warning and the miracles of the man of God (chap. xiii. 1–10) nor his remarkably significant fate (vers. 11–32). He remained hardened in his apostasy. The divine sentence on him and his house, recorded in chap. xiv., was therefore announced to him by the prophet Ahijah, who had promised him the kingdom on condition of fidelity to Jehovah (chap. xi. 31–39). In respect of the contents of our section here, in its phraseology, its source was not contemporaneous with the events, as is the case with the other sources of our books, which are written by contemporaneous prophets (*cf.* Introduc. § 2). Ver. 32 shows this; the old prophet of Bethel speaks of the "cities of Samaria," after the burial of the man of God. But the city of Samaria did not even exist then; it was built by Omri, who was king fifty years after Jeroboam (chap. xvi. 24); and there certainly could not have been at that time any province named after it. The explanation that the expression is "proleptic" (Keil) is untenable, because it was not written by our author, who lived in exile, but it is given by him as an expression of the Bethel prophet. Later critics, Ewald and Thenius, for instance, have inferred that the whole account is of a much later date, from ver. 2, where the man of God does not speak of a future son of David only, but mentions the proper name of a king who lived more than 300 years later; the narrative must therefore date from after Josiah's time (2 Kings xxiii. 15–20) and have been written down as it was repeated among the people. The calling of proper names, certainly, does not characterize prophecy, which differs from foretelling in this, that it does not notice more or less accidental outward circumstances, but announces only such things as are connected with the divine economy and development of God's kingdom; it describes the persons whose future appearances it announces by their qualities, but not by their names. In the only exceptional case (Isai. xliv. 28; xlv. 1) the name כּוֹרֶשׁ may be appellative = sun, as a name of honor for the Persian kings (Hengstenb., *Christol.* I. 2, *s.* 192 *sq.*). Keil says that "the name יֹאשִׁיָּהוּ (in our passage) only follows its appellative meaning; he whom Jehovah sustains, from אָשָׁה

to sustain, and means, a son shall be born to the house of David, whom Jehovah shall support and establish, so that he shall execute judgment on the high priests at Bethel. This prophecy was afterwards so fulfilled by divine Providence, that the king who executed the sentence bore the name of Josiah as his proper name." But this name is never used anywhere else as an appellative, and only belonged to one person. If we must take the expression "all the cities of Samaria" (ver. 32) "as proleptic," we cannot see the reason why this may not also be the case with the words "Josiah by name" (ver. 2). We need not suppose they were the gloss of a later interpolator; our author took them as he found them in the document from which he borrowed; this document, however, was, as we have said, not a contemporary one, but the later record of what had been preserved in the verbal traditions of the people, and had been revived by Josiah's act (2 Kings xxiii). If any section of our books bears the stamp of tradition, the present one does; and that by no means because a miracle is recorded in it. The names of the two prophets with whom the whole narrative is taken up are wanting, which is an evidence of tradition, as are also the difficulties in ver. 6 *sq.* and vers. 18–22, about which opinions differ widely, and which can scarcely be satisfactorily explained. Although *those* facts which are most important here are historical and unchanged, yet the traditional coloring of single and less important circumstances can be plainly perceived; every attempt to determine what is purely historical and what is traditional is vain. We must not forget the general grand aim of the whole section, which is to make known the wonderful ways and judgments of God.

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

Vers. 1–3. **And behold there came a man of God, &c.** We cannot ascertain who this was. "Josephus calls him Jadon, thinking no doubt of the עִדּוֹ or עִדּוֹא who is called יֶעְדִּי after the *k'ri* in 2 Chron. ix. 29; we cannot accept this, however (as Jarchi does), because he lived under king Abijah, according to 2 Chron. xiii. 22, while the prophet spoken of here died now. For the same reason we cannot think, with Ephrem and Tertullian, that it was Shemaiah, see 2 Chron. xii. 1, 22" (Thenius). It expressly says that he came *out of Judah*, therefore he did not spring from the apostate part of the nation. בִּדְבַר יְהוָה does not mean: on the word or command of Jehovah, but, as appears from vers. 2, 9, 17 (*cf.* chap. xx. 35 and 1 Sam. iii. 21): in (through) the word. "The word of the Lord is spoken of as a power that came upon the prophet and forced him to utter the revelation made to him" (Keil). *O altar, altar!* the altar is metonymically for what was done on it and concentrated in it; in short, of the worship performed there. The fact that the prophet addressed the altar was incomparably more significant than if he had turned himself to the person of the king; the sentence of destruction which he pronounces on the altar as the type of the new worship, and of Jeroboam's sin, includes the ruin of the latter. For *Josiah* see preliminary remarks. The burning of men's bones on the altar is the greatest possible desecration of it, as according to the law (Numb. xix. 16) every, even involuntary, contact with a dead body made a person unclean; nothing else could have represented the altar as so utterly useless and abominable. In the genuine prophetic manner, the man of God adds to his words a deed (see on chap. xi. 30) as a pledge of his prophecy. מוֹפֵת is not so much a sign (אוֹת), as an act producing astonishment, *prodigium* (Hengstenberg, *Christol.* II. *s.* 45 *sq.*). דֶּשֶׁן (really fat, hence the Sept. gives πιότης here) is the fat of the parts sacrificed on the altar, and ran out mixing with the ashes, therefore is not ashes absolutely. These ashes of sacrifice were, on that account, usually taken to a clean place (Lev. i. 16; iv. 12). The spilling of them out, in this case, denoted that they, and consequently the sacrifice from which they came, and the whole worship, were unclean; it was no natural result of the bursting of the altar. 2 Kings xxiii. relates the fulfilment of the prophetical act and word.

Vers. 4–7. **And it came to pass when king Jeroboam heard the saying, &c.**, ver. 4. Jeroboam did not raise his hand to offer the incense (Thenius); but as he stood on the altar, he stretched out his hand towards the man of God as he spoke, and cried out, Lay hold on him! *It dried up.* "Jeroboam's hand, so suddenly affected that he could not draw it back, was either paralyzed or, what seems more explanatory of the expression dried up, struck with tetanus; this last is what Ackermann accepts (in Weise's *Materialien* III. *s.* 131 *sq.*)" (Winer, *R.-W.-B.* II. *s.* 192). Jeroboam's order thereby lost all effect; no one ventured to seize the prophet; it was also a warning to the king himself, and had a momentary effect on him. He was terrified, and begged the prophet to "entreat now [to make inattentive] the face of the Lord thy God for me" (חַלֵּה) *i. e.*, to beseech Him so earnestly that He cannot refuse. "The Lord thy God," he says, not that He was not his God, but: thy God in whose name and behalf thou hast come here. When he was succored he invited the prophet to go home with him, and offered him a present, but not from genuine repentance or gratitude, but only because he wished to win him over, and to do away with or lessen the impression his conduct (the prophet's) made on the people present; for he himself remained the same apostate after as before.

Vers. 8–10. **[But] And the man of God said, &c.**, ver. 8. The object of this prohibition of eating and drinking in Bethel was not to effect the "prompt execution of the commission" (Thenius). Eating and drinking with a person, sitting down to table with any one, is the sign of communion or fellowship, and used as such here, as often elsewhere in Scripture (1 Cor. v. 11; *cf.* Gen. xliii. 32; Luke xv. 2; Gal. ii. 12; 1 Cor. x. 18, 21). The man of God, chosen to announce God's judgment by word and deed on the apostate and his followers, was to avoid fellowship with him, for this would be utterly inconsistent with his commission; the command was given him, *ad detestationem idololatriæ; ut ipso facto ostenderet, Bethelitas idololatras adeo esse detestabiles et a Deo quasi excommunicatos, ut nullum fidelium cum iis cibi vel potus communionem habere velit* (*Corn. a Lapide*). When he afterwards ate and drank there, he transgressed a much higher and

more important command than one relative to fasting only. This, too, was why he was to take another way home; not "to remain unnoticed and to avoid being detained" (Ewald), but to avoid being brought back, and persuaded to do anything inconsistent with his commission or not contained in it; this alone he was to do, and then vanish as quickly as he came. This sheds the necessary light on the following narrative, vers. 11–32.

Vers. 11–22. **An old prophet in Bethel,** ver. 11. He lived in the town (vers. 25, 29), but the high place was probably outside the town. Instead of "*his son*," the Sept., the Vulg., and the Syr. give the plural, as in ver. 12. One spake in the name of the others, or they agreed with what the one said. These were actual sons of the prophet, not pupils, for the latter would scarcely have witnessed the golden calf worship. The *Terebinth* (ver. 14) "is a tree that resembles an oak, ... has evergreen leaves, and grape-like fruit. It attains a great age, and therefore often serves as a monument or for topographical purposes; Gen. xxxv. 4; Jud. vi. 11, 19; 1 Sam. xvii. 2, 19; 2 Sam. xviii. 9" (Gesenius). The article points to a certain terebinth known in Bethel. The resting under this tree was not at all the beginning of his sin, as the older commentators think, for delay in Bethel alone was prohibited; still the delay gave time for others to come up to him. The בְּדְבַר ver. 18 is the same as in ver. 17 and ver. 2; the angel said to me, "by the word," *i. e.*, the power of Jehovah's word; he does not venture to say Jehovah spake to him, but says an angel did. See the His. Ethic. below, for the announcement of punishment (vers. 20–22) by the same old prophet who had lied to the man of God. The final words of ver. 22: thy carcass, &c., do not mean, *morte violenta, antequam in patriam redeas, peribis* (J. H. Michaelis, Keil, and others), for נְבֵלָה means all dead bodies (Isai. xxvi. 19), not only those killed with violence; the Sept. simply gives σῶμα. The emphasis falls on the "*sepulchre of thy fathers*." It was thought a misfortune to be buried among strangers, far from home and relations; so it was a very natural wish to be buried in the grave of his fathers (every respectable family had a family sepulchre, *cf.* Winer, *R.-W.-B.* I. *s.* 444), (2 Sam. xix. 38; Gen. xlvii. 29 *sq.*; l. 5). But this blessing so coveted by every Israelite was refused to the "refractory."

Ver. 23–34. **And it came to pass, after he had eaten,** &c., ver. 23. The subject of the last part of the sentence cannot be other than that of the first part; so it was not the prophet of Bethel who saddled the ass, neither is it "one saddled" (Luther, Bunsen), but the man of God did it or had it done. לַנָּבִיא is not in opposition with לוֹ, so that we could translate: "he saddled the ass for him, for the prophet he had fetched back" (Keil, Luther, De Wette); for throughout the whole section, נָבִיא is only used for the prophet of Bethel; the Judaish one is called "the man of God;" and the clause אֲשֶׁר הֱשִׁיבוֹ, that occurs three times, cannot be translated differently here from vers. 20 and 26, where it is impossible to take אֲשֶׁר as the accusative. לַנָּבִיא is the general form of the genitive when it dénotes possession and belonging, and must be connected with הַחֲמוֹר immediately preceding it. The old prophet either offered his ass to the man of God, who hastened home after eating and drinking, or he gave it to him at his request. שָׁבַר, used in vers. 26 and 28 to express killing by the lion, does not mean: to tear (Ewald, De Wette), but, to break, crush, and "is very expressive, for the lion kills with one blow" (Thenius). The *grave* in which the man of God was laid (ver. 30) was the family sepulchre of the old prophet; see on ver. 22. הוֹי אָחִי seems to have been the usual form of lamentation, *cf.* Jer. xxii. 18. The man of God from Judah was mourned and buried as a relative of the family. The Sept. adds at the end of ver. 31, ἵνα σωθῶσι τὰ ὀστᾶ μου μετὰ τῶν ὀστῶν αὐτοῦ, which Thenius thinks was original, because the כִּי in the following verse becomes thus perfectly justified. But this sentence, evidently borrowed from 2 Kings xxiii. 18, is unnecessary here; the connection is: My bones shall rest next his, for he was a true prophet; what he prophesied against the altar at Bethel will come to pass. For the expression "cities of Samaria" see Prel. Remarks. The connection of vers. 33 and 34 with the preceding verses has been given above. If in ver. 33, in the various directions for worship devised by Jeroboam, mention only of the priests he appointed is made, the reason of this is that they were the main supports of the whole of the unlawful worship, which could not have lasted without them. *To "fill the hand"* is the formula for investiture with priesthood, because the pieces of the sacrifices which belonged to Jehovah were solemnly laid in the hands of the candidate for consecration; Ex. xxix. 24; Lev. viii. 27 *sq.* (*Symb. des Mos. Kult.* II. *s.* 426).

HISTORICAL AND ETHICAL.

1. *The appearance of the man of God from Judah, at the feast in Bethel,* shows in few strokes the characteristic nature of the prophet system, which stands alone in the history of the world. Unknown hitherto and living in retirement, neither named nor called, when the right moment came he stood there as suddenly as lightning from heaven, not coming in any man's service but as a messenger of the Lord, borne up and sustained by the might of the "word" of God alone. Without any human help he stood before the proud, energetic king, knowing his hatred to David's house and to Judah, knowing how Adoniram had fared (chap. xii. 18), but he fears nothing, and boldly announces the divine sentence, not at a private interview, but in presence of all the king's followers, of the whole priesthood, and crowd of spectators. He adds a divine act to the divine word, which act is a significant "sign" and pledge of the fulfilment of the prophecy. Having spoken and acted in the name of the Lord, he was under Jehovah's protection, no one dared to seize him; the hand of the king, when stretched forth against him, dried up and became powerless. When the king, thus punished, begs the prophet for help, the latter calls upon the Lord, who hears him, thus showing Himself to be a gracious as well as a just God (Rom. xi. 22), in order to bring him

back from his evil ways. He vanished as suddenly as he came, without eating a bit of bread or drinking water, or receiving a present, even though it were the half of the house. He was to disappear completely, that every one should think of the Lord and His word alone; of what they had heard and seen.

2. *Jeroboam's conduct* is full of contradictions and inconsistency. At first he was haughty and violent to the man of God, wishing to seize his person. But when he failed in this, and he felt a higher power, he became humble and dejected, begged the man he had just threatened to intercede for him, gave him a friendly invitation and offered him a present; he then let him go on his way, but paid no regard whatever to his words and deed. The cause of this conduct was not weakness of character, but rather, on the contrary, the obstinacy with which he pursued what his soul desired, and which was the mainspring of all his actions, *i. e.*, the resolve to keep himself on the throne at any cost and under all circumstances, and not to come under the dominion of the hated house of David and Judah again (chap. xii. 26 *sq.*). The petition to have his hand restored was only the effect of momentary fright; when this passed, instead of listening to the man of God, he tried to bribe him and win him over, and the whole transaction left no trace behind it. He is a type of those usurpers who have no other aim in life than to gratify their ambition and love of power, and whose apparently good and noble actions are only the fruit of this passion. It seems from ver. 11 that the appearance of the man of God made an impression upon the surrounding people, but the account does not say of what sort this impression was, and it passes on at once to the much more important occurrence related in vers. 10–32.

3. *The old prophet in Bethel* was called a false prophet and a "lying prophet" in old times, because he induced the man of God to return by telling him a lie. Josephus regards him as such (*Antiq.* viii. 9), but he "misunderstands the whole narrative in a truly frightful manner" (Ewald); but Jonathan, several Rabbins, and older R. Catholic commentators, even Hess also, agree in the principal thing, and pronounce the motives of this old prophet, in what he said and did, to have been unworthy. The recent commentators, following Ephrem's example and that of Theodoret, Witsius, and others, have very rightly rejected this view. The sentence he announces to the man of God (ver. 21) shows that he was no partaker of Jeroboam's calf-worship, but was a worshipper of Jehovah; still more does this appear from his belief in the fulfilment of the prophecy of the destruction of that false worship (ver. 32), but most of all when, on hearing of the death of his guest, although he perceived divine punishment in it, he at once proceeded to the dangerous place to find the corpse and bury it in his family sepulchre, lamented over him as his "brother," and desired his sons to "lay his bones beside his bones" (ver. 31). We may see from 2 Kings xxiii. 18, that he never was regarded afterwards as a false prophet, but as a true comrade of the man from Judah. From all this it appears that he could have had no bad intention when he at first hastened after the man of God (vers. 12, 13) and pressed him to return and go into his house. On the contrary, when he had heard from his sons what he had said and done, he was seized with a strong desire to see and speak to the faithful and courageous messenger of Jehovah, to enter into friendship with him, and edify himself in his company. One thing alone he was guilty of, that he used a lie to reach his end. This, however, by no means shows that he was a false, bad, and hypocritical man, but only shows he was no saint, just as "dissembling" did not make the apostle Peter (Gal. ii. 13) a pseudo-apostle. "This was one of the many lies spoken in good intentions, by otherwise enlightened persons of the Old Testament, but who were weak in faith" (Von Gerlach); old age, too, may have partly accounted for it. It is, however, a difficulty that the same prophet who had lied to the man of God announced his punishment to him afterwards. Perhaps his conscience awoke meantime, when he heard more at table, so that he saw his own guilt as well as that of the man of God, and in this condition became the instrument to announce the punishment, so that what happened to the man of God might not seem an undeserved fate. We ought to notice that he did not announce his death by a lion, but only said that he should not come into the sepulchre of his fathers (see above on ver. 22). Of all the conjectures about the reason and motive of the old prophet's conduct, the least tenable are such as that he followed the Judah-man from mere curiosity or "from human envy" (Thenius), or "because God had charged him to speak to the king" (Dereser), and that he felt his prophetical reputation injured (Hess). Apart from everything else, the commission of the man of God was no enviable one, but difficult and dangerous, and also a fruitless one. According to Hengstenberg (*Beiträge* II. *s.* 149), with whom Keil and Lisco agree, the old prophet had "sinned by silence about Jeroboam's innovations." "What the Judah-prophet did, showed him what he should have done. Penetrated with shame for his neglect, he endeavored to restore himself in his own opinion and that of others by intercourse with the witness for the Lord." In this case, his purpose in hurrying after him could not have been a good one, but selfish and objectionable, and the lie would have been so much the greater sin. Besides, if silence were a sin, the prophet Ahijah would have been peculiarly guilty of it, as he was an Ephraimite and had placed the prospect of the kingdom before Jeroboam (chap. xi. 31–39). Neither prophet undertook the mission to Bethel, because no commission was given them from above—a man of God was to come from Judah. According to Knobel (*Der Prophetismus der Hebr.* II. *s.* 66 *sq.*), the old prophet induced him to return because "no doubt he wished to test the firmness and obedience of the Judah-man to Jehovah; perhaps the Ephraimite wished to form some theocratic plan with him, and thought it needful to ascertain first whether he was reliable—a very natural measure for an old and cautious man who lived among hostile idolatrous priests." This, it is supposed, explains how he announced his punishment to the Judah-man, but could not refuse him his pity and esteem, as one in the same vocation. This opinion is also untenable, for, according to it, the old prophet would have taken the very opposite means to attain his end (the formation of a theocratic plan); if his test of the fidelity and obedience of the Judah-man had succeeded, and he had continued his home journey without delay, the old prophet could

not have communicated his plan to him, still less have carried it out together with him.

4. *The tragical end of the man of God out of Judah* is clearly represented as a divine dispensation, in consequence of disobedience to Jehovah's command, wholly conformable to the stern legal character of the Old-Testament economy (*cf.*, for instance, Numb. xx. 24; xxvii. 14; 1 Sam. xii. 15, &c.). The question has often been asked, why the prophet of Judah came to such an end, and the Bethel prophet who lied to him went unpunished? To this we may reply with another question: Who can say to Him who is righteous in all His ways and holy in all His works (Ps. cxlv. 17), Lord, what doest Thou (Job ix. 12)? We do not know what fate God allotted to the old prophet; he acts only a minor part in the narrative, compared with the prophet of Judah. It is quite wrong to assert, as is so often done, that the sin of the lie was much greater than the disobedience to Jehovah's command. This was distinct from Jeroboam's sin wherewith he made Israel to sin, for it touched the whole of the prophet-system, *i. e.*, the institution of the office of divine guardians and witnesses. By not eating or drinking in that place, where that sin fully showed itself, he was to prove (as well by word as by deed) that there could be no fellowship between those who kept Jehovah's covenant and those who had broken it. If he ate and drank in that place, he nullified the important end of his mission, and deprived the threat he had solemnly pronounced of all its force, by appearing as one who himself did not fear to transgress the express command of Jehovah. The fate that overtook him was a confirmation of the truth of the sentence he had pronounced against Jeroboam's sin, and which sentence had appeared doubtful through his conduct; it showed also to all the people, as Theodoret remarks, that if God so punished the man of God, he would certainly not leave Jeroboam's sin unpunished. In that the man of God did not "come unto the sepulchre of his fathers" (ver. 22), but was buried in Bethel, (*i. e.*, "in this place"), he was, even after death, a witness against the apostasy, and his grave was a lasting monument that reminded the apostates of Jehovah's judgments and exhorted them to conversion. But for the prophet-system itself, his fate was of great significance. With it began the active working (henceforth uninterrupted) of the prophet-system in the kingdom of organized apostasy: here it had a mission, on the unconditional fulfilment of which everything depended, namely, the constant struggle against the pseudo-theocracy. The fate of the man of God contained the strongest warning to all who should afterwards receive a similar charge, not to allow themselves to be enticed by anything, however plausible and alluring it might be (ver. 18), from implicit obedience to the divine commission. This is very probably the reason that the narrative is so explicitly detailed. As to the old prophet, his lamentation (vers. 31, 32) evidently proceeds from a heart that mourns over his own sin; he says, as it were, If I can have no more fellowship with my brother in life, I will at least be united to him in death; our common grave, to which I shall soon go down in sorrow, shall be a lasting testimony against the sin of Jeroboam.

5. *Witsius says of the wonderful circumstances* which accompanied the end of the man of God (*Miscell. sacr.* I. *cap.* 15, *s.* 145): *Denique tot admiranda in unum concurrentia effecerunt, ut vaticinium adversus aram Betheliticam in omnium ore atque memoria versaretur, et legatio hujus Prophetæ multo redderetur conspectior et illustrior.* The extraordinary nature of these circumstances distinguishes his end from every ordinary accidental death, and bears the impress of a special dispensation; this is peculiarly apparent in the fact that the corpse remained untouched, instead of falling a prey to the wild beasts (*cf.* chap. xiv. 11), and that it was honorably carried to the grave without any pollution. To pronounce this deeply serious and significant narrative to be a "sensational" story (Vatke), on account of its miraculous disclosures, seems to indicate an almost frivolous character. For, though one or another part may bear the trace of a verbal tradition (see Prelim. Remarks), having been written down at a later date, yet the chief point remains, and that is that this history of the two prophets loudly and sternly proclaims the wonderful ways and judgments of God, and therefore lived for hundreds of years in the mouths of the people. The fact of the man of God out of Judah being killed by a lion is significant, inasmuch as God carried out His judgments elsewhere by lions (2 Kings xvii. 25 *sq.*; Wis. xi. 15–17), and He Himself, when He comes as a judge, is likened to a lion (Isai. xxxi. 4; Jer. iv. 7; Am. iii. 8), and those also who execute His judgments are called lions (Jer. xxv. 30, 38; xlix. 15; l. 44). That the lion did not tear the dead so that he could not be buried, is a sure evidence that all creatures are in His hand (the Almighty's), and that they cannot stir against His will (*Heidelberg Katech.*). *Cf.* Job xxxviii. 11.

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

Vers. 1–10. The man of God out of Judah. (*a*) He comes, led by the word of God, and goes on his dark, difficult way in faith, without taking counsel with flesh and blood. (*b*) He stands, strong and bold, before the king, fears him not, testifies against his sins, and announces the judgment of God. (*c*) He makes entreaty for him, who was about to lay hold on him, and heaps coals of fire on his head. (*d*) He resists the offers of the king, and will not be secured by bribes. The testimony against the service of the false gods. (*a*) It proceeded from a nameless, unknown, insignificant man who, without worldly consequence, has nothing and knows nothing, except only the power of the divine Word. That is the manner of the Lord in His kingdom. He accomplishes by means of small, insignificant instruments what no king, with all his power, can do. The altars of heathendom are shattered by means of the testimony of fishers and tax-gatherers (1 Cor. i. 27–29), even as were the altars of the false worship of God by means of a poor world-despised recluse. It was received, at first, with scorn, wrath, and violence; but the wrath is powerless and avails nothing; the altar is rent, and the threatening arm is dried up. Humble entreaties then take the place of wrath, for: Is. xxvi. 16. But, though the withered hand be restored, the heart remains withered as before. Physical aid is alway readily received by men, whilst they shut their hearts to the testimony against their sins.

Ver. 1. God has never, even when apostasy was

almost universal, suffered His Church to fail for want of messengers, who would cry aloud in the world, "Down with the false idols! The Lord is God! the Lord is God! Give God all honor!"—God not only warns and admonishes men, as Jeroboam by Ahijah (chap. xi. 38) before they set out in the path of evil, but when they are already walking in it, even then He strives with them, in order to reclaim them, for "He has no pleasure," &c. (Ezek. xxxiii. 11; Rom. ii. 4, 5).—Ver. 2. God announces beforehand to sinners His judgments, that they may have time and space, for repentance. Woe to them who misemploy the respite, for the measure of their sins will be full. In the new covenant we have a far weightier prophecy. Unto us is born a Son, named Jesus, out of the House of David; who will come again, and pronounce judgment upon those who know not God, and who obey not the Gospel, &c. (2 Thess. i. 8, 9).—Ver. 3. The miracles which the Lord our God performs are not only proofs of His almighty power, to amaze us, but likewise significant signs which reveal to us His eternal decrees, and lead us to the recognition of that heavenly truth which sanctifies our hearts.—Ver. 4. CRAMER: Although faithful teachers often accomplish nothing, and fail, most signally, with men of high degree, yet must they never on this account abandon their office. For if thou warn him, thou hast delivered thy soul (Ezek. iii. 19), and although the obdurate remain untouched, yet it shall not remain without fruit (Is. lv. 10). How did even this warning work itself out, and bear fruit after 300 years (2 Kings xxiii. 15). Sinners, eminent by wealth and position, will only listen to prophets who are dumb dogs, and cannot bark (Is. lvi. 10). When a true servant of the Lord cries out "The axe is already laid at the root of the tree," they arise in wrath, and cry out, Seize him! (2 Tim. iv. 1–5). He who attacks a servant of God, on account of his testimony, never remains unpunished. In vain doth the enemy stretch forth his hand against those who are under God's protection (Job vii. 44; Lev. iv. 29 *sq.*; Ps. xxxvii. 17). Those who will not listen to the word of truth, God often visits with bodily pain in order to humble them, and teach them to pray and supplicate.—Ver. 6. He who desires for himself the intercession of others must himself draw near, humbly and penitently, to God and implore His mercy. In this wise can we know if we are indeed children of God, and guided by His spirit, if we pray and supplicate for those who have done their worst to us, and thus overcome evil with good (1 Peter iii. 9).—Ver. 7. OSIANDER: Although the ungodly often hold in high esteem these holy men especially raised up by God, yet they never follow their instructions and warnings (Mark vi. 19 *sq.*). What boots it that we gratefully acknowledge the material blessings which meet us, if we leave unfulfilled the very object of these blessings, viz., the turning of our hearts from sin and the world to God. Unbelief and impenitence cannot be outweighed by even the highest friendship and humanity. When the world can effect nothing more by force and threats, it seeks to gain its ends by plausible love-tokens.—Ver. 8, 9. There is no bribe to which the man of God will yield: to him, that which God has commanded him seems, in all times and all places, in evil as in good days, the fixed and definite plan of action.—STARKE: The best weapon and defence against the snares of our spiritual enemy is the word and law of God. It must always be said: God has forbidden me (Matt. iv. 4, 7, 10). It is far from being unimportant with whom we eat and drink, *i. e.*, in fellowship and intimate alliance (1 Cor. v. 11).—Ver. 10. If in a certain position thou hast done what God commanded, and left undone what he forbade, then go on thy way peaceful and content, how dark and unknown soever it may seem to thee.

Vers. 11–32. VON GERLACH: The history of these two prophets offers an important view of the relation of this class to the new order of things; in the prophet out of Judah we see a man of God full of life and strength, but who yet proved unstable in these disturbed times; in the old Israelite we look upon one in whom the fire is almost quenched—it only glimmers faintly—a type of the expiring high and manly strength of Israel: he is still upheld by faith in God's word rather than by self-reliance. They both yet speak and testify in death. The fall and death of the man of Judah set forth two great truths: (*a*) He who thinketh he standeth, let him take heed, &c. (1 Cor. x. 12). (He had conducted himself grandly and nobly, and victoriously withstood a severe temptation, yet he yielded to a lesser one. The higher a man stands the deeper is his fall, and to whom much is given from him will much be required. Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, &c. 1 Cor. xvi. 13; x. 13. Only those who are true unto death can obtain the crown of life.) (*b*) How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out, Rom. xi. 33. He who is holy in all his ways knows how to establish firmly that which is threatened with destruction and annihilation by human treachery and deceit. The death and the grave of the man of God announce in louder and more threatening accents than did his lips—the altar is rent.

Vers. 11–15. The old prophet when he hears of the man of God hastens upon his way and spares neither care nor pains to see him and bring him to his house; how much time, pains, and money are expended by the children of this world to see and to hear what will gratify their senses, whilst they stir neither hand nor foot to acquire that which pertains to their peace and salvation.—Vers. 16–19. So in indifferent ordinary matters, which God has either ordered or forbidden, we must observe unerring obedience, for he who is faithful in that which is least, &c. (Lu. xvi. 10; xix. 17). Hearken not unto him who says: I am a prophet, declaiming that he announces divine truth, whilst he deprives your heart of the dear and steadfast word of God, which shall remain until heaven and earth shall pass away. Hence the warning of the apostle: Beloved, believe not, &c. (1 John iv. 1–3), and, But though we or an angel, &c. (Gal. i. 8). Whatever obtains success and position by means of deceit cannot be followed by a blessing, but rather by a curse. The Scripture is not silent concerning the sins of the man of God; and this, not that we may excuse our sins by his, but that we may guard ourselves from haughtiness and spiritual pride, and pray earnestly: Search me, O God, &c. (Ps. cxxxix. 23, 24).—Vers. 20–22. The same sentence which the old prophet pronounced upon the man of God he pronounced upon himself, while he had led and betrayed him to disobedience. How often does the judgment which we utter for others fall

upon ourselves, when we have sinned equally or in greater measure (Rom. ii. 1): for wherein thou, &c.—Vers. 23–25. The judgments of God often fall suddenly and unexpectedly, thus proving that although long delayed they are sure to come, even as this, after the lapse of three hundred years, was the punishment threatened for the golden calf worship.—Ver. 24. see Histor. and Eth. 5.—Vers. 25–29. The chastisement with which God visits our fellow-men for their sins is both a warning to reflect upon our own sins and deserts, and a call to work active deeds of love with all our might, in life and in death.—Vers. 30, 31. We often for the first time, at the grave of a friend, recognize what we possessed in him, and how we have sinned against him. One look into the open grave of one dear to us in life is adapted, beyond anything, to remind us of our own end. It is a very natural wish to rest in death near those who were closely bound to us in life by ties of blood or strong affection; but yet stronger should be the wish to die in the Lord, and enter into eternal glory. Then, wherever in the providence of God we may find our grave, there shall we rest in peace, for the earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof (Ps. xxiv. 1).

Vers. 33, 34. When neither the severity nor the patient long-suffering of his God brings to repentance a man who walks in evil ways, he is brought by his own sin under the sentence for the obdurate, viz., temporal and eternal ruin (2 Tim iii. 13; John viii. 34).—Starke: Church patrons should not abuse their so-called jus patronatus, to place in charge of themselves and congregations teachers "having itching ears" (2 Tim. iv. 3), or one who will preserve silence concerning every kind of godlessness and misrule. Should they do so they become followers of Jeroboam, and must expect Jeroboam's punishment. The spiritual office is put to shame if borne by men who make a traffic of religion, and are intent only upon filling their own hands.

[R. South: Vers. 33, 34. "The means to strengthen or ruin the civil power is either to establish or destroy the right worship of God." . . . The way to destroy religion is to embase the dispensers of it. "This is to give the royal stamp to a piece of lead." . . . "It is a sad thing when all other employments shall empty themselves into the ministry; when men shall repair to it not for preferment but refuge; like malefactors flying to the altars only to save their lives, or like those of Eli's race (1 Sam. ii. 36), that should come crouching, and seeking to be put into the priest's office that they might eat a piece of bread."—E. H.]

B.—*The prophecy of Ahijah against the house and kingdom of Jeroboam, and the death of the latter.*

Chap. XIV. 1–20.

1 2 [1]At that time Abijah the son of Jeroboam fell sick. And Jeroboam said
to his wife, Arise, I pray thee, and disguise thyself, that thou be not known to
be the wife of Jeroboam; and get thee to Shiloh: behold, there *is* Ahijah the
3 prophet, which told me that *I should be* king[2] over this people. And take with
thee ten loaves, and cracknels,[3] and a cruse of honey, and go to him: he shall tell
4 thee what shall become of the child. And Jeroboam's wife did so, and arose and
went to Shiloh, and came to the house of Ahijah. But Ahijah could not see; for
5 his eyes were set by reason of his age. And the Lord [Jehovah] said unto Ahijah,
Behold, the wife of Jeroboam cometh to ask a thing of thee for her son; for
he *is* sick: thus and thus[4] shalt thou say unto her: for it shall be, when she
6 cometh in, that she shall feign herself *to be* another *woman*. And it was *so*,
when Ahijah heard the sound of her feet, as she came in at the door, that he said,
Come in, thou wife of Jeroboam; why feignest thou thyself *to be* another? for I
7 *am* sent to thee *with* heavy *tidings*. Go tell Jeroboam, Thus saith the Lord
[Jehovah] God of Israel, Forasmuch as I exalted thee from among the people,
8 and made thee prince over my people Israel, and rent the kingdom away from
the house of David, and gave it thee: and *yet* thou hast not been as my servant
David, who kept my commandments, and who followed me with all his heart,
9 to do *that* only *which was* right in mine eyes; but hast done evil above all
that were before thee: for thou hast gone and made thee other gods, and mol-
10 ten images, to provoke me to anger, and hast cast me behind thy back: there-
fore, behold, I will bring evil upon[5] the house of Jeroboam, and will cut off from
Jeroboam him that pisseth against the wall, *and* him that is shut up and left[6] in
Israel, and will take away the remnant[7] of the house of Jeroboam, as a man
11 taketh away dung, till it be all gone. Him that dieth of Jeroboam in the city
shall the dogs eat; and him that dieth in the field shall the fowls of the air eat:
12 for the Lord [Jehovah] hath spoken *it*. Arise thou therefore, get thee to thine

13 own house: *and* when thy feet enter into the city, the child shall die. And all
Israel shall mourn for him, and bury him: for he only of Jeroboam shall come to
the grave, because in him there is found *some* good thing toward the Lord [Jeho-
14 vah] God of Israel in the house of Jeroboam. Moreover, the Lord [Jehovah]
shall raise him up a king over Israel, who shall cut off the house of Jeroboam
15 that day: but what? even now. For the Lord shall smite Israel, as a reed is
shaken in the water, and he shall root up Israel out of this good land, which he
gave to their fathers, and shall scatter them beyond the river, because they have
16 made their groves, provoking the Lord [Jehovah] to anger. And he shall give
Israel up because of the sins of Jeroboam, who did sin, and who made Israel to
17 sin. And Jeroboam's wife arose, and departed, and came to Tirzah; *and* when
18 she came to the threshold of the door, the child died: and they buried him; and
all Israel mourned for him, according to the word of the Lord [Jehovah], which
he spake by the hand of his servant Ahijah the prophet.
19 And the rest of the acts of Jeroboam, how he warred, and how he reigned, be-
20 hold, they *are* written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Israel. And
the days which Jeroboam reigned *were* two and twenty years: and he slept
with his fathers, and Nadab his son reigned in his stead.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

[1] Ver. 1.—[The Vat. Sept. omits the first twenty verses of this chapter, *i. e.*, the whole of this section.

[2] Ver. 2.—[דִּבֶּר עָלַי לְמֶלֶךְ: lit. "spake of me for king."

[3] Ver. 3.—[נִקֻּדִים occurs only here and in Josh. ix. 5, 12, where it is rendered in the A. V. by the adjective *mouldy*. The sense of the word seems to be "that which is easily crumbled." The Alex. Sept. translates by κολλυρίδα, adding τοῖς τέκνοις αὐτοῦ, supposing them to be a sort of cakes for the children, and adds to these σταφίδας, raisins.

[4] Ver. 5.—[The peculiar form כָּזֹה וְכָזֶה occurs elsewhere only in Judg. xviii. 4 and Sam. xi. 25.

[5] Ver. 10.—[The reading עַל בֵּית, found in many MSS. instead of אֶל־בֵּית, scarcely modifies the sense.

[6] Ver. 10.—[The difficult words עָצוּר וְעָזוּב are so literally translated in the A. V. as to give a scarcely intelligible sense. There is no uniformity in the ancient VV. although it seems to have been understood as an expression to designate all classes. Our author translates "those under age and those of age." Keil makes the sense to be "the married and the single." The phrase occurs also xxi. 21, and 2 Kings ix. 8; xiv. 26, and is taken from Deut. xxxii. 37.

[7] Ver. 10.—[The proposition אַחֲרֵי is taken in the A. V. as if it were the noun אַחֲרִית. So also the Vulg. There is really nothing in the Heb. answering to the word *remnant*. On the construction of the verb with this prep. see Gesenius lex. *s. v.* בָּעַר, Piel. 3.—F. G.]

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

Vers. 1–6. **At that time, &c.** As Jeroboam was not led to a change of heart by what is recorded in chap. xiii., a visitation overtook him in the form of the illness of his promising son Abijah, who was doubtless to have been his successor. Then, when in distress, he thought of the prophet who once promised him the kingdom, and a "sure house" (chap. xi. 38); he thought of Ahijah, whose prophecy respecting the kingdom had been fulfilled, and he hoped to receive from him a sure answer to a question which concerned the continuance of his dynasty. But, conscious that he had not fulfilled the prophet's condition—unswerving loyalty to Jehovah—he did not venture to go himself, but tried to deceive him, and, as it were, to steal an answer from him. He sends the mother, the most natural intercessor for the son; she is disguised, so that no one can know her and tell the prophet who she is. The presents that it was customary to take (1 Sam. ix. 8) were purposely very small, for she wished, no doubt, to appear to the prophet as a very poor woman; but נִקֻּדִים does not mean "mouldy loaves" (Hess, Dereser, and others), for נָקֹד means punctured, spotted, but not therefore mouldy; the Sept. gives κολλυρίς, the Vulgate *crustula*. The expression קָמוּ עֵינָיו (ver. 4), *i. e.*, his eyes stood (were set), "means the gray cataracts, *amaurosis*, that take place in old age, through paralysis of the optic nerves" (Keil) (1 Sam. iv. 15). קָשָׁה, ver. 6, is the same as in chap. xii. 13.

Vers. 7–9. **Go tell Jeroboam, &c.** Ver. 7. The older commentators remark that the prophecy which begins here and ends in ver. 16 takes a rhythmical form. It has ten verses (vers. 7–16), five of which make one section (vers. 7–11 and 12–16); the first section is in 3 + 2, and the second in 2 + 3 verses. Jeroboam had sinned *above all* that were before him (ver. 9); for none, whether king, judge, or leader, had made an unlawful worship a State institution, and forcibly maintained it to gratify lust of power and selfishness; Solomon had only permitted the idolatrous worship, and that first to his already idolatrous wives. מַסֵּכוֹת, the same as in Deut. ix. 12; Jud. xvii. 3, 4, molten images. Worship of images is here placed on a level with worship of idols, because it involuntarily leads to it (see Hist. and Eth. on chap. xii. 28). "The expression, *hast cast me* (*God*) *behind thy back*, which occurs nowhere else but in Ezek. xxiii. 35, is the strongest possible phraseology to denote intentional contempt of God—the opposite

from having God before one's eyes; and it is stronger than 'cast Thy law behind their backs,' Neh. ix. 26" (Keil).

Vers. 10–12. **Therefore behold, I will bring evil,** ver. 10. The expression "that pisseth against the wall" in 1 Sam. xxv. 22 (1 Kings xvi. 11; xxi. 21; 2 Kings ix. 8), was, no doubt, originally used of dogs, and was not an honorable way of alluding to the male sex; for it is employed in all these passages only of those who are to be cast away and rooted out. The words עָצוּר וְעָזוּב, which are mostly connected with it, are epexegetical; literally, the detained, and those set free, which Seb. Schmidt rightly interprets *puer, qui domi adhuc detinetur et qui emancipatus est*; the male descendants not of age are under guardians (2 Kings x. 1, 5; 1 Chron. xxvii. 32). This is the only explanation which suits the word בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל, which "refers to an intruded, or already assumed share in public life" (Thenius); *all* the male descendants of the king, even the minors, were threatened with destruction. Luther's translation, "those shut up and forsaken in Israel," is decidedly erroneous. "Behind the house of Jeroboam" means: as often as a new scion arises I shall take it away, &c. (*cf.* Isai. xiv. 23). The Vulgate which Luther followed is wrong: *mundabo reliquias domus Jeroboam.* The threat reaches its climax in ver. 11, which foretells the frightful and disgraceful manner of the destruction. To remain unburied was an intolerable thought to the Hebrews; and in all the ancient world it was accounted the severest disgrace, because in such cases the corpse became the prey of the birds or of wild beasts, or of the voracious dogs in the East, that ran wild and were reckoned unclean. According to Deut. xxviii. 26 this punishment was a divine curse. The same threat occurs elsewhere, especially in Jeremiah (chap. xvi. 4; xxi. 24; Ezek. xxix. 5; xxxix. 17; Jer. vii. 33; viii. 2; ix. 22; xii. 9; xiv. 16). *cf.* Winer *R.-W.-B.* I. *s.* 148. The כִּי at the end is to heighten the effect, as elsewhere, and is = *imo* (Ewald, *Lehrb. der hebr. Sprache* § 330 *b*); yes, Jehovah will fulfil this as well as the former prophecy of Jeroboam's elevation.

Vers. 13–14. **Some good thing toward the Lord God,** ver. 13. אֶל יְהוָֹה is not to be connected with נִמְצָא, and then translated as the Vulgate has it, *a domino* (Thenius); but it means towards, or in relation to, Jehovah (*cf.* 2 Kings vi. 11). The whole context shows that it can scarcely mean anything else than that this son, from whom the king and people hoped so much, was inclined to the pure and lawful worship of Jehovah. The Rabbins have a fable that he disobeyed his father's command to hinder people from travelling to Jerusalem to keep the feasts, and that he even removed obstructions in the road. The abrupt words in ver. 14: וּמֶה גַּם־עַתָּה are obscure, and are very variously explained. Thenius adopts the view of the Chald.: He shall cut off the house of Jeroboam "that which now (lives), and that which shall be (born) to it." But the athnach with הַיּוֹם as well as with מֶה contradicts this, which means not *quod* but *quid.* The meaning seems to be: Jehovah will raise up a king, who at a certain period shall cut off the house of Jeroboam; what now occurs (the death of the boy) is the sign and beginning of this complete destruction. The interrogatory form makes the words more impressive. The Hirschberger Bible says: "And what shall I say (on that coming day)? It is even now come;" Keil also; "but what (*sc.* say I)? even now (*viz.* he has raised him up)."

Vers. 14–16. **For the Lord shall smite Israel,** ver. 15. Smiting refers to the wasting of Israel by hostile nations, before the Assyrian captivity. A "reed" continually waves to and fro in water, as it cannot resist the force of the wind and waves. "The image is very striking, for Israel was brought so low, that every political influence bore it along" (Thenius). The "scattering" took place in the captivity (2 Kings xv. 29; xvii. 23; xviii. 11). אֲשֵׁרִים does not mean groves (Luther), but the statues of the female deity, elsewhere called Astarte (see above on chap. xi. 5), who stands over against Baal, the Canaanitish (Phœnician) male deity. These statues were wooden (upright tree-stems); the worship was licentious (Judg. iii. 7; vi. 25 *sq.*; 2 Kings xxiii. 7; Ezek. xxiii. 42 *sq.*). It is not expressly said that images of Astarte were erected under Jeroboam, but ver. 23 remarks that this was done in Judah under Rehoboam, how much more then in Israel. The Astarte worship existed in the time of the Judges (*cf.* on the place). Jeroboam's image-worship is here regarded as a continual evil and source of all ruin. Keil's assertion that "אֲשֵׁרִים stands for any idols, among which the golden calves are to be numbered," is not susceptible of proof.

Vers. 17–18. **And Jeroboam's wife . . . to Tirzah,** ver. 17. According to Josh. xii. 24, Tirzah was originally a Canaanitish royal city, situated in a beautiful district (Eccle. vi. 4). We cannot ascertain its precise situation; it was probably near Shechem; Robinson thinks it was rather north of Mount Ebal; former travellers state that they found a Tersah on a high mountain, three hours' distance east of Samaria (*cf.* Winer, *R.-W.-B.* II. *s.* 613). According to chap. xii. 25, Shechem was the residence of Jeroboam; and he must either have changed it afterwards to Tirzah, or the latter must have been only a summer residence. Penuel, mentioned above, was not a place of residence but a fortress; so that the present passage does not at all contradict that one, as Thenius thinks. The kings Baasha and Asa and Elah resided at Tirzah (chap. xv. 21, 33; xvi. 8).

Vers. 19–20. **The rest of the acts of Jeroboam,** &c., ver. 19. For the book of the contemporaneous history of the kings of Israel see Introduction § 2. What is only alluded to by our author, in the words "how he warred," is fully given by the Chronicler, from the book of the prophet Iddo; 2 Chron. xiii. 2–20. This is an account of a great defeat of Jeroboam by king Abijah, and it says at the end: "and the Lord struck him (וַיִּגֹּפֵהוּ), and he died." Bertheau's supposition that this refers to the defeat itself, is scarcely right; neither can it mean a sudden death (Thenius), but, as in 2 Chron. xxi. 18, a severe and painful illness.

HISTORICAL AND ETHICAL.

1. *From the long reign* (*twenty-two years*) *of Jeroboam, whose history closes with the present section*, our author only selects those deeds that bear on his apostasy from the fundamental law of Israel, *i. e.*, on "the sin wherewith he made Israel to sin." He passes over all the rest that Jeroboam did as a shrewd and powerful regent or warrior, because it was of far less importance to the history of the kingdom and of the entire theocracy than that sin which especially characterized his government, and the results of which were felt for hundreds of years. David was the king who faithfully kept the fundamental law, and was therefore the type of a theocratic king, but Jeroboam was the king who openly broke the fundamental law, made the bull-worship the religion of the State, and used it as a bulwark of his kingdom over against Judah. He was the real cause of the apostasy of all the after kings of the ten tribes, for they all regarded it as the support of their power, and as a firm wall of separation between both kingdoms. This is the reason why the account of his reign significantly closes with the divine sentence on him and the apostate kingdom. It was a divine dispensation that he himself, after all warnings and threatenings had been in vain, called forth this divine sentence by the deceitful means he took, and even from the very prophet who had announced to him his future elevation; so that he could judge from the fulfilment of that announcement that the sentence would also come to pass. As his sin was the type of the sin of all succeeding kings and of the whole kingdom, so Ahijah's prediction is the type of all succeeding predictions regarding this kingdom; it forms the key-tone that rings through all of them (chap. xvi. 4; xxi. 23; xxii. 28; 2 Kings ix. 36).

2. *Ahijah's prophecy*, in form as well as in contents (*cf.* above on ver. 7) is a perfectly connected whole. It refers back (ver. 7, 8) to the former prediction, chap. xi. 30, particularly to ver. 37 *sq.* After, in ver. 8, it is stated in a general way that Jeroboam did not follow David's example, which was the condition imposed upon him. Ver. 9 declares how he sinned; then follows, in vers. 10 and 11, the announcement of the punishment, which was to be a shameful destruction of his house; vers. 12 and 13 apply this to the heir-apparent, to the sick and only son, who was, indeed, also to die, but he was not to perish so disgracefully, because some "good thing" was found in him. Vers. 10 and 11 are repeated in ver. 14, and it is added who is to carry out this sentence; but as Jeroboam had drawn all Israel into his sin, and they had consented thereto, the prophecy finally proceeds in vers. 15, 16 to deal with guilty Israel, pronouncing its disastrous future and final ruin. This alone shows how unfounded the assertion of the recent criticism is, that the form of the prediction, as it now is, is not the original. According to Ewald, vers. 9 and 15 are "clearly an addition of the later (*i. e.*, fifth Deuteronomical) author;" the style of ver. 9 is peculiar to this author, and ver. 15 interrupts the connection. But ver. 9 is an essential part of the whole, and its omission would leave a serious gap; the following sentence of punishment is founded on what ver. 9 states. Just as little does ver. 15 break the connection; it rather forms the object and acme of the prediction, pronouncing the natural and necessary end of Jeroboam's sin. To take away this conclusion is to break off the point of the whole. Thenius only objects to the second half of ver. 15, on account of the expression; "beyond the river;" this he thinks is from an "elaborator." But the Euphrates is generally given as the extreme limit of the land that was promised to the fathers (Gen. xv. 18; Ex. xxiii. 31; Deut. i. 7; xi. 24; Josh. i. 3, 4; Ps. lxxx. 12). The prophet, when he wished to say that Israel should lose the land given to their fathers, could scarcely use any other form of expression than that they should be sent away beyond the river; a case which Solomon foresaw as possible (see above). If criticism did not take it for granted that any genuine prediction is impossible, it would not think of doubting the authenticity of this. That the prophet predicted the cutting off of Jeroboam's house, and the destruction of the kingdom of Israel, is as little to be doubted as the prediction connected with it, that of Abijah's death, whom the blind prophet had not even seen.

3. *Ahijah's prophecy repeatedly describes* the consequence and working of "Jeroboam's sin" (vers. 9 and 15) in the words, *provoked the Lord to anger.* This expression occurs in other parts of the Old Testament also (chap. xiv. 22; xvi. 2, 7, 13; xxi. 22; 2 Kings xvii. 11, 17; xxiii. 26; Deut. iv. 25; xxxi. 29; xxxii. 16, 21; 2 Chron. xxiii. 25; Ezek. viii. 17; xvi. 26; Ps. lxxviii. 58); it by no means presupposes rude, anthropopathical ideas of the nature of God, but is founded on perfectly just views of the deity. The two expressions for Jehovah's anger, כעס and קנא, which are cited in the above passages, sometimes interchanged and sometimes used synonymously, are employed only in reference to a particular sin, *i. e.*, apostasy from Jehovah through idolatry or image-worship, and never of sin in general; and they have, therefore, direct reference to the fundamental law, the covenant, in which this sin is forbidden, with the addition, "for the Lord thy God is a אֵל קַנָּא," *i. e.*, a jealous God. Jehovah had from love chosen Israel out of all peoples to be His people, and had made a covenant with them (Ex. xix. 4, 5; Deut. iv. 36-40; vii. 6-13; x. 14, 15; Ps. xlvii. 5; Jer. xxxi. 3), that they should be a holy people, even as He is holy (Lev. xix. 2). The holy love of Jehovah to his people is so great and strong that each departure of Israel from the covenant excites His "jealousy;" Jehovah, "the holy God," is, as such, also "a jealous God" (Josh. xxiv. 19), and He would appear as faithless and unholy if He were indifferent to idolatry and image-worship, which are breaches of the covenant, and therefore called adultery and whoredom (Jer. iii. 9, and many other places). Offence against the holy love of God awakens His jealousy, which manifests itself in retributive justice, *i. e.*, it provokes Him to anger. "Just anger can only be conceived of as closely united with mercy. The Old Testament proclaims this high and blessed truth with a voice above that of man. This is its greatest excellence, and conspicuously with it is to be seen its peculiar sublimity, which consists in its preaching at one and the same time the all-consuming wrath of God and the ardor of His mercy, surpassing infinitely that of a mother. Both are closely and inseparably interwoven on every page, the thunder of God's

wrath and the quickening spring-breath of His mercy. Classical antiquity had no genuine, awe-inspiring knowledge of divine anger, neither had it any living consciousness of the divine mercy" (Rothe, *Theologische Ethik* II. *s.* 203).

4. *The divine judgments* announced in Ahijah's prediction, namely, cutting off Jeroboam's house, and dispersion of Israel out of the good land given to their fathers, correspond with the nature of the old covenant, which has its form in the bodily and in the temporal. As natural descent and derivation was the condition of belonging to the chosen covenant people, so the curse and blessing, good and evil bound up with the covenant relation, were of a material, temporal nature. As natural descent determined a right to partake of the covenant with Jehovah, so also natural posterity was blessing and peace, while the dying out or cutting off of a race was a curse and misfortune. This is the reason why David, who was faithful to the covenant, was promised that he should always have a light, *i. e.*, a house forever (chap. xi. 36; xv. 4; 2 Sam. xxi. 17), while the speedy and shameful extinction of his house was announced to the unfaithful Jeroboam. So also the "good land," flowing with milk and honey, was promised to the whole of the chosen people; but when they broke the covenant and partook of Jeroboam's sin they were deprived of the good land, were scattered in strange lands, and ceased to be a nation, which was to them the greatest punishment.

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

Vers. 1-20. The last divine warning to Jeroboam, (*a*) through the illness of his son, (*b*) through the prediction of the prophet. Jeroboam in need and in distress. (*a*) He is only concerned about the taking away of the need and the lifting off of the punishment, not in the renunciation of his sin and the conversion of the heart, which should have been the result of his need, as it is the case now with so many. (*b*) He seeks consolation and help, not at the hands of his false priests and spiritual hirelings, whom he himself did not trust, but from the prophet, about whom he did not long trouble himself after he had nothing to ask. Thus it is always. In need and necessity unbelievers and the children of this world seek for consolation and comfort from a spiritual preacher, and despise the finery of the hirelings who care only for the wool and not for the sheep. (*c*) He does not himself apply to the prophet, because he has an evil conscience, and he sends his wife in a disguise, for before the world he does not wish to be viewed as one who cares much for prophets. This is the folly of the wise of this world, that they suppose they can deceive God as they deceive men. But the Lord sees what is concealed in the darkness, and gives to every one what he has deserved.

Ver. 1. When the threatening, warning word of God bears no fruit, God at last sends the cross, especially the cross in the household, to humble us, to bring us to a knowledge of our sins, and to lead us to the cross of Christ.—STARKE: God generally lays hold upon men in those respects where it is most grievous to them (2 Sam. xii. 14; John iv. 47).—Ver. 2. CALW. B.: Jeroboam did not wish to be seen having anything to do with the prophet, by any one. Worldly people are ashamed to make it known that they believe in anything, even if it be a superstitious faith. If God send thee necessity and distress, take no by-ways, but go to Him and pour out thine heart before Him; He hears all who call upon Him, all who earnestly cry unto Him. Disguise thyself, that no one mark who and what thou art! This is the bad advice which the world gives for the conduct of life, and which passes current with it as the true wisdom thereof. How social life is vitiated by this sin, by the endeavor to seem before people rather than to be—often it is like a masquerade! It is even more deceived by actions, by mien and manner, than by words. The art of disguise corrupts man in the profoundest ground of his being, and transforms him into an incarnate lie.—Vers. 3, 4. CALW. B.: The little bit of faith which worldly people often exhibit is but part of their selfishness. . . . The foreknowledge of the future in the affairs of daily life man would gladly possess, because he will not yield himself, in faith, to the will of God. Hence flow often superstition, fortune-telling, dream-interpretation, astrology, both among the heathens as well as among Christians.—CRAMER: The gift of God neither should nor can be sold or bought for money. As a rule, unbelief is bound with superstition. Jeroboam did not believe when God spoke to him by word and deed (chap. xiii.), and yet he believed that by means of a few loaves and cakes he could persuade God to reveal the future to him. [The history of religion in modern times confirms and illustrates this.]

Vers. 4-6. The wife of Jeroboam before the prophet. (*a*) She means to deceive the aged blind prophet by a disguise, but the Lord gives him sight (Ps. clvi. 8). He gives strength to the weary and power to the feeble. The Lord ever gives sight to His true servants, so that the world cannot deceive and blind them. (*b*) She hopes, by her present, to secure the desired answer, but, at the hour, the Lord gives him the word he shall speak; it is the Spirit of God who speaks through him (Matt. x. 19 *sq.*). A true servant of God proclaims the word of truth to every one, without respect of persons, no matter how hard it be for him. This often is his hard yet sacred duty.—Vers. 7-16. Ahijah's sermon of repentance and retribution. (*a*) Against Jeroboam, who corrupted Israel. (*b*) Against Israel, allowing themselves to be corrupted.—Ver. 7 *sq.* How often it happens that the very ones whom God raises from the dust, and to whom He gives the largest favors, turn their back upon and forget Him. So Jeroboam, so Israel. Deut. xxxii. 6.—Vers. 10, 15. Not a blessing but a curse rests upon a house which turns its back upon the Lord and His commandments. And so also a people who forget the faith of their fathers lose all territory, are given up to all convulsions from within and from without, and go to destruction. Sin is the destruction of the people. (Heb. x. 28-30.)—Vers. 12, 13. The death of a beloved child, for whom God has prepared good, is often the only and the supreme means of turning away the heart of the parents from sin and the world, and of winning them to the life in God to which they are strangers. For many a child it is a divine blessing when it is early taken out of this vain world and called away from surroundings in which there is danger of the corruption both of soul and body.—Ver. 15. Israel, it is thine own sin that thou hast destroyed thyself.—Ver. 16. If the Lord say,—he who offends *one* of the least of

these, &c., &c. (Matt. xviii. 6), what will He say to those who give offence to an entire people, at the head of which they stand, through unbelief and immorality, and beguile them into an apostasy from the living God?—Ver. 18. What the Saviour said to those who bewailed Him on His way to death, Weep not for me, but, &c. (Luke xxiii. 28), might have been said to the whole people Israel, and is true to-day of so many who are weeping over a grave. We should carry the dead in whom good before God is found with honor to their rest in the grave.

Vers. 19, 20. The Scripture says (Prov. x. 7), The memory of the just is blessed, but the name of the godless will perish (rot). The first is true of David, the last of Jeroboam, whose name is not like an ointment poured out (*i. e.*, diffusing sweet perfume, Eccle. i. 3), but is a savor of death unto death; for with his name, for all the future, this word is connected: who sinned and made Israel to sin. Of what use is it to have worn a worldly crown two and twenty years, to have striven and fought for it, when the crown of life does not succeed it, which they alone obtain who are faithful unto death (Rev. ii. 10)?

THIRD SECTION.

THE KINGDOM IN JUDAH UNDER REHOBOAM, ABIJAM, AND ASA.

(CHAP. XIV. 21.—XV. 24.)

A.—*The Rule of Rehoboam.*

CHAP. XIV. 21–31.

21 And Rehoboam the son of Solomon reigned in Judah. Rehoboam *was* forty
and one[1] years old when he began to reign, and he reigned seventeen years in
Jerusalem, the city which the Lord [Jehovah] did choose out of all the tribes of
Israel, to put his name there. And his mother's name *was* Naamah an Ammoni-
22 tess. And Judah did evil in the sight of the Lord [Jehovah], and they provoked
him to jealousy with their sins which they had committed, above all that their
23 fathers had done. For they[2] also built them high places, and images [pillars][3],
24 and groves, on every high hill, and under every green tree. And there were
also sodomites in the land: *and* they did according to all the abominations of
the nations which the Lord [Jehovah] cast out before the children of Israel.
25 And it came to pass in the fifth year of king Rehoboam, *that* Shishak king of
26 Egypt came up against Jerusalem: and he took away the treasures of the house
of the Lord [Jehovah], and the treasures of the king's house; he even took away
27 all: and he took away all the shields of gold which[4] Solomon had made. And
king Rehoboam made in their stead brazen shields, and committed *them* unto
the hands of the chief[5] of the guard, which kept the door of the king's house.
28 And it was *so*, when the king went into the house of the Lord [Jehovah], that
29 the guard bare them, and brought them back into the guard-chamber. Now the
rest of the acts of Rehoboam, and all that he did, *are* they not written in the
30 book of the Chronicles of the kings of Judah? And there was war between
31 Rehoboam and Jeroboam all *their* days. And Rehoboam slept with his fathers,
and was buried with his fathers in the city of David. And his mother's name
was Naamah an Ammonitess.[6] And Abijam his son reigned in his stead.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

[1] Ver. 21.—[Our author substitutes the number *twenty-one* in his translation, the reasons for which see in the Exeg. Com. On the other hand, the entire agreement of the VV. and MSS. is a strong argument for the text as it stands. Keil decides against the proposed alteration.

[2] Ver. 23.—[וַיִּבְנוּ גַם־הֵמָּה "and they, even they built," *i. e.*, the Jews as well as the Israelites.

[3] Ver. 23.—[מַצֵּבוֹת = monumental pillars for religious purposes. Sept., *στήλας*. See the Exeg. Com.

[4] Ver. 26.—[The Vat. Sept. thus enlarges the close of ver. 26: shields of gold which David received of the hand of the children of Adrazaar, king of Souba, and brought them into Jerusalem, all the things which he received, the arms of gold which Solomon made, and carried them into Egypt.

[5] Ver. 27.—[The Heb., followed by all the VV., has the plural. The A. V. must have used "chief" collectively.

[6] Ver. 31.—[The Vat. Sept., as also the Syr., omits the foregoing clause, which is repeated from ver. 21.—F. G.]

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

Ver. 21. **Twenty and one years old was Rehoboam.** [Rehoboam was forty and one years old.—Eng. Ver.] The usual reading is "forty and one." Although the Chronicler (2 xii. 13) and all translations give the latter, and only some MSS. give twenty and one, yet this is indisputably the right reading. For (*a*) in chap. xii. 8, 10 (2 Chron. x. 8, 10), Rehoboam's companions at the time of his accession are called יְלָדִים, which generally mean infants, or at most youths, but never men of forty. The older commentators resorted to the very strange and far-fetched supposition that the young men mentioned in chap. xii. were not young in years but in understanding. Thenius thinks that their youth was relative as compared with the age of the "old men;" but men in ripe manhood of one and forty years cannot be called ילדים in any case. (*b*) Regarding the son of Rehoboam, Abijah, 2 Chron. xiii. 7, says, the insurrection of Jeroboam and the separation of the ten tribes took place because his (Abijah's) father was still a boy, נַעַר, and רַךְ־לֵבָב (of a weak, tender heart, *cf.* Gen. xxxiii. 13). The son wishes to explain the conduct of his father by his youthful age: but he could not possibly speak thus of a man forty-one years old. Besides, chap. xii. 6 *sq.* agrees perfectly with the description of Rehoboam's conduct. (*c*) If Rehoboam were forty-one years old at the death of Solomon, who reigned forty years (chap. xi. 42), Solomon must have married during David's life-time, and have married an Ammonitess, which was contrary to the law; and, as he calls himself only a נַעַר (chap. iii. 7) when he had become king, he must have had a son in about his 18th year. There is nothing, however, of all this in the history; on the contrary, it says expressly that he married a daughter of Pharaoh after he became king, and she was the real queen (chap. iii. 1; ix. 24); he did not take Canaanitish wives till later (chap. xi. 1 *sq.*). All these positive historical evidences for the youth of Rehoboam at his accession cannot be disproved and rejected on account of a mere numerical figure, though it were originally in the text. We must, therefore, believe, like Capellus and Le Clerc, that the numeral signs were changed, as so often happens, viz., that of מ with כ; this obviates all difficulties, and there is no passage that in the least contradicts it. *The name and descent of the mother* are expressly given, because the queen-mother was very much esteemed and very influential, as the גְּבִירָה, just as the sultana Walida is now in the Turkish empire. The text also subsequently gives the name of the queen-mothers, but only of those belonging to the Judah-kings (chap. xv. 2, 13; xxii. 42, &c.). The reason of the words, *in Jerusalem, the city which the Lord did choose, &c.*, is found in the following vers. 22 and 24, in connection with which they mean: the residence of Jeroboam was indeed the city where Jehovah's dwelling stood, which was the centre of the whole theocracy, but even here the people fell into idolatry. For the expression: put His name there, see above on chap. vi.

Vers. 23–24. **And Judah did evil, &c.** Even in the times of the judges the apostasy was never so great in Judah as it was now under Rehoboam. For the expression: provoke to jealousy, see above. For בָּמוֹת see on chap. iii. 2, and for אֲשֵׁרִים see on ver. 15. The מַצֵּבוֹת are also mentioned in Ex. xxxiv. 13; Deut. vii. 5; xii. 3; xvi. 21 *sq.*, in connection with the Astarte-images; from which passages it appears that the former were made of stone, and the latter of wood. מַצֵּבָה from נָצַב means something that is made fast or placed firmly, and refers to monuments (Ex. xxviii. 18, 22; xxxi. 13; xxxv. 14, 20; Ex. xxiv. 4; 2 Sam. xviii. 18). As they were only used to commemorate a divine appearance and revelation (Gen. xxviii. 18), men easily came to pay them divine honor, and in the heathen world they passed into regular idols (Lev. xxvi. 1). Whilst the wooden monuments (Astarte) represented the female nature-divinity, the stone pillars represented the male deity, *i. e.*, Baal; hence מַצֵּבַת הַבַּעַל (2 Kings iii. 2; *cf.* x. 26; xviii. 4; xxiii. 14). The בָּמוֹת were erected on hills and mountains, the idols of the male and female divinities were placed under thick shady trees, as appears from Hos. iv. 13, *cf.* Deut. xii. 2; Jer. ii. 20; iii. 6; xvii. 2. That קָדֵשׁ (ver. 24), used collectively, does not mean female (Ewald, Thenius), but only male prostitutes, is quite evident from chap. xv. 12 (הַקְּדֵשִׁים) and Deut. xxiii. 18; the author mentions as the greatest excess of idolatry, that men or boys allowed themselves to be prostituted in honor of the gods. There is no reason to suppose, as Keil does, that they were such "as had castrated themselves in a fit of religious frenzy." The words "in the land" (*cf.* with chap. xv. 12) shows that they were not natives (Israelites or Judeans), but strangers, Canaanites or Phœnicians who had settled in the land for unlawful gain.

Vers. 25–26. **Shishak came up**, ver. 25. For this king see on chap. xi. 40. 2 Chron. xii. 2–8 gives a further account of his invasion of Judah. We do not know the cause; the Rabbins think it was only a robber expedition. As Jeroboam had sojourned as a refugee with Shishak (according to an addition of the Sept. to chap. xii. 24, he had even married the daughter of the latter), it has been supposed that he was induced to undertake the war by Jeroboam. "It can scarcely be doubted that the king with a Jewish countenance on one of the monuments at Carnac (see Winer, *R.-W.-B.* II. *s.* 311, 474) was Rehoboam, if Champollion was correct in reading Sheshonk (*Précis du syst. hieroglyph.* p. 204)," Thenius. וְאֶת־הַכֹּל, *i. e.*, all that he found; took the shields, &c. (chap. x. 16). These were of peculiarly high value. According to the connection, the author means, "That Judah was given over into the power of the heathen was the punishment that speedily followed their fall into heathen abominations" (Keil).

Vers. 27–28. **King Rehoboam made, &c.**, ver. 27. The רָצִים are the royal guards (see above on chap. i. 38), who were also named *celeres* with Romulus (Liv. i. 14). They kept watch at the palace gate (see on 2 Kings xi. 6) and accompanied the king in solemn procession, as often as he went to the temple; it was only then that they bore these shields, and not on ordinary occasions.

תָּא does not mean exactly the "guard-room," but any place where the runners were staying. The costly golden shields which Solomon had made were in the house of the forest of Lebanon (chap. x. 17), but it is doubtful whether the brazen shields of Rehoboam were only kept in the תָּא, being considered as "of no value" (Thenius).

Vers. 29-31. **The rest of the acts, &c.** What 2 Chron. xi. relates of the cities fortified by Rehoboam, of the emigration of priests and those faithful to Jehovah to the Judah-territory, and of the family relations of Rehoboam, is certainly derived from ancient historical sources, probably from those mentioned in 2 Chron. xii. 15 (Thenius). As also the account of the Chronicles gives no details of a regular war of Rehoboam with Jeroboam, מִלְחָמָה here ver. 30, and מִלְחָמוֹת 2 Chron. xii. 15 only refer "to the hostile position of both kingdoms as manifested in single acts" (Winer), therefore not to a warlike disposition simply.—Thenius thinks that the repetition of the concluding words of ver. 21 (the name of his mother, &c.) "was caused by a fault in the copyist that cannot be accounted for." This, however, is very improbable, for why should just these words have been taken by a copyist from ver. 21, have been repeated here, and then always have remained? The repetition appears rather to have been intentional, in order to show once more at the end of the account of Rehoboam that the mother of this king was descended from that rough heathenish people, the Ammonites, who were always hostile to Israel, and that under Solomon the worship of Moloch, the "abomination of the Ammonites," was brought by her to Jerusalem (chap. xi. 7) and suffered to remain for her by his son Rehoboam. This appears also to be meant by 2 Chron. xii. 14, in connection with ver. 13.

HISTORICAL AND ETHICAL.

1. *We learn only a few facts from these books regarding king Rehoboam and his reign*, and from those few no certain conclusion can be drawn regarding his relation to the fundamental law of Israel; the general phrase also which expresses the relation to Jehovah, and which always immediately follows the account of the personal circumstances of all the later kings (*cf.* chap. xv. 3, 11, 25, 34, &c.) is omitted here. But Chron. concludes its rather more explicit account with the words: "he did evil, because he prepared not his heart to seek the Lord (הֵכִין)," 2 Chron. xii. 14; and the remark is made before (ver. 1), that "he forsook the law of the Lord." We are not to conclude from this, however, that he himself served idols; on the contrary, it is emphatically said that, in solemn procession, accompanied by his whole body-guard, he continually visited the temple, and thus showed himself publicly to all the people as a worshipper of Jehovah. As such he showed himself also when Shishak made war against him (2 Chron. xii. 6, 12) But he forsook the law in so far that he did not obey its injunctions; he suffered idolatrous worship in Jerusalem and did nothing towards exterminating it. This was "the evil" he was accused of; he continued Jehovah's servant, but he wanted firmness and decision. Sometimes fiery and arrogant, sometimes yielding and weak, he was unstable, as he had shown himself in Shechem at the commencement of his reign (chap. xii. 5-9, 18, 21); he seems also to have been under the influence of his idolatrous mother (see on ver. 31) and wife (chap. xv. 13), and of his many wives (2 Chron. xi. 21). Menzel (*Staats- und Rel.-Gesch.*, s. 236) is wholly wrong in referring, in his superficial way, the expression לִדְרוֹשׁ אֶת־יְהוָה (2 Chron. xii. 14) which he translates "to ask the Lord," to "the relation of the king to the priesthood, and in that he is blamed for not inquiring of the Lord, we can perceive that Rehoboam had not been led, by the misfortune which had befallen him, to accord greater consideration to the priesthood than they had enjoyed under his predecessors." That expression denotes rather, as Dietrich very justly remarks (*Zu Gesenius W.-B. s. v.*), "the striving of the spirit after God, the inward seeking, especially in prayer, and calling upon Him; *cf.* Isai. lv. 6; lviii. 2; Jer. xxix. 13; 2 Chron. xv. 2, 14, 6; Hos. x. 12; Ps. xiv. 2." That the priesthood under Rehoboam strove for greater consideration than they had under David (for instance) is a pure invention; but we see from chap. xii. 22-24 and 2 Chron. xii. 5, 6, 12, that Rehoboam did not resist or act in opposition to the prophetical word.

2. *The idolatrous worship that commenced in Judah under Rehoboam* was not begun by the latter but by the people; for ver. 22 does not say, he did evil in the sight of the Lord, as is said of other kings, but: *Judah* did, &c. This seems remarkable, because Judah had the central sanctuary in their midst, and the priests and levites; indeed all the true worshippers of Jehovah had left the apostate ten tribes and had gone to Judah, by which the kingdom of Jeroboam was weakened, but that of Rehoboam strengthened (2 Chron. xi. 13-17). That Judah, nevertheless, fell so deeply was owing to an after-influence of the condition of things under Solomon's reign, and particularly the latter part of the same. Commerce and intercourse with foreign nations, acquaintance with their customs and mode of life, great riches and uninterrupted peace, had exercised an enervating and demoralizing influence. Ease, superfluity, and luxury gradually undermined serious thought, and brought forth lukewarmness, indifference, and even aversion to the strict covenant-law: what was written in Deut. xxxii. 15 (Hos. xiii. 6) came to pass. Added to this, Solomon at last removed every obstacle to the strange heathen-worship of his wives, so that although Jerusalem was the centre of the Jehovah-worship, it was at the same time the spot where the most various national gods were adored, and where their unchaste worship found a ready soil (see on chap. xi. 1-8). Immediately after Solomon's death this "religious liberty" could only have been abolished by force and iron severity; but the times were not adapted for this task, and still less was his successor, Rehoboam, the son of the Ammonitess, the נַעַר וְרַךְ־לֵבָב (2 Chron. xiii. 7); so that idolatry and immorality rather increased than decreased, and the fall of Judah seems to have been even deeper than that of Israel. However, the condition of Judah was not so bad as the condition of Israel in this respect; as in the latter, the breach of the fundamental law had become the State religion and institution of the kingdom, the separate existence of which de-

pended on the new worship; whilst in Judah the apostasy was only permitted, and the lawful worship of Jehovah had always a firm footing at the central sanctuary. Many good elements also still existed in Judah (2 Chron. xx. 12). Judah always repented as often as they fell into idolatry, and they continued to be the guardian of the law, whilst Israel, on the contrary, never completely returned to the right way.

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

Vers. 21–30. The deep fall of Judah: (*a*) Whence it came (Deut. xxxii. 15; Hosea xiii. 6; Prov. xxx. 9—see Hist. and Ethic. 2); whither it led (Rom. i. 25–28). Amongst individual men as in entire communities, cities, and nations, revolt against the living God results from haughtiness, over-prosperity, and carnal security, bringing as inevitable consequences, poverty, ruin, and misfortune in war. High as stood Judah under David and Solomon, so deep in proportion did it sink under Rehoboam.—Vers. 21, 22. Wherever God has a house, the devil always builds a chapel close at hand. How often does it happen that cities and countries, whence it has been ordained by God that the light of His knowledge should shine forth, have become the seat alike of superstition and of scepticism, and thus infinitely sink below the level of those lands which have never heard His blessed word. When an individual man, or a whole community and people, who have received and acknowledged the truth, again depart from it, then is their last state worse than their first (Isa. xi. 26).—Vers. 23, 24. Wherever profligacy and fornication are in the ascendant, there is true heathendom, how many soever may be the churches King Rehoboam, too, sinned grievously in this wise—he, although not himself an idol-worshipper, yet failed as a servant of God, in that he did not oppose idol-worship with all his might, and even regarded it as having equal rights with the service of the true God—even, alas, as we find Christian sovereigns who permit unbelief and revolt from the truth to rank upon a level with faith and confession of God in Christ.—Vers. 25 *sq.* Where the carcass is, there will the eagles be gathered together (Matt. xxiv. 28). The chastisements of God are never delayed where immorality and godlessness prevail, but they do not always lead, as with Judah, to the humble confession: The Lord is righteous! (2 Chron. xii. 6).—Calw. B.: Sovereigns are often only the instruments of God in their undertakings, although they do not or will not recognize the fact.—Ver. 26. The true treasures of the temple are the worship of God in spirit and in truth, prayer, faith, love, and obedience; these no thieves nor robbers can steal, and without them all the gold and silver in temples and churches is vain and empty show. Golden or copper shields are alike in value if only we can say: The Lord is our shield, and the Holy One of Israel our King.—Vers. 27, 28. It is better to pray to our heavenly Father in our closet, rather than to worship with pomp in church to be seen by men. Yet now there are many who ceremoniously frequent the churches, but neglect to maintain the fear of God, discipline, and good morals in their own houses and neighborhoods.—Vers. 30, 31. It is not to a man's honor when, at his grave, these words are said: There was life-long enmity between him and his neighbor.

B.—*The reigns of Abijam and Asa.*

Chap. XV. 1–24 (2 Chron. XIII. XIV.)

1 Now in the eighteenth year of king Jeroboam the son of Nebat reigned
2 Abijam[1] over Judah. Three[2] years reigned he in Jerusalem. And his mother's
3 name *was* Maachah, the daughter of Abishalom. And he walked in all the sins
of his father, which he had done before him: and his heart was not perfect with
4 the Lord [Jehovah] his God, as the heart of David his father. Nevertheless, for
David's sake did the Lord [Jehovah] his God give him a lamp in Jerusalem, to set
5 up his son after him,[3] and to establish Jerusalem: because David did *that which*
was right in the eyes of the Lord [Jehovah], and turned not aside from any *thing*
that he commanded him all the days of his life,[4] save only in the matter of Uriah
6 the Hittite. And there was war between Rehoboam[5] and Jeroboam all the days
7 of his life. Now the rest of the acts of Abijam, and all that he did, *are* they not
written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Judah? And there was
8 war between Abijam and Jeroboam. And Abijam slept with his fathers[6]; and
they buried him in the city of David: and Asa his son reigned in his stead.
9 And in the twentieth year of Jeroboam king of Israel reigned Asa over
10 Judah. And forty and one years reigned he in Jerusalem. And his mother's
11 name *was* Maachah,[7] the daughter of Abishalom. And Asa did *that which was*
12 right in the eyes of the Lord, as *did* David his father. And he took away the
sodomites out of the land, and removed all the idols that his fathers had made.
13 And also Maachah his mother, even her he removed from *being* queen, because
she had made an idol in a grove[8]; and Asa destroyed her idol, and burnt *it*
14 by the brook [in the valley of] Kidron. But the high places were not removed·

15 nevertheless Asa's heart was perfect with the Lord [Jehovah] all his days. And he
brought in the things which his father had dedicated, and the things which himself
had dedicated,[9] into the house of the Lord [Jehovah], silver, and gold, and vessels.
16 And there was war between Asa and Baasha king of Israel all their days. And
17 Baasha king of Israel went up against Judah, and built Ramah, that he might not
18 suffer any to go out or come in to Asa king of Judah. Then Asa took all the silver
and the gold *that were* left[10] in the treasures of the house of the Lord [Jehovah],
and the treasures of the king's house, and delivered them into the hand of his
servants: and king Asa sent them to Ben-hadad, the son of Tabrimon, the son
19 of Hezion, king of Syria, that dwelt at Damascus, saying, *There is* a league
between me and thee, *and* between my father and thy father: behold, I have
sent unto thee a present of silver and gold; come and break thy league with
20 Baasha king of Israel, that he may depart from me. So Ben-hadad hearkened
unto king Asa, and sent the captains of the hosts which he had against the cities
of Israel, and smote Ijon, and Dan, and Abel-beth-maachah, and all Cinneroth,
21 with all the land of Naphtali. And it came to pass, when Baasha heard *thereof*,
22 that he left off building of Ramah, and dwelt in Tirzah. Then king Asa made
a proclamation throughout all Judah; none *was* exempted[11]: and they took away
the stones of Ramah, and the timber thereof, wherewith Baasha had builded;
23 and king Asa built with them Geba of Benjamin, and Mizpah.[12] The rest of all
the acts of Asa, and all his might, and all that he did, and the cities which he
built, *are* they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Judah?
24 Nevertheless in the time of his old age he was diseased in his feet. And Asa slept
with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the city of David his father:
and Jehoshaphat his son reigned in his stead.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

[1] Ver. 1.—[Many MSS. and Ed. read throughout this narrative אֲבִיָּה instead of אֲבִיָּם as in 2 Chron. xi. 22; xiii. 1, &c. (*Cf.* 2 Chron. xiii. 20 אֲבִיָּהוּ) and so the Sept. Ἀβιού, and the Syr.

[2] Ver. 2.—[The Alex. Sept. makes his reign sixteen years.

[3] Ver. 4.—[In the author's translation the name Rehoboam is inserted in brackets as explanitory of the pronoun *him*. The natural reference to Abijam may, however, as well be preserved.

[4] Ver. 5.—[The Vat. Sept. omits the mention of this exception, and also omits the following verse.

[5] Ver. 6.—[For Rehoboam eight MSS., followed by the Syr. and Arab., substitute Abijah. The Alex. Sept. puts the last pronoun of ver. 6 in the plural—a variation in the opposite direction.

[6] Ver. 8.—[The Vat. Sept. adds, "in the twenty-fourth year of Jeroboam," and in ver. 9 changes the number to correspond—a manifest error.

[7] Ver. 10.—[The Vat. Sept. escapes the difficulty connected with the queen-mother's name, here and in ver. 13, by substituting Ana for Maachah. The Arab. omits the name here, but gives Maachah in ver. 13.

[8] Ver. 13.—[מִפְלֶצֶת לַאֲשֵׁרָה. The meaning of these words has been much discussed and is variously given in the VV.—The most probable sense seems to be "an idol of Asherah." See Exeg. Com.

[9] Ver. 15.—For וקדשו must be read with 2 Chron. xv. 18 וְקָדָשָׁיו. [The k'ri is קָדְשֵׁי, which Kiel says "is a bad emendation for the above correct קדשו, which is to be read קָדְשׁוֹ, or more correctly perhaps קָדָשָׁו.]

[10] Ver. 18.—[The Sept. in translating by τὸ εὑρεθὲν give the sense as expressed in the Exeg. Com. All the other VV., like the A.V. translate literally.

[11] Ver. 22.—[The adverbial use of אֵין נָקִי = *nemine immuni i. e. excepto* is peculiar to this passage. Keil refers for its source to such passages as Deut. xxiv. 5; Num. xxxii. 22. The Sept., not understanding the phrase, has rendered it as a proper name, εἰς Ἐνακίμ (Alex. Ἀνακείμ.)

[12] Ver. 22.—[The Sept. has undertaken to translate the names Geba and Mizpah as common nouns, πᾶν βουνὸν Βενιαμὶν καὶ τὴν σκοπιάν.—F. G.]

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

Vers. 1–5. **Abijam king of Judah.** Instead of אֲבִיָּם Chronicles has always אֲבִיָּה (2 Chron. xiii. 1 *sq.*), Ἀβιά in the Sept. The latter seems to be the right and original name, composed of אָבִי and יָה, which mean אֲבִיאֵל (1 Sam. ix. 1), not, therefore, father of the sea, *vir maritimus* (Gesenius), but whose father (benefactor) is God. According to 2 Chron. xi. 20 *sq.* Abijam was the eldest son of Rehoboam's second wife Maacha, who was his favorite, for which reason he set Abijam above his brothers, and appointed him for his successor. As there is no mention made of an Absalom except of him known as the son of David, בַּת must mean the granddaughter here, as אָב means grandfather in ver. 3. Maacha must then have been the daughter of Tamar (2 Sam. xiv. 27), as Absalom had no sons (2 Sam. xviii. 18). The same name is no doubt meant in 2 Chron. xiii. 2, where Abijam's mother מִיכָיָהוּ is called a daughter of Uriel of Gibeah; see on ver. 13. *In all the sins*, &c., is not to be taken in a universal sense, but of all the sins which Rehoboam committed regarding the service of Jehovah; in these he followed the ex-

ample of his father (לְפָנָיו). He was in his own person Jehovah's servant, but he did not oppose the idol-worship; he permitted it, and therefore in no respect resembled his great-grandfather David, who therefore for all kings continued to be the pattern and model of right conduct towards Jehovah. Thenius thinks that vers. 4 and 5 are the addition of an "elaborator"; they are certainly not useless, but stand in a very proper connection. Abijam was the third king on David's throne who allowed idol-worship to exist side by side with that of Jehovah. Such kings had, in fact, deserved to lose their land and throne, because they had not acted as servants of the true king of Israel; but for David's sake, to whom God had promised that a descendant of his should always reign in Jerusalem (for ניר see on chap. xi. 36), Jehovah suffered even such kings of the house of David, who, like this one, were not wholly and undividedly devoted to Him. The sin of David against Uriah was great indeed (2 Sam. xi. and xii.), but apart from the fact that he repented of it bitterly, it was not one which broke the fundamental law of the theocracy, the covenant and its chief commandment, and it did not therefore undermine the foundation of the Israelite nationality. Vers. 4 and 5 serve, then, to explain ver. 3, and in a certain measure to justify what is said there.

Vers. 6–8. **And there was war between Rehoboam and Jeroboam, &c.** Ver. 6 says the same that was previously said in chap. xiv. 30, only with this difference, that there the concluding words כָּל־הַיָּמִים are changed to כָּל־יְמֵי חַיָּיו here, from which it follows, at least, that this verse is not, as Thenius thinks, a mere repetition arising from the carelessness of a copyist. Instead of "Rehoboam," the Syrian, Arabic, and several manuscripts have "Abijam;" but this would make the conclusion of ver. 7 a mere repetition of our verse, which is even less tenable than the repetition from chap. xiv. 30. As the words stand they can scarcely be understood in connection with ver. 7 otherwise than as Schulz, Maurer, and Keil take them; they give their meaning to be this: that the hostile feeling which existed between Rehoboam and Jeroboam during the entire lifetime of the former, also lasted during the lifetime of his son Abijam. This interpretation is certainly rather forced, and it is very possible that the text is no longer the original one; happily, however, the substance of the narrative is in no wise affected by it, but it remains the same, howsoever those words may be read or explained.

Vers. 9–11. **In the twentieth year of Jeroboam, &c.** Ver. 9 *sq.* If Abijam became king in the eighteenth and Asa in the twentieth year of Jeroboam (vers. 1 and 9), Abijam could not have reigned three full years (ver. 2). The incomplete years are here, as elsewhere (see on ver. 25), reckoned as if complete, in statements of the length of the reigns. *Maachah, the daughter of Abishalom*, is named in ver. 2 as the mother of Abijam, and as the mother of Asa in ver. 10, but she could not, of course, have been the mother of both father and son at the same time. It has therefore been supposed "that Maachah, Abijam's mother, was in the position of queen-mother or הַגְּבִירָה, *i. e.*, sultana Walida, under Asa, until Asa deposed her on account of her idolatrous worship (ver. 13), and that she had been such because, perhaps, Asa's mother had died early" (Keil and Ewald after the Rabbins). אֵם (ver. 10) would then stand for grandmother, which is very questionable for the reason that, often as the name of the mother of a king is given, his grandmother is never meant thereby; besides, the mother alone, and never the grandmother of a king, had the dignity and position of the Gebirah, the name given to Asa's mother, ver. 13 and 2 Chron. xv. 16. Other commentators, who are not insensible to these considerations, think that Maachah, the mother of Abijam, was indeed, as is said in chap. xv. 2, and 2 Chron. xi. 20 and 21, a daughter of Abishalom, but that Maachah, the mother of Asa, was the daughter of Uriel of Gibeah. They think that the Chronicler (2 xiii. 2) committed an oversight when he mentioned the latter (whom he names Michaiah) as the mother of Abijam instead of Asa, whilst, inversely, our author names the daughter of Abishalom (ver. 10) instead of the daughter of Uriel, as the mother of Asa (Thenius, Bertheau). This much is certain, that the mother of Asa, as well as the mother of Abijam, was called Maachah.

Vers. 12–15. **All the idols.** Ver. 12. The designation גִּלּוּלִים for idols, includes, confessedly, the idea of something contemptible, as appears from the many passages in Ezekiel where it occurs. The Rabbins, whom several commentators follow, have derived the word from גָּלָל or גֵּלֶל, *i. e.*, mud drained off, and translated it *Dei stercorei*, mudgods, which Thenius thinks the most correct interpretation. But in the Pentateuch, where the word first occurs, גָּלָל, mud, is not used, but גל, גלים, stone-heaps, masses of stone (Gen. xxxi. 46, 48, 51, 52), hence Hävernick (*Comm. über Ezechiel, s.* 75) understands it to mean stone monuments, with the additional notion of what was dead and lifeless (*cf.* Ezra v. 8; vi. 4); which translation seems better than: lumps (Keil). *Cf.* also Deut. xxix. 16; Lev. xxvi. 30. For גְּבִירָה see on chap. xi. 19. מִפְלֶצֶת means *horrendum*, and no doubt refers to a phallus-image, which was something terrible and detestable to the Hebrews. The Vulgate gives *in sacris Priapi* for it. The statue of the male and generative power in nature was placed next that of the female power (Astarte). That the former was of wood, like the latter, appears from the "burning in the valley of Kidron;" the ashes were thrown into the brook, which carried them quite away. The בָּמוֹת, ver. 14, mean here such as were dedicated to Jehovah, as in chap. iii. 2 therefore, and not as in chap. xi. 7, and 2 Chron. xiv. 2. **These**, to which the people were accustomed from ancient times, Asa did not destroy, perhaps because doing so might have given offence to many even of the true servants of Jehovah. This was the only unlawful thing he permitted; in everything else he adhered perfectly, as long as he lived, to the worship of Jehovah as enjoined in the law. He even began to fill again the treasure chambers of the Temple, which had been plundered by Shishak; to fill them partly with what his father Abijam had taken (*cf.* 2 Chron. xiii. 19), partly with the

plunder he himself had seized (2 Chron. xiv. 12; xv. 18).

Ver. 16. **And there was war between Asa . . . . all their days.** Ver. 16. The account of Chronicles does not agree with this, if the former be only understood in the sense as given above, chap. xiv. 30. For, according to 2 Chron. xiv. 1 (xiii. 23) the land had rest ten years under Asa; according to 2 Chron. xv. 19, "there was no more war unto the five and thirtieth year of the reign of Asa," and in xvi. 1 it says that Baasha did not make war on Judah till the six and thirtieth year. But these numbers cannot possibly be correct, for according to our chapter ver. 33, Baasha became king of Israel in the third year of Asa, and only reigned four-and-twenty years, therefore he could not have made war against Asa in the six-and-thirtieth year of the latter. The number ten is also too great, and was used probably because the numeral sign ו was shortened to י. Judah had rest before Baasha's accession to the throne of Israel, and also two years afterwards, but then, when he was properly prepared for war, Baasha undertook the invasion; this occurred, therefore, in the fifth or sixth year of Asa's reign. The numeral sign ל=30 of the Chronicles may very well have been taken out of the לְמַלְכוּת. *Cf.* Thenius and Bertheau on the same passages. The supposition of older commentators and of Keil, that the five-and-thirty, that is, the six-and-thirty years dated from the time of the separation of the two kingdoms, is not admissible, because the text in 2 Chron. xvi. 1 says quite positively: "in the six-and-thirtieth year of the reign of Asa."

Ver. 17. **Ramah** (ver. 17) was not in the mountains of Ephraim (1 Sam. x. 2) but in the tribe of Benjamin (Josh. xviii. 25; Jud. xix. 3), somewhat more than two hours' distance from Jerusalem: it is the modern Er-Ram. The fortification of Ramah presupposes that Baasha had recovered the towns that belonged to the kingdom of Israel (2 Chron. xiii. 19) which had been taken by Abijam. The conjectural reading הֱיוֹת instead of תֵּת (Thenius) is unnecessary; it is literally: "to the end that one should not give (or send) any one coming in or going out, to Asa" (Bertheau) *i. e., ut non posset quispiam egredi vel ingredi de parte Asæ* (Vulg.). As the principal road from Jerusalem to the north passed through Ramah, Baasha wished to cut off all traffic, and in fact to blockade Jerusalem completely. The הַנּוֹתָרִים, ver. 18, does not mean here, in the strict sense of the word, the *remainder*, for Shishak had taken *all* (chap. xiv. 26); Asa, after his victories and those of his father, filled the treasure chambers again with the plunder he took (ver. 5), and this, when compared with the former treasure, was the remainder. The Sept., therefore, gives τὸ εὑρεθὲν, *i. e.*, what he then found.

Vers. 18–22. **Benhadad** (ver. 18) means "son of the sun," for the sun received divine honors from the Syrians, under the name of Adad (*Macrob. Saturn.* i. 23). Three kings of Damascene-Syria bore this name; the one named here was the first of them, and he who is mentioned in chap. xx. 1 *sq.* 34 was his son. The name could scarcely have been a general royal title (Keil), for the name *Tabrimmon* is certainly the name of a person, but it is, in composition, like "good is Rimmon" (2 Kings v. 18). Thenius identifies Hezion with the Rezon mentioned in chap. xi. 23, who was called so originally (?). The phrase "king of Syria" is certainly in opposition with Benhadad. *There is a league*, &c. (ver. 19), *i. e.*, as between our fathers there was a league, let it continue between us also. Syria must have increased rapidly in power since the days of Solomon; for both kingdoms, Israel and Judah, sought its friendship, although it was the natural foe of both. There is no doubt that Benhadad was induced to break his league with Baasha by the larger sum that Asa offered him. The Syrian army, which came from the north, overran the whole land of Naphtali to the lake of Genesareth; the towns which it laid waste lay in a line from north to south. *Ijon.* was the most northern, and is nowhere else named, except in the parallel passage 2 Chron. xvi. 4; according to Robinson (*Researches*, &c. II. p. 438), it is situated in the well-watered district of Merj Ayun. Dan could not have been far south of it. Abel-beth-maachah (2 Chron. xvi. 4; Abel-maim) is the same town as that mentioned in 2 Sam. xx. 14 and 18, and was situated at the mouth of the Merj Ayun; it is the modern Abil el Kamh (see Thenius on the place). *Cinneroth*, "evidently a district, not a town; it was the basin which stretches from the lake of Merom to the head of the lake of Genesareth" (the same). Although then Benhadad only disturbed the northern parts of the kingdom, Baasha saw himself induced to obey the demand to leave Judah (probably made to him) in order to prevent further losses. He left off building the fortifications of Ramah which he had begun, and returned to his residence Tirzah (chap. xiv. 17) without disturbing Asa any more. The latter now had the building materials at Ramah removed, and he fortified Geba of Benjamin and Mizpeh with them; the former was one-half mile [two and a quarter Eng. miles] from Ramah, and the latter about three miles [thirteen and a half Eng.]. These two fortresses overlooked each side of the road that led northwards from Jerusalem.

Vers. 23–24. **His might and . . . the cities.** גְּבוּרָה, not so much *potestas* as deeds of might, *i. e.*, brave deeds, as appears from chap. xvi, 27; xxii. 46. Besides Geba and Mizpah, Asa erected other fortresses in Judah (2 Chron. xiv. 5, 6), which were probably designed to protect the southern part of his kingdom. He was on the whole prosperous, "*only in his old age*" he suffered much, and did not show a right trust in God (2 Chron. xvi. 12). It is uncertain if his disease were gout (Thenius). Chron. says that he had caused his tomb to be hewn out in the city of David; probably the place of sepulture hitherto used was not large enough.

HISTORICAL AND ETHICAL.

1. *Chronicles gives not only more extended accounts of king Abijam*, but some also which recent criticism declares to be utterly irreconcilable with the representation here. "According to the earlier narrative," says Winer (*R.-W.-B.* I. *s.* 6), "Abijam walked in the footsteps of his idolatrous father (1 Kings xv. 3); according to the later one, he appears to be a very zealous guardian of the worship of Jehovah and of the levitical system (2 Chron. xiii. 8 *sq.*). We must bear in mind that

the Chronicler elsewhere endeavors to acquit the Judah-state from idol-worship, as much as possible." De Wette, Thenius, and others hold similar views. But against this we remark, that the presupposition that Rehoboam was addicted to idolatry, and that Abijam followed in his ways, is erroneous, and Winer contradicts himself, for (in the work already cited, II. *s.* 312, note) he himself declares, that "the older.(*i. e.*, our) narative says nothing of the personal participation of Rehoboam with the untheocratic worship, rather, see ver. 28." Now we have already proved above that Chron. does not accuse him of it. Ewald therefore justly says (*Gesch. Isr.* III. *s.* 460 *sq.*): "Rehoboam indeed permitted or encouraged the exercise of foreign forms of worship, from his own predilections," and in this respect "Abijam walked completely in Rehoboam's footsteps; he shared his father's religious views and principles." It is no contradiction when in Chron. he is represented as a worshipper of Jehovah, for this he really was. The words he uttered before the beginning of hostilities to the opposite host of "all Israel" were not merely edifying and "exceedingly pious expressions" (Thenius), they quite correspond with the political and theocratic stand-point which Abijam took as king of *Judah*. He reproaches the ten tribes with their revolt from the house of David, and at the same time with all that Jeroboam had done, out of his own mind, against the divine fundamental law, given to the whole people. The evident purpose of the entire discourse was to win over Israel again to the house of David, to attach those who, being faithful to Jehovah, had already left the other tribes and settled in Judah, and also to attract and encourage such as still remained in Israel. Abijam had probably observed that his best support in a war with Israel was not to be found in the idolaters of his kingdom, but in the faithful servants of Jehovah. His very brief reign did not allow him any larger experience in this respect.

2. *The long reign of king Asa*, which lasted forty-one years, is treated with great brevity by our author; but the Chronicler devotes three whole chapters to it (2 Chron. xiv., xv., xvi.). The former, however, lays especial emphasis on what is most important to the history of the theocracy, and what the Chronicler also esteems the principal thing, namely, that Asa energetically and sternly put down the idol-worship, which had been suffered to remain side by side with that of Jehovah since Solomon's time, together with all the abominations the former included, and that he even deprived his idolatrous mother of her dignity as the Gebirah. How it happened that he entered with such decision on an entirely different course, immediately after his accession, is not told in either of the narratives; we can only form suppositions on the subject. After the separation of the ten tribes from Judah, the latter must have plainly perceived the injurious results of the religious liberty, which had been granted from political motives (see above, Histor. and Eth. on chap. xi.). This already small kingdom lacked unity, and therefore a firm bond. The more that danger threatened it from Israel under Jeroboam, through the continual wars that went on, the more people must have become convinced of the necessity of making an end of the schism which had arisen from the various forms of idolatry, of restoring the lost unity, and of thus giving full sway to the theocratic fundamental law through which Judah had become great and strong, and so making the kingdom firm, both in its internal and external relations. Besides this, the number of those who, from true affection to the divine law, emigrated from all the other tribes to Judah, increased (2 Chron. xv. 9), and all these abhorred the idol-worship which still existed in juxtaposition with that of Jehovah. Besides, some powerful and influential prophets were not wanting, who exhorted the king and the people to be faithful to Jehovah, and not to forsake the God of Israel, who had always helped His people (2 Chron. xv. 1 *sq.*; xvi. 7 *sq.*). These circumstances may have convinced Asa that nothing could secure stability and permanence for his kingdom but the return to the fundamental law and firm adherence to the same; and the great victory which the Lord had given him over Zerah the Ethiopian must have tended not a little to strengthen him in that conviction (2 Chron. xiv. 7 *sq.*). From Asa's subsequent conduct, it seems very uncertain whether his strict proceedings against the idol-worship were really the result of genuine conversion to Jehovah and of true piety, as might appear from his prayer (2 Chron. xiv. 10); political motives, if not principally, no doubt partially, influenced him. The Chron., which has been accused of giving a too partial and favorable view of Asa's character, lays especial stress on some facts which do not seem to show a true conversion and godly mind, such as David had. For instance, Asa took away the Temple-treasures that were consecrated to Jehovah, and had been lately gathered anew (this our author also mentions), and sent them to the king of Syria (who was growing continually more dangerous to both kingdoms) in order to induce him to break his league with Baasha. Also that when the prophet Hanani reproved him for doing so he threw the latter into prison, which no king of Judah had yet ventured to do to a prophet; and he even punished others who took the prophet's part; finally, that he showed no resignation to the will of the Lord or trust in Him during his last sickness (2 Chron. xvi. 10, 12). How completely different was David's conduct after the report of the prophet Nathan, and a short time before his end (2 Sam. xii. 13; xxiii. 1 *sq.*)! When, notwithstanding all this, both narratives say that Asa's heart was שָׁלֵם עִם־יְהוָה, it follows that this often repeated expression only means: he never wavered between God's service and that of idols or images, but was unreservedly devoted to the lawful worship of Jehovah, which was an exclusive one; and by being so he rendered his people a great service.

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

Vers. 1–8. The fruit falls not far from the tree. What the old sing, the young chirp (Was die Alten sungen, das zwitschern die Jungen). The parental house is, for the child, the preparatory school of life; what he there sees and hears is never forgotten through life. No example is so weighty and important as that of the parents: how great, then, is their responsibility. Abijam followed not after the example of David, great and

glorious as it was, but after that of his father Rehoboam, which he saw immediately before him. —Ver. 4. The blessing of pious, God-fearing forefathers often falls to the advantage of even degenerate children, through the mercy of God. —Ver. 5. No human example, however glorious it may be, is perfect, for even the greatest and best are wanting in the sight of God, and miserable sinners. Therefore we are referred to the example of Him who alone is sinless, and out of whose mouth proceeds no guile. He alone can say: He who follows me, walketh not in darkness, but has the light of life (1 Pet. ii. 21; John viii. 12). The children of this world often quote and excuse their sins by citing the example of good and holy men who have fallen, but never take pattern after their repentance and humiliation, and refuse to know anything of the wrung and smitten heart of a David (Ps. li. 19), or of the tears of a Peter (Matt. xxvi. 75).—Vers. 6–8. The enmity, strife, and war between the sister-kingdoms was the result of their broken covenant with the Lord God. Wheresoever, be it amid a nation, a community, or a family, the fear of the living God, and the bond of union with Him is destroyed, there will ever be strife and discord; peace is only to be found where the God of peace reigns in the heart (Col. iii. 15). To go out of the world at enmity is not a blessed death.

Vers. 9–24. The reign of Asa the king, (*a*) in its religious aspect (vers. 9–15); (*b*) in its political aspect (vers. 16–24).—Ver. 11. It is to be regarded as a merciful providence of God, when a son who has grown up with evil surroundings, and the bad example of a father and mother, yet holds steadily to His word and commandments, and resists firmly all ungodly influences.—Vers. 12–13. Against sins of licentiousness no authority can be powerful enough, for where this evil has crept in, there comes a moral corruption which works destructively upon all relations of life. Authority being ordained of God, as the Apostle says, its duty and task is to oppose with severity all godless conduct, without fear or favor of man, and to vindicate the eternal divine laws. Therefore it is that we have the church prayer for those in authority.—Ver. 13. CALW. B.: Thus it is: A man must first cleanse his own house if he would be an example to others. Therefore says the Apostle, "if a man know not how to rule his own house he cannot take care of the church of God" (1 Tim. iii. 5). Where the honor of God or the salvation of the soul comes in question, there even a mother must not prevail. I am come, says our Lord (Matt. x. 35 *sq.*), to set at variance, &c.—Ver. 14. To remove deep-rooted and long-standing evils suddenly and completely is impossible, even for a well-intentioned and powerful ruler; for in that case he would bring about resistance to the good rather than further it.—Ver. 15. Hence noble and pious princes should bethink themselves of using their gold and silver not only for worldly objects, but to enrich churches and schools, necessary to the accomplishment of godly designs.

Vers. 16 *sq.* The enemies who rise up against us, and bring us into straits, must often serve, in the hand of God, to try and prove whether our faith is rooted in the deepest soil of the heart, and our zeal in religious things no fleshly one, but a high and holy one.—Vers. 17–18. What is bestowed in faith must be regarded as sacred, and under no pretext must it be diverted to worldly purposes. Nothing but a rude power, knowing neither fear nor awe of God, could commit such a robbery, and no blessing can ever rest upon it. He who gives with one hand and takes back with the other, has his just recompense therein.—Ver. 19. This is the curse resting upon the strife of brethren—each forms a league with the common enemy rather than resolve upon peace with each other. The least reliable friend and companion in need is he who can be bought with gold, and is always at the disposal of the highest bidder. He who persuades another to break faith must be prepared to find that he will not maintain the word given to him. In every strait, seek first the support and aid of thy God, without whom no man can help thee. Asa was indeed *right* believing, but he was not right *believing*.—Vers. 20 *sq.* Whoso diggeth a pit shall fall therein, and he that rolleth a stone, it will return upon him (Prov. xxvi. 27). Baasha wished to become possessed of an additional city, and thus lost a series of his own cities; with the same stones with which he purposed to strengthen Ramah, Asa built two strong cities.—Ver. 24. Sickness in old age, previous to death, is a divine chastisement and trial, to wean men from the world and ripen them for eternity. How many men would die unconverted if God did not visit them before death with sickness! Well is it for all who through such visitations turn unto the Lord, as did Asa in 2 Chron. xvi. 12.

FOURTH SECTION.

THE KINGDOM OF ISRAEL UNDER NADAB AND HIS SUCCESSORS UNTIL AHAB.

CHAP. XV. 25—XVI. 28.

A.—*The reign of Nadab and Baasha.*

CHAP. XV. 25-XVI. 7.

25 And Nadab the son of Jeroboam began to reign over Israel in the second year
26 of Asa king of Judah, and reigned over Israel two years. And he did evil in the
sight of the Lord [Jehovah], and walked in the way of his father, and in his sin
27 [sins[1]] wherewith he made Israel to sin. And Baasha the son of Ahijah, of the
house of Issachar, conspired[2] against him; and Baasha smote him at Gibbethon,
which *belonged* to the Philistines; for Nadab and all Israel laid siege to Gibbethon.
28 Even in the third year of Asa king of Judah did Baasha slay him, and reigned in
29 his stead. And it came to pass, when he reigned, *that* he smote all the house of
Jeroboam; he left not to Jeroboam any that breathed,[3] until he had destroyed him,
according unto the saying of the Lord [Jehovah], which he spake by his servant
30 Ahijah the Shilonite: because of the sins of Jeroboam which he sinned, and which
he made Israel sin, by his provocation wherewith he provoked the Lord [Jehovah]
31 God of Israel to anger. Now the rest of the acts of Nadab, and all that he
did, *are* they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Israel?
32 [4]And there was war between Asa and Baasha king of Israel all their days.
33 In the third year of Asa king of Judah began Baasha the son of Ahijah to
34 reign over all Israel in Tirzah, twenty and four years. And he did evil in the
sight of the Lord [Jehovah], and walked in the way of Jeroboam, and in his sin
[sins] wherewith he made Israel to sin.
XVI. 1 THEN the word of the Lord came to Jehu the son of Hanani against
2 Baasha, saying, Forasmuch as I exalted thee out of the dust, and made thee
prince over my people Israel; and thou hast walked in the way of Jeroboam, and
hast made my people Israel to sin, to provoke me to anger with their sins;
3 behold, I will take away the posterity of Baasha, and the posterity of his house;
4 and will make thy house like the house of Jeroboam the son of Nebat. Him that
dieth of Baasha in the city shall the dogs eat; and him that dieth of his in the
5 fields shall the fowls of the air eat. Now the rest of the acts of Baasha, and
what he did, and his might, *are* they not written in the book of the Chronicles
6 of the kings of Israel? So Baasha slept with his fathers, and was buried in
7 Tirzah: and Elah his son reigned in his stead.[5] And also by the hand of the
prophet Jehu the son of Hanani came the word of the Lord [Jehovah] against
Baasha, and against his house, even for all the evil that he did in the sight of
the Lord [Jehovah], in provoking him to anger with the work of his hands, in
being like the house of Jeroboam; and because he killed him.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

[1] Ver. 26.—[It is better here and in ver. 34, &c., to retain the plural form of the Heb. *Sin* was doubtless intended to be understood collectively in the A. V.

[2] Ver. 27.—[The Heb. וַיִּקְשֹׁר from the root קָשַׁר, to bind or tie together, is correctly translated *conspired*, and implies that others were concerned with Baasha in the plot.

[3] Ver. 29.—[לֹא־הִשְׁאִיר כָּל־נְשָׁמָה, "he left not any that had breath," *i. e.*, he destroyed all, both male and female, of the house of Jeroboam, in contrast with the expression in chap. xiv. 10, &c. *Cf.* Josh. xi. 11, 14.

[4] Ver. 32.—[The Vat. Sept. omits ver. 32, which has occasioned so much perplexity from its being an exact repetition of ver. 16. For the reasons of its insertion see Exeg. Com.

[5] Ver. 6.—[The Alex. Sept. adds "in the twentieth year of king Asa"—an impossible date. *Cf.* xv. 33.—F. G.]

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

Vers. 25–26. **In the second year of Asa.** We see clearly from this verse, compared with the time given, in vers. 28 and 33, as in all the statement regarding the length of reigns, that years not fully complete are considered as whole ones. "For if Nadab ascended the throne in the second year of Asa's reign (ver. 28), and Asa ascended the throne in the twentieth year of Jeroboam's (ver. 9), Jeroboam could not have reigned quite twenty-two years, but only twenty-one and some months; and if Baasha succeeded to Nadab in the third year of Asa's reign (vers. 28 and 33) Nadab could not have reigned two years (ver. 25), in fact not much more than one and a half year or perhaps a little shorter time" (Keil).

Vers. 27–31 **Baasha . . . of the house of Issachar,** *i. e.*, of the tribe of Issachar; he cannot therefore have been the son of the prophet Ahijah, as Menzel supposes, for he was an Ephraimite of Shiloh. The city of *Gibbethon* belongs to the tribe of Dan (Josh. xix. 44), and was one of the four cities of the levites which belonged (*i. e.*, the cities) to this tribe (Josh. xxi. 23); it must have been on the borders of Philistia. It is very doubtful if it had always been occupied by the Philistines, and was now for the first time besieged by the Israelites (Winer); it rather appears that the Philistines, after the partition of the kingdom, again took possession of it as an important border fortress; whereupon the Israelites under Nadab and Elah (chap. xvi. 15) tried to recover it. As Nadab met his death on this occasion, it seems that Baasha's conspiracy was of a military description, and that the latter was an army chief like Zimri (chap. xvi. 9). Thenius supposes that Gibbethon was the same as the modern Muzeiri'ah, or Elmejdel (Tower) (*cf.* Robinson, *Pal.* III. p. 282). How the conspiracy arose is not stated; perhaps Nadab was still very young, and not a match for Baasha, who was very enterprising. It seems that he was not satisfied with exterminating the male relatives of Jeroboam, but murdered the whole of his race. The כִּדְבַר ver. 29, does not, of course, mean: as the Lord had promised him, but: so that the word of prophecy was fulfilled. For vers. 29, 30 see above on chap. xiv. 10 *sq.*

Vers. 32–34. **And there was war . . . all their days.** Ver. 32 is a literal repetition of ver. 16, and does not seem suitable to the context here, for even if we were to read Nadab instead of Baasha (Ewald), this does not agree with "all their days," for Nadab did not reign much longer than a year, and had war with the Philistines during that time. Nadab, too, should be named first; between Nadab and Asa; and finally Asa, whose year of accession coincided with the short period of Nadab's reign, had, according to 2 Chron. xiii. 23, no war at that time. Thenius thinks that the repetition of ver. 16 arose through a mistake of the copyist, but there is certainly no necessity for this easy but at the same time violent solution of the difficulty. Keil's view is better. He finds (1845) the reason of the repetition in the excerptive character of these books, and in the manner of theocratic historical writing, namely, in the want of strict order in the arrangement of the historical matter. Ver. 16 is taken from the book of the acts of the kings of Judah; ver. 32 from that of the kings of Israel. In the first instance the remark is given beforehand, because there was something special to be said about the war between Asa and Baasha; here, though it would certainly be more suitable after vers. 33 and 34, it is not put in on account of Asa, but on account of Baasha, and is the regular mode of expression for the conditions of the State under the different reigns. For Tirzah see chap. xiv. 17.

Chap. xvi. 1–6. **The word of the Lord came.** The chapter is not here divided according to the accession of the king, but according to the prophetic sentence which proclaimed ruin to the whole reigning dynasty, and therefore was the beginning of all the subsequent period. The prophet Jehu is mentioned in 2 Chron. xix. 2 *sq.* as well as in vers. 1, 7, 12; in the above passage he blames the conduct of the Judah-king Jehoshaphat, the successor of Asa; and in 2 Chron. xx. 34 he is named as the author of the "acts of Jehoshaphat in the book of the kings of Israel." There is no doubt that his father *Hanani* was the same as he who was thrown into prison because of his censure of king Asa (2 Chron. xvi. 7, 10). According to this, he must have belonged to the kingdom of Judah, and either pronounced his sentence there (vers. 2 and 7), or have gone over, for the purpose, into the northern kingdom. It is also uncertain whether he pronounced the threatening to Baasha personally and directly. For *out of the dust* (ver. 2) chap. xiv. 7 gives "from among the people," from which "we might conclude that Baasha had raised himself from a very low position to be a commander of the army and finally king" (Thenius). What Baasha did, of himself and by crime, the prophet ascribes in so far to Jehovah, that he could not possibly have executed his plans had they been contrary to the purposes of Jehovah. The entire sentence is evidently modelled after that of the prophet Ahijah against Jeroboam (chap. xiv. 7–11) (see Hist. and Eth. there, 1). Ver. 6 says that Baasha died a natural death, but Zimri (ver. 12) exterminated all "his posterity" (*cf.* אַחֲרֵי, ver. 3). For גְּבוּרָתוֹ, see on chap. xv. 23.

Ver. 7. **Came the word,** &c. The וְגַם is not equal to and also, or yes (De Wette), neither does it mean that Jehu himself bore the message, but rather "any former thought or excuse that might be brought forward was strongly rejected" (Ewald, *Lehrbuch* § 354). The whole of ver. 7 is not, as the Rabbins say, a new and further prophecy, but a supplementary remark to the prediction ver. 2, which might be misinterpreted as meaning that Baasha had a divine commission to murder Nadab and his race. No! the word, ver. 2, spoken by Jehu was called forth by the fact that Baasha had of his own accord destroyed the whole house of Jeroboam, and yet himself had adhered to Jeroboam's sin. This very word "clearly shows that the extermination of the house of Jeroboam was not done by divine commission, but from selfish motives." For הִכְעִיס, see above on chap. xiv. 15. "*The work of his hands*" denotes, according to Deut. iv. 28, *Dii factitii*, whether images of Jehovah (calves) or idols.

HISTORICAL AND ETHICAL.

1. *We have much less concerning the two Israelitish kings Nadab and Baasha* and the acts of their reigns than of the two Judah-kings Abijah and Asa. The narrative merely says of Nadab that he walked in the ways of his father Jeroboam; *i. e.*, that he retained unlawful institutions, and after a reign of scarcely two years was murdered in a conspiracy, by Baasha. But of the reign of Baasha, which lasted twenty-four years, our only narrative says that he destroyed all the whole house of Jeroboam after he (Baasha) became king, as was threatened to Jeroboam by the prophet Ahijah (chap. xiv. 7 *sq.*); that he also persisted in the sin of Jeroboam, and had the same fate as the latter announced to him by the prophet Jehu. We can see plainly from this what the principle which guided our author in his historical writing was. He does not care to give a complete account of all the facts and events of the reign of each king,—for these he refers to the authorities that lay before him,—but the thing rather which concerned him most of all, was the position each king took with regard to the Israelitish fundamental law, *i. e.*, the covenant, which was the soul of the entire Old-Testament theocracy; and how the promises and threatenings of this law itself, or of the prophets charged with its announcements, and who spoke as the servants and ambassadors of Jehovah, became fulfilled (see Introd. § 5). The heavy judgment which overtook the house of him who first openly broke the fundamental law of the entire people, and made the image-worship (so strictly forbidden in that law) the religion of the State and people; that heavy judgment, we say, was a practical historical prediction for every royal house which persisted in "the sin of Jeroboam." No less than nine dynasties of the kingdom of Israel, with whom this was the case, perished in like manner with the house of Jeroboam, until at last the kingdom itself was destroyed, whilst the dynasty of David continued uninterruptedly in Judah.

2. *The little that is told of Baasha is sufficient to show that he was an* ambitious, rough, and violent, indeed even a blood-thirsty man. He did not conspire against his lord and king, and usurp the throne, in order to bring the fundamental law of Israel into force again, and to make an end to the sin of Jeroboam, for he himself adhered firmly to it all his life, in spite of all the warnings and threatenings of the prophets. He only cared for dominion thereof, and for this he esteemed the sin of Jeroboam as necessary as the latter himself had done; in short, he seems to have been a rough soldier who cared little or nothing about religion. We see from his enterprise at Ramah (chap. xv. 17), which he wished to fortify "to reduce Judah utterly, through complete obstruction of trade" (Ewald), that he hated Judah and wished to destroy it, and therefore to reign over it also. He was the first king-murderer in Israel, and led the way, as it were, to this crime, which was afterwards so often imitated. He was the first, too, who exterminated an entire royal house with violence, and not only killed the males, but "every one that had breath," an unheard of cruelty, even in throne-usurpations in the ancient East. Menzel (*s.* 171), who wrongly takes him to have been the son of the prophet Ahijah (see above on ver. 27), intimates that he was therefore under prophetical influence, and then says that he "disappointed the hopes which the prophets of Jehovah had placed in him." This, however, is pure fancy. The conspiracy of Baasha was completely a military insurrection, as ver. 27 indubitably proves, while there is not a word to show that he was influenced by the prophets. He was, no doubt, one of the leaders in Nadab's army, but there is no evidence in the history that he was "a man distinguished for his valor" and a "skilful warrior," as Ewald calls him (III. *s.* 446 *sq.*); the general term, too, used in chap. xvi. 5 is no proof. There is still less ground for the further supposition, that besides the growing discontent of the prophets, the fact that the house of Jeroboam had not been able to conquer the kingdom of Judah, and other enemies, was evidently the chief root of the insurrection against it; that Baasha thought he could perform more, and in this hope he seized the throne. The text does not say the least word of all this. For the sentence announced to Baasha by the prophet Jehu, see above, Hist. and Eth. on chap. xiv. 1–20 (4).

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

Vers. 25–31. The ruin of the house of Jeroboam proclaims these two great truths: sin is the destruction of a people (Prov. xiv. 34), and: He who heareth not my word, of him will I require it (Deut. xviii. 19). God does not punish the innocent children for the sins of their fathers, but those who, despising the divine patience and long-suffering shown to their fathers, perpetuate, without any shame, the sins of the fathers (Exod. xx. 5, 6). A given example of evil is rarely without imitation; as Jeroboam rebelled against the house of David, so did Baasha against the house of Jeroboam. Desire for rule and envy beget first dissatisfaction with the condition in life ordained by God, lead then to breach of faith, and end at last with murder and homicide.—Ver. 29. Conspirators and rebels profess to overthrow tyranny and to throw off its yoke; but when they attain power and sovereignty they are themselves the most violent and cruel tyrants.—Ver. 34. CALW. B.: Baasha trod in the footsteps of Jeroboam just as if Jeroboam had been good and upright. And yet Baasha himself was an instrument in the hands of God to punish Jeroboam on account of his sins. What folly! When Jeroboam's son, Nadab, did as his father, we can explain it by paternal influence;—but that Baasha should have pursued the same course is a proof of monstrous blindness. The world does not allow itself to be interrupted in its purposes; vain conduct after the way of those who lived before, is always inherited (1 Pet. i. 18).—Chap xvi. 1. The word of the Lord in the mouth of a true servant of God is, for the pious, sweeter than honey and the honey-comb (Ps. xix. 11), for the wicked and impious it is a consuming fire, and like the hammer which breaketh the rock in pieces (Jer. xxiii. 29).—Vers. 2–4. OSIANDER: The sins of the common people which they have learned from their princes, as well also as those which these do not restrain when they can, are charged to them. Those who are lifted up out of the dust are often the proudest and most arrogant because they think they must thank only themselves for their exalted position, and they

forget what is written in 1 Sam. ii. 7 *sq.* For Baasha, also, the hour struck when it was said, Behold, oh! most proud, &c. (Jer. l. 31). The throne which has been obtained by lying, deceit, and falsehood and bloodshed has no stability. The judgment of God, though delayed for a time, will not always tarry (Ps. v. 6, 7). Robbers and murderers are not always in caves and the hidden recesses of forests, sometimes they are seated upon thrones; but the Lord will "sweep them away," and their end will be with horror: before His tribunal no people, no crown is a protection.

B.—*The reigns of Elah, Zimri, Omri, and Ahab.*

CHAP. XVI. 8–34.

8 In the twenty and sixth year of Asa king of Judah[1] began Elah the son of
9 Baasha to reign over Israel in Tirzah, two years. And his servant Zimri, captain of half *his* chariots, conspired against him, as he was in Tirzah, drinking
10 himself drunk in the house of Arza, steward of *his* house in Tirzah. And Zimri went in and smote him, and killed him, in the twenty and seventh year of Asa
11 king of Judah, and reigned in his stead. And it came to pass, when he began to reign, as soon as he sat on his throne, *that* he slew all the house of Baasha: he left him not one that pisseth against a wall, neither of his kinsfolks,[2] nor of his
12 friends.[3] Thus did Zimri destroy all the house of Baasha, according to the word
13 of the Lord [Jehovah], which he spake against Baasha by Jehu the prophet, for all the sins of Baasha, and the sins of Elah his son, by which they sinned, and by which they made Israel to sin, in provoking the Lord [Jehovah] God of Israel
14 to anger with their vanities. Now the rest of the acts of Elah, and all that he did, *are* they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Israel?
15 In the twenty and seventh year of Asa king of Judah[4] did Zimri reign seven days in Tirzah. And the people *were* encamped against Gibbethon, which *be-*
16 *longed* to the Philistines. And the people *that were* encamped heard say, Zimri hath conspired, and hath also slain the king: wherefore all Israel made Omri,
17 the captain of the host, king over Israel that day in the camp. And Omri went
18 up from Gibbethon, and all Israel with him, and they besieged Tirzah. And it came to pass, when Zimri saw that the city was taken, that he went into the palace [citadel] of the king's house, and burnt the king's house over him with
19 fire, and died,[5] for his sins which he sinned in doing evil in the sight of the Lord [Jehovah], in walking in the way of Jeroboam, and in his sin which he
20 did, to make Israel to sin. Now the rest of the acts of Zimri, and his treason [conspiracy] that he wrought, *are* they not written in the book of the Chronicles
21 of the kings of Israel? Then were the people of Israel divided into two parts: half of the people followed Tibni the son of Ginath, to make him king; and half
22 followed Omri. But the people that followed Omri prevailed against the people that followed Tibni the son of Ginath: so Tibni died,[6] and Omri reigned.
23 In the thirty and first year of Asa king of Judah began Omri to reign over
24 Israel, twelve years: six years reigned he in Tirzah. And he bought the hill Samaria of Shemer for two talents of silver, and built on the hill, and called the name of the city which he built, after the name of Shemer, owner of the hill,
25 Samaria. But Omri wrought evil in the eyes of the Lord [Jehovah], and did worse
26 than all that *were* before him. For he walked in all the way of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and in his sin [sins] wherewith he made Israel to sin, to provoke
27 the Lord [Jehovah] God of Israel to anger with their vanities. Now the rest of the acts of Omri which he did, and his might[7] that he shewed, *are* they not
28 written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Israel? So Omri slept with his fathers, and was buried in Samaria: and Ahab his son reigned in his stead.[8]
29 And in the thirty and eighth year of Asa king of Judah began Ahab the son of Omri to reign over Israel: and Ahab the son of Omri reigned over Israel

30 in Samaria twenty and two years. And Ahab the son of Omri did evil in the
31 sight of the Lord [Jehovah] above all that *were* before him. And it came to pass,
as if it had been a light thing for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam the son of
Nebat, that he took to wife Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaal king of the Zidoni-
32 ans, and went and served Baal, and worshipped him. And he reared up an altar
33 for Baal in the house of Baal, which he had built in Samaria. And Ahab made
a grove; and Ahab did more to provoke the Lord [Jehovah] God of Israel to
anger than all the kings of Israel that were before him. In his days did Hiel
34 the Beth-elite build Jericho: he laid the foundation thereof in Abiram his
first-born, and set up the gates thereof in his youngest *son* Segub, according
to the word of the Lord [Jehovah], which he spake by Joshua the son of Nun.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

[1] Ver. 8.—[The Vat. Sept. omits the preceding comparative date.

[2] Ver. 11.—[The Vat. Sept. omits the latter half of ver. 11 and the first of ver. 12.

[3] Ver. 11.—גֹּאֲלָיו = his kinsman who might avenge his death. The full force of the word גֹּאֵל as the avenger of blood can hardly be conveyed by any single English word.

[4] Ver. 15.—[The Vat. Sept. here again omits the comparative date.

[5] Ver. 18.—[The division of verses breaks the connection, and obscures the dependence of ver. 19 upon the word "died."

[6] Ver. 22.—[The Sept. adds, "and Joram his brother at that time."

[7] Ver 27.—[Many MSS. and editions, followed by the Sept. and the Syr., insert וְכָל before אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה = "his might and all that he did," thus assimilating the expression to that used in regard to some other kings, *cf.* ver. 14; xv. 7, 23, 31, &c., although the expression of this text is also used elsewhere.

[8] Ver. 28.—[The Vat. Sept. here inserts (with some chronological variations) the account of the reign of Jehoshaphat from chap. xxii. 41–50, again repeating that account (without those variations) in its proper place. The insertion was evidently made to avoid the chronological difficulty between verses 28 and 29, for the explanation of which see the Exeg. Com. Accordingly in ver. 29 instead of the 38th year of Asa the Vat. Sept. has "in the second year of Jehoshaphat." The Alex. Sept. follows the Hebrew.—F. G.]

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

Vers. 8–14. **Began Elah to reign, &c.** For Tirzah see on chap. xiv. 17. As Elah commenced his reign in the twenty-sixth year of Asa, and according to ver. 10 was killed in the twenty-ninth, the *two years* he was king could not have been full ones. רֶכֶב is now generally translated riding; but a comparison with chap. ix. 19; x. 26 would seem to indicate that it should be chariot. There is no doubt that some of the chariot-cities which Solomon built (see on the place) were in the kingdom of Israel; perhaps "the half" of all the chariots were at the capital, and Zimri was placed over them. According to Josephus (*Antiq.* viii. 12, 4), Zimri took advantage of the absence of the army and its chief to undertake the siege of Gibbethon (see above on chap. xv. 27). The house steward Arza, who had arranged a drinking bout, was no doubt the principal person in the conspiracy which Zimri set on foot. *Cf.* chap. xiv. 10 with ver. 11. Zimri acted, as Grotius remarks, according to the tyrannical principles *νήπιος, ὃς πατέρα κτείνας υἱοὺς κατέλιπε*. But he went farther than Baasha, inasmuch as he not only killed the relatives of the king, but also his friends, in order to secure himself from any possible blood-revenge; all this took place in a few days, for his whole reign was only seven days. For vers. 12 and 13 *cf.* ver. 3, and above on chap. xiv. 15, 16. הֲבָלִים *i. e.*, *vanitates*, anything which is called God, yet is not God, and which is consequently vain and empty (*cf.* Deut. xxxii. 21). The word here does not refer to idols, properly speaking, but to images of Jehovah, which, however, are, like the former, empty and vain.

Vers. 15–20. **Did Zimri reign seven days, &c.** The distance of Tirzah from Gibbethon requires us to suppose that the seven days apply to the time during which Zimri was in undisturbed possession of the throne, *i. e.*, until the day when the army in Gibbethon made their chief, Omri, king, who then first went to Tirzah and besieged it. Zimri's death followed when he saw that he could not hold the town against the besiegers. The "people" and "all Israel" mean here all those who were armed, *i. e.*, the men of war. אַרְמוֹן, from the root אָרַם to be high, is the part that was highest, that is "the fortress of the royal palace, the securest and inmost place, the citadel, as it were; for the royal palace contained a great number of buildings" (Gesenius, *cf.* 2 Kings xv. 25). Zimri set fire to this last place of refuge, and through it to the entire palace, in order not to fall into the hands of his enemies, and to prevent the palace and all it contained from passing into their possession. Similar instances are to be found in *Justin. hist.* i. 3; *Liv.* xxi. 14: *Flor.* ii. 18. Ewald's rendering of אַרְמוֹן is quite arbitrary; he gives the "women's chamber," the harem; and supposes that Zimri went there, for the "effeminate man had only suffered the queen and other women of the palace to live, as they readily lent themselves to the murder of their lord; and the queen mother seems to have offered him her favor." However, there is not a syllable of all this either in the text or anywhere else. Besides, the deed recorded in ver. 18 rather displays courage and contempt of death than effeminacy. The Syriac has: and they, the besiegers, fired his royal house over his head; and Kimchi translates: and he, that is Omri, set fire, &c.; both are de-

cidedly wrong. In consideration of Zimri's short reign of seven days, we must conclude from ver. 19 that he had formerly shown much partiality for the calf-worship of Jeroboam, and that, at the time of his accession, he had no intention of removing it.

Vers. 21-22. **Then the people of Israel divided.** Ver. 21 *sq.* It is generally thought that two parties had arisen within the army, each of which wished to make their leader king, and that they fought for some time until the weaker party succumbed, and their leader Tibni fell in battle. According to Ewald, Tibni was assisted in the war by his brother Joram, and both fell in the one battle. But it is very doubtful if the "people of Israel," ver. 21, means the same as "the people that were encamped," ver. 18, *i. e.*, only the army. The latter had not divided, for according to ver. 16 Omri was made king by "all" the army; it is only said of him that he was the captain of the host, but neither this nor anything similar is said of Tibni. We have therefore more reason to suppose that after the death of Zimri a faction arose, which did not acknowledge the soldier-king Omri, who had been chosen by the army alone, and which faction set up Tibni in opposition. The Sept only makes mention of a brother of Tibni (*καὶ ἀπέθανε Θαβνὶ καὶ Ἰωρὰμ ὁ ἀδελφὸς αὐτοῦ ἐν τῷ καιρῷ ἐκείνῳ*), and Josephus also (*Ant.* viii. 12, 15), only says, Tibni was killed by Omri's faction, but not that the two brothers fell in the same battle.

Vers. 23-28. **Began Omri to reign over Israel, twelve years.** Ver. 23. According to ver. 15 the elevation and death of Zimri occurred in the twenty-seventh year of the reign of Asa, king of Judah (929); according to ver. 29, Ahab, the successor of Omri, came to the throne in the thirty-eighth year of Asa (918); therefore the twelve years of Omri's reign could not have been twelve full years. And furthermore, if Omri became king in the thirty-first year of Asa, according to ver. 23 (925), and yet died in the 38th year of Asa, according to ver. 29 (918), that is, in from seven to eight years, it is plain that the twelve years of his reign are reckoned from the year in which he was made king by the host (929), but did not at the same time attain the sole sovereignty, as part of the people wished Tibni to be king. He became sole sovereign only in the year 925, so that the struggle with Tibni's faction must have lasted four years. The six years during which Omri resided at Tirzah were the first half of the twelve years of his reign; during the latter six years he lived in Samaria, a city which he had newly built (ver. 24). In order to explain some chronological difficulties that occur later, with regard to the kings Jehoram and Jehoshaphat, Ewald (III. *s.* 432) refuses to reckon the four years before Tibni's death in the twelve years of Omri's reign, and as Asa reigned four years as a contemporary of Ahab, the successor of Omri (chap. xxii. 41), Asa could not have reigned forty-one years (chap. xv. 10) but forty-seven, for the years mentioned in chap. xvi. 15 amount to that; 27 + 4 + 12 + 4. "But according to this supposition, the numbers here and in ver. 29, also in chap. xv. 10, which are perfectly correct, should be altered" (Thenius), and there is no reason whatever for doing so. The name שֶׁמֶר (ver. 24), is probably the same as שׁוֹמֵר and שֶׁמֶר (1 Chron. vii. 32-34), we cannot, therefore, pronounce the derivation of the name of the city to be "wrong," because the owner must otherwise have been called שֹׁמֵר (Petermann). The mountain of *Shemer* is not far to the east of Tirzah, and it lies north-east of Shechem. The palace at Tirzah, which was destroyed under Zimri, does not seem to have been rebuilt, and Omri appears, as soon as he became king, to have taken the resolution of building a new capital and royal city, for which that mountain was peculiarly adapted. It was a "beautiful round mountain, covered with splendid trees, and lying in a valley or basin enclosed with mountains;" it commanded "a glorious prospect of the fruitful valley and the heights and villages surrounding it" (Knobel on Isa., xxviii. 1-4; Robinson, *Palest.* III. 1, p. 503 *sq.*). Samaria, therefore, continued to be the capital of the kingdom until its destruction. The *two talents of silver*, for which Omri bought the hill, are reckoned at 5,200 Thr. by Keil, and at 4,000 Thr. by Thenius [$3,900 and $3,000 respectively]. We may infer from Mic. vi. 16, where Judah is reproached with keeping "the statutes of Omri and all the works of the house of Ahab," that Omri went further in regard to the worship than the former kings of Israel (ver. 25). We have no more exact information, but it is certain, at any rate, that he prepared the way for the state of things under his successor Ahab. That Omri was a valiant warrior appears from the word גְּבוּרָתוֹ (ver. 27), which is used respecting Asa and Baasha, Elah and Zimri, but not of Nadab.

Vers. 29-33. **Ahab....to reign over Israel.** Vers. 29 to 34 describe the government of Ahab generally; from chaps. xvii. to xxii. follow notices of separate events that occurred in this time, and then in chap. xxii. 39, 40, comes the usual concluding formula, the rest of the acts, &c. Our section, therefore, forms a general introduction, and at the same time the superscription to the following particulars; it is also designed to place the reader beforehand upon the stand-point from which all that is coming must be viewed and judged. Omri had departed farther than any of his predecessors from the fundamental law, but Ahab went still farther than his father (ver. 30 is therefore no mere repetition of ver. 25). He was not contented with the sin of Jeroboam, but he formally introduced the service of Baal into his kingdom, in consequence of his marriage with Jezebel, and he even built a temple to Baal in the royal city and capital Samaria. *Ethbaal* is no doubt the Εἰθώβαλος (who was mentioned by Menander in Josephus *c. Apion.* I. 18), king of Tyre and Sidon, who succeeded to the throne about fifty years after Hiram's death, and could, therefore, have very well been the father-in-law of Ahab; he was priest of Astarte and the murderer of his brother, king Pheles. What is related of Jezebel afterwards coincides perfectly with what we should expect from the daughter of such a father. הַבַּעַל is the known chief male divinity of the Phœnicians, "the sun-god, which was regarded as the primary preserver and principle of physical life, and of the generative, reproductive power in nature, which flowed from his being" (Movers, *Rel. d. Phön. s.* 184). According to 2 Kings iii. 2; x. 27 the image of Baal which Ahab had made, was מַצֵּבָה, *i. e.*, a monument, a monumental pillar (see on chap. xiv.

23). In the temple of the Tyrian Hercules (=Baal), at Tyre, there stood two pillars, one of gold, the other of emerald (Herodot. II. 44, see above). Besides the male divinity there was also the הָאֲשֵׁרָה, the female deity a (wooden) image of Astarte (see above 7). From the great number of the priests who were employed in the worship of Baal which Ahab introduced (chap. xviii. 19), it appears that it was very extensive and magnificent. More particulars regarding the temple of Baal are given in 2 Kings x. 25–27. That Ahab built besides "another splendid building of the same kind, which served as a sacred grove for Astarte, and which was probably close to his favorite palace at Jezreel" (Ewald III. s. 457), is a pure invention, of which there is not a single word in the text.

Ver. 34. **In his days did Hiel the Bethelite build Jericho.** Ver. 34. The city of Jericho, which was very strong at the time of the conquest of the promised land, was destroyed after being taken, and Joshua pronounced these words over it: "Cursed be the man before the Lord that raiseth up and buildeth Jericho; he shall lay the foundation thereof in his first-born, and in his youngest son shall he set up the gates of it" (Josh. vi. 1, 2,4 26). This does not mean that no one should live there again, but he who endeavors to make it again what it was, *i. e.*, a fortress, shall be severely punished. Jericho was afterwards apportioned to the tribe of Benjamin, but in Ahab's time it certainly belonged to the kingdom of Israel (Josh. xviii. 21; 2 Kings ii. 5, 18). At the command of Ahab, Hiel of Bethel (the chief seat of the calf-worship) now built, *i. e.* fortified (בָּנָה as in chaps. xi. 27; xii. 25), Jericho again; probably because it lay on the borders of Ephraim, or was designed to protect the passage of the Jordan, which was near. Whether this was done in defiance of Joshua's prediction, as older commentators think, or in ignorance of it, is uncertain; at any rate Joshua's word was fulfilled. "We cannot doubt the truth of what is related in this verse, for the names are mentioned, and the signification of these names has no reference to the event" (Thenius). There is no other ground for the supposition that Joshua's utterance was a *vaticinium ex eventu* than the rationalistic presupposition that all prophecies are impossible. The supposition of the Rabbins that all the sons of Hiel, from the eldest to the youngest, were destroyed during the building, is unsupported by the text. However, the question remains how the whole of the information contained in ver. 34 comes to be inserted just here. As it follows immediately after the account of the introduction of the Canaanitish idolatrous worship by Ahab (vers. 30–33), our author may very well have thought of it in connection with the latter. The fortress of Jericho was, in Joshua's time, the gate and key to the whole land of Canaan; he who possessed it had the entire country open before him (Josh. ii. 1, 24; vi. 1 *sq.*). The taking of this town was, therefore, of the greatest importance; it was achieved by a miraculous act of Jehovah, which was compared, on that account, to the passage through the Red Sea, *i. e.*, the complete deliverance from Egypt (Josh. ii. 9 *sq.*). With it, the land of Canaan fell into the hands of the Israelites; with the walls of Jericho the stronghold of Canaanitism fell, its destruction was begun, and the pledge of the same lay, in a measure, in the destruction of that city. But just for this very reason it should never again become what it was before its capture. Ahab, however, who placed the country again in its ante-Israelitish condition through the introduction of the Canaanite idol-worship, caused the fortress, which had been destroyed by the almighty power of Jehovah, to be restored. As he denied the God of Israel, and placed the Baal of the Canaanites in His stead, so he also denied the great saving act of Jehovah as manifested in the fall and destruction of Jericho. He showed his apostasy from Jehovah by causing the walls of Jericho to be rebuilt. It appears, however, that the God of Israel would not suffer contempt of Him to go unpunished. The curse of Joshua was fulfilled as a warning that the divine threatenings would not remain unfulfilled. The account in ver. 34, thus understood, is so well connected with that of ver. 32 that it forms the direct transition to the activity of the prophet Elijah (of whom the following chapter treats) against the apostasy of Ahab.

HISTORICAL AND ETHICAL.

1. *The unspeakable results of the partition of the kingdom, and the consequent breach of the fundamental law of Israel*, appears more plainly in the history of the reigns of Elah, Zimri, Omri, and Ahab, than in those of the three previous kings. All four of these kings continued in the sins of Jeroboam, because they as well as he considered it to be necessary to the separate existence of their kingdom and to the support of their power. In fact each one surpassed the other until the image-worship reached its natural goal in the worship of idols (see above), which the last of them, Ahab, not only permitted, but introduced as the State-religion. With Ahab, therefore, the history of the kingdom of Israel comes to a conclusion relatively, and a new epoch begins, characterized by the appearing of the great prophet Elijah and his struggle with idolatry (chap. xvii.). The consequences of the partition, which were felt in the sphere of religion, were felt, in like manner, in that of politics, on account of the peculiar and inseparable connection of the Israelite people with their religion. The monarchy in Israel had arisen by means of rebellion and forcible separation from the house of David, and thus it lacked the ground of divine law. What Jeroboam conceived he was justified in doing, every other one thought he had a right to do also, as soon as he had followers and power enough; that was the case with Baasha and still more with Zimri and Omri. Thus the kingdom became the football of human ambition and caprice, so that one insurrection followed another; and in the comparatively short time of from fifty to sixty years, seven kings reigned, of whom four attained the throne by violence and even murder. But no blessing could rest on such a kingdom. The people of the ten tribes, who were already more inclined to nature-life, and therefore more adapted for the reception of Jeroboam's calf-worship, must, by the persistence of their kings in this worship, and by their complete separation from Judah, the guardian and protector of the law, and with it of the spirited life by the nation, have sunk lower and lower. A people can

indeed endure a bad ruler without themselves degenerating; but a whole line of sovereigns, of whom each obtained the throne by conspiracy, rebellion, and murder, is only possible where the people themselves are rough and barbarous. What social and religious degeneracy is presupposed, where the nation accepted all the abominations of its rulers, and where an Ahab (finally) met no opposition in instituting the shameful and indecent worship of Baal and Astarte as the State-religion! How far different the state of things in Judah! For though the religious liberty permitted by Solomon bore evil fruit, yet the fundamental law was always adhered to by the kings, and the idol-worship was completely destroyed by Asa, who reigned two years contemporaneously with Ahab. The kingdom was firm; there was not a trace of conspiracy or rebellion, and the house of David retained the throne. Although the kingdom of Judah was much smaller and weaker than that of Israel, and was continually in danger from the latter; yet, holding fast to its royal house, it victoriously repelled all attempts to subjugate it. Such was the blessing which rested in fidelity to Jehovah and His law.

2. *Of the two kings, Elah and Zimri*, we learn nothing besides that they held to the sin of Jeroboam, except how they died. This was, however, sufficient to characterize them. We see that Elah did not even inherit energy and courage from his father Baasha, but was a coward and a low-souled glutton; because when the whole army was engaged in combat with the Philistines before Gibbethon, he not only remained at home, but drank and caroused. Zimri was still worse; ambition led him to unfaithfulness and treason; he not only murdered his king and master, but the king's whole house. How little esteemed and respected he was, appears from the fact that the whole army, as soon as they heard of his having ascended the throne, immediately made another king, and marched against Zimri. Then, when shut in and surrounded, he set fire to the citadel over his head and gave himself to the flames—his act was one of despair rather than of heroism.

3. *The accounts of Omri's reign* are limited entirely to this: that he built the city of Samaria after the taking of Tirzah, and that he walked in all the ways of Jeroboam, and was worse than all who preceded him. It is not said in what respect he was worse, but it certainly implies that he maintained the anti-theocratic institutions of Jeroboam with great zeal and decision. It appears that he stood well as captain of the army, for it was in the camp that he was elected to the throne. Yet however valiant he may have been as a warrior, in the chief thing, *i. e.*, in his relation to Jehovah and the theocratic fundamental law, he stood worse than any of his predecessors, and was furthest from being what was especially required of a theocratic king, that is, a servant of Jehovah. According to Ewald (III. *s.* 452 *sq.*), whom Eisenlohr (II. *s.* 150) again follows, Omri was "a ruler as enterprising as he was prudent," and "very wisely took advantage of the times to secure greater prosperity for his kingdom and security to his own house. This camp-king ruled his people with great power and decision, not even sparing the prophets when they opposed his designs. But without, he sought . . . . . the needful peace in order to strengthen himself in his internal relations. He concluded peace with the kingdom of Judah. . . . Omri's chief efforts were directed towards the furtherance of trade, commerce," &c. Every one that has eyes can see that the text does not say a word of all this; it gives us another example of how history is made. Omri is not great and distinguished even as a commander, for it took him four years to conquer the already weaker faction of Tibni, and according to chap. xx. 34; xxii. 3, he was, as Eisenlohr himself is obliged to confess, "forced to conclude a peace with (the Syrian king) Benhadad on very humiliating conditions." It is not credible that a soldier-king should have thought only of quiet and peace; and it does not follow from the marriage of his son Ahab with the Sidonian Jezebel that his chief desires were for the furtherance of trade and commerce, for Ahab did not marry till after he became king, that is, after the death of Omri (ver. 31). It is just as arbitrary to conclude that because he was worse than they all, the prophets must have thrown obstacles in the way of his designs, and that he "punished their interference with the utmost severity." Ahab is the first of these kings of whom we have a complete picture, which is given in the following chapters.

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

Vers. 8–34. General reflections upon the history of the reigns of the four kings in the following succession, Elah, Zimri, Omri, and Ahab. (*a*) At variance as they were with each other, hating, destroying, and killing each other, yet they all remained faithful to the calf-worship, regarding it as the means by which they could maintain their own kingdom and their dominion over Judah. The religion of the people in the service of the policy of the sovereign. How often does it happen that selfish profit, power, or seeming form the real motive of a confession of faith. (*b*) One exceeds the other in revolt against the living God.—Calw. B.: In sin and departure from God there are always gradual advances, just as in godliness and well-doing—one step follows another, and the slavery of sin is ever increasing (2 Tim. iii. 13). (*c*) One successful insurrection seldom stands alone in history, but is ever followed by a fresh one, and becomes a passion, which, like a deadly plague, saps the moral and religious life of a nation to its foundations. Hence the apostle's meaning: let no man, &c. (1 Tim. ii. 1–3).

Vers. 8–10. King Elah. (*a*) He riots and carouses whilst his people are pouring out their blood in war. It is a sign of great barbarousness and rudeness amid exterior refinement, when the great and rich lead a frivolous and luxurious life, whilst the masses eat their bread in the sweat of their brow, and are famishing. A riotous court life is the usual precursor of the storm which shakes or destroys the throne. (*b*) Death overtakes him in drunkenness. To go suddenly and unprepared from time into eternity is a heavy fate; but it is still more fearful to leave the world in darkness. Therefore, we should daily pray: Lord, teach us so to, &c. (Ps. xc. 12).—Würt. Summ.: The nearer chastisement comes to the ungodly the more secure are they. When they say, "There is peace, there is no danger," then destruction shall overtake them suddenly, and they shall not escape from it (1 Thess. v. 3; *cf.* Ps. xxxix. 6). Therefore: be

sober, &c. (1 Pet. v. 8). It is fearful, when one can say nothing more of a man than, "He has despised God and his word, served his belly, and ended his life with a revel. Better to famish and be miserable with Lazarus, and then to be borne by angels into Abraham's bosom, than with the rich man to live in splendor and revelry, and afterwards to suffer the pains of hell.—Ver. 9. Drunken revels are an abomination unto the Lord, and only occur where the fear of the Lord is absent. The drunkards rank with those (1 Cor. vi. 9, 10) who will not inherit the kingdom of God, and the Lord Christ warns: Take heed to yourselves, &c. (Lu. xxi. 34).

Vers. 11–20. Zimri, King. (*a*) His way to the throne: Treachery, cunning, murder. He shunned no means to gain his end. That is the way of the ungodly; but without their knowledge or will they are compelled to be scourges and whips in the hand of the Lord (Is. x. 5). (*b*) His end: a speedy and fearful one. Only seven days did the dominion which he so coveted, and attained through such villany, last. Lightly come, lightly go. The ungodly are like the chaff, &c. (Ps. i. 4, 6). He gave himself up to death, in flames of fire. The ungodly are utterly consumed, &c. (Ps. lxxiii. 19). As he had lived, so he died.—Ver. 18. The doom of despair is the end of a life given over to sin, which has lost sight of the living God, and can never again find Him. Frequently, what the world regards as heroism and contempt of death is simply cowardice and crime in the sight of God. The Lord has no pleasure, &c. (Ezek. xviii. 23). It requires more courage and bravery to bear the merited punishment of one's sins than to escape from it by suicide.

Vers. 21–28. The King Omri. (*a*) How he became king. When the king is chosen by the people instead of receiving the crown from the hand of God by right of inheritance, which is by the grace of God, factions are sure to arise, which wage bloody conflicts, and waste the best strength of the people, until, at length, the stronger party conquers the weaker by violence.* The curse of party spirit. (*b*) How he reigned. He built Samaria, making it the strong centre of the kingdom, but he walked in all the sins of Jeroboam, and "did worse" than all who went before him. A man may be skilful and useful to himself and others, in all material and worldly things, whilst in spiritual and divine things he works only mischief and destruction. What, without religion, is so-called civilization?

Vers. 29–34. The King Ahab. (*a*) His union with Jezebel—a marriage contracted not in obedience to God's holy will, but merely upon worldly grounds and political considerations, and was therefore the source of great mischief to himself and to his people. (*b*) The uplifting of idolatry over the religion of the country. The calf-worship was merged in the Baal worship. The greatest tyranny is the tyranny over conscience, which pretends to rule also over belief. The worst rule is that which, instead of demanding recognition of the truth, substitutes lies and errors, and exercises its power in aid of unbelief and of superstition. (*c*) The rebuilding of Jericho. By means of "faith" the walls of Jericho fell (Heb. xi. 30). Idolatry will build them up again, but the curse rests upon them. He who builds up what the Lord has destroyed, falls under his judgment. 2 Chron. xiii. 12: Fight ye not, &c. Julian, who rebuilt the heathen temple, and the Jews, who rebuilt the temple of Jerusalem, were confounded and brought to shame.

* [Of course our readers will estimate at their value these stiff monarchial sentiments. The present Editor, here as elsewhere, prefers to translate in this work rather than omit them, because it is due to the author to give his work fairly in a translation.' But here he enters a mild caveat, and avails himself of the opportunity to say that his task is not that of a reviewer, and consequently he has allowed many things to pass without comment, from which he differs widely and thoroughly.—E. H.]

SECOND EPOCH.

FROM AHAB TO JEHU.

(1 KINGS XVII.—2 KINGS VIII.)

FIRST SECTION.

THE PROPHET ELIJAH DURING AHAB'S REIGN.

1 KINGS XVII., XVIII., XIX.

A.—*Elijah before Ahab, at the brook Cherith, and in Zarephath.*

CHAP. XVII. 1–24.

1 AND Elijah[1] the Tishbite, *who was* of the inhabitants[2] of Gilead, said unto
Ahab, *As* the Lord [Jehovah] God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there
shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word.[3]
2 3 And the word of the Lord [Jehovah] came unto him, saying, Get thee hence,
and turn thee eastward, and hide thyself by the brook Cherith, that *is* before[4]
4 Jordan. And it shall be, *that* thou shalt drink of the brook; and I have com-
5 manded the ravens[5] to feed thee there. So he went and did according unto the
word of the Lord [Jehovah]: for he went and dwelt by the brook Cherith, that
6 *is* before Jordan. And the ravens brought him bread and flesh in the morning,
and bread and flesh in the evening[6]; and he drank of the brook.
7 And it came to pass after a while, that the brook dried up, because there had
8 been no rain[7] in the land. And the word of the Lord [Jehovah] came unto him
9 saying, Arise, get thee to Zarephath, which *belongeth* to Zidon, and dwell there:
10 behold, I have commanded a widow woman there to sustain thee. So he arose
and went to Zarephath. And when he came to the gate of the city, behold, the
widow woman *was* there gathering of sticks: and he called to her, and said,
11 Fetch me, I pray thee, a little water in a vessel, that I may drink. And as she
was going to fetch *it*, he called to her, and said, Bring me, I pray thee, a morsel
12 of bread in thine hand. And she said, *As* the Lord [Jehovah] thy God liveth, I
have not a cake, but a handful of meal in a barrel, and a little oil in a cruse: and,
13 behold, I *am* gathering two sticks, that I may go in and dress it for me and my
son,[8] that we may eat it, and die. And Elijah said unto her, Fear not; go *and*
do as thou hast said: but make me thereof a little cake first, and bring *it* unto
14 me, and after make for thee and for thy son. For thus saith the Lord [Jehovah]
God of Israel, The barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil
15 fail, until the day *that* the Lord [Jehovah] sendeth[9] rain upon the earth. And
she went and did according to the saying of Elijah: and she, and he,[10] and her
16 house, did eat *many* days. *And* the barrel of meal wasted not, neither did
the cruse of oil fail, according to the word of the Lord [Jehovah], which he
spake by Elijah.
17 And it came to pass after these things, *that* the son of the woman, the mistress

of the house, fell sick; and his sickness was so sore, that there was no breath left
18 in him. And she said unto Elijah, What have I to do with thee, O thou man of
God? art thou come unto me to call my sin to remembrance, and to slay my
19 son? And he said unto her, Give me thy son. And he took him out of her
bosom, and carried him up into a loft[11], where he abode, and laid him upon his
20 own bed. And he cried unto the Lord [Jehovah], and said, O Lord [Jehovah] my
God, hast thou also brought evil upon the widow with whom I sojourn, by slay-
21 ing her son? And he stretched himself[12] upon the child three times, and cried
unto the Lord [Jehovah], and said, O Lord [Jehovah] my God, I pray thee, let
22 this child's soul come into him again. And the Lord [Jehovah] heard the voice
of Elijah; and the soul of the child came into him again, and he revived.
23 And Elijah took the child,[13] and brought him down out of the chamber into the
house, and delivered him unto his mother: and Elijah said, See, thy son liveth.
24 And the woman said to Elijah, Now by this I know that thou *art* a man of
God, *and* that the word of the Lord [Jehovah] in thy mouth *is* truth.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

[1] Ver. 1.—[The Sept. adds his office, "Elijah the prophet, the Tishbite."

[2] Ver. 1.—[The Sept. has mistaken the Heb. participle מִתֹּשָׁבֵי, and by a slight change of the pointing has read מִתִּשְׁבִּי ὁ ἐκ Θεσβῶν, "who was of Thesbe." The Alex. Sept. also omits the word Θεσβίτης. It has been much questioned whether Elijah was of the Thesbe in Galilee mentioned Tobit i. 2 (see Exeg. Com.). Against this supposition is the fact that the Jews of our Lord's time believed that "out of Galilee ariseth no prophet" (Jno. vii. 52).

[3] Ver. 1.—[כִּי אִם־לְפִי דְבָרִי] is strongly emphatic: *nisi ego et non alius vir, etiamsi propheta sit vel prophetam mentiatur, dixero*, Seb. Schm.

[4] Ver. 3.—[The phrase עַל־פְּנֵי, the ambiguity of which is exactly rendered in the English "before," allows either the opinion that the brook was on the east of the Jordan (Euseb., Jerome, v. Raumer, &c., with whom our author), or that it was on the west (Reland, Robinson, &c.)

[5] Ver. 4.—[עֹרְבִים] is translated *ravens* in all the VV. except the Arab.; yet so important a commentator as S. Jerome says: *Orbim accolæ villæ in finibus Arabum, Eliæ dederunt alimenta.* But see Exeg. Com.

[6] Ver. 6.—[The Vat. Sept. says the ravens brought bread in the morning and flesh in the evening.

[7] Ver. 7.—[The Heb. word here used for rain, גֶּשֶׁם, is the same as in ver. 14 and in xviii. 41, but different from מָטָר coupled with dew, in ver. 1. It denotes *heavy rain.*

[8] Ver. 12.—[The Sept. curiously has here and in ver. 18 τέκνοις in the plural.

[9] Ver. 14.—[The form in the text תתן is pointed by the Masorets and marked in the k'ri as to be understood תֵּת. It may, however, be considered as the *infin.* תֵּת with reduplicated syllable תֵּן and read תֵּתֵּן. See Ewald Krit. Gramm. § 238 c.—F. G.]

[10] Ver. 15.—The k'ri היא־והוא in place of the k'tib הוא־והיא is unnecessary. Maurer: *Accentus major voci* ותאכל *adponendus, post* ותאכל *vero cogitatione repetendum est edebat s. edebant.* According to Keil, the feminine form ותאכל is to be taken as an indefinite neuter: and it, he and she, ate. [The reading of the k'ri, however, is sustained by many MSS.

[11] Ver. 19.—[עֲלִיָּה] = ὑπερῷον, the upper chamber which is often built upon the roof of Oriental houses, and to which there was access without passing through the house.

[12] Ver. 21.—[וַיִּתְמֹדֵד] lit. "he measured himself," *i. e.* stretched himself.

[13] Ver. 23.—[The Vat. Sept. omits the greater part of ver. 22 and the first clause of ver. 23.—F. G.]

PRELIMINARY.

The history of the prophet Elijah, which begins with the chapter now before us, is continued in chapters xviii., xix., xxi., 2 Kings i., and is brought to a conclusion in 2 Kings ii., belongs, as is known, not only to the weightiest portions of our own, but of the Old Testament historical books generally. Hence it has been the object frequently, both of special theological inquiry and also of devotional consideration. In this respect we name here: Eichhorn: *Ueber die Prophetensagen aus dem Reiche Israel* (*in der allgem. Bibliothek der bibl. Literatur* IV. 2 *s.* 193 *sq.*). Niemeyer: *Charakteristik der Bibel* V. *s.* 257 *sq.* Knobel: *Der Prophetismus der Hebräer* II. *s.* 73 *sq.* Rödiger: *In der Hall. Encyclopädie* Bd. 33 *s.* 320. Köster: *Die Propheten des Alten und Neuen Testaments, s.* 70 *sq.* Winer: *R.-W.-B.* I. *s.* 317 *sq.* Ewald: *Geschichte Israels* III. *s.* 485 *sq. und* 533 *sq.* Kurtz, in Herzog's *R.-E.* III. *s.* 754 *sq.* Sartorius: *Elias und Elisa*, 3. *Heft der Vorträge über die Propheten*, Basel, 1862. Menken: *Christliche Homilien über die Geschichte des Propheten Elias*, 2 Bd. *der gesammelten Schriften*, Bremen, 1858. (These 1798 homilies are, as the preface rightly remarks, "a complete ascetic commentary." They are to this day unsurpassed, and belong to what is best that has ever been said and written upon Elijah.) Fr. W. Krummacher: *Elias der Thisbiter*, 4. Ausg.. Elberf., 1851. K. M. Wirth: *Das Leben des Propheten Elias, Predigten*, Bern, 1863. F. Bender: *Alttestamentliche Lebensbilder in Predigten*, 3. Bändchen: *Die Propheten Elias und Elisa*, Stuttgart, 1858. [See also Dean

Stanley: *Jewish Church*, Lecture xxx. F. D. Maurice: *Prophets and Kings of the Old Testament*, Sermon viii. Bp. Hall: *Contemplations*, &c., Book xvii. 6, 7, 8. F. W. Robertson: *Sermons*, Second Series, vi.—E. H.]

Besides the sections in our books just referred to, we have no further accounts of the history of Elijah. As his activity was limited to the kingdom of Israel, the Chronicles, which are occupied specially with the kingdom of Judah, furnish no parallel accounts. They make no mention of Elijah, except that he wrote a letter to king Joram (2 Chron. xxi. 12 *sq.*), of which, however, we find nothing in our books. Elsewhere in the Old Testament, Elijah is mentioned but once (Mal. iv. 5). How high he stood in the estimation of the later Jews may be learned from the praise of him in the Wisdom of Solomon (xlviii. 1-12). In the New Testament no prophet is mentioned and extolled so frequently as Elijah: whence certainly it follows that in the time of Christ and of the Apostles generally, a high significance was attached to him in the sphere of the history of redemption. Rabbinical tradition supplements indeed the history of the prophets, but its statements are so marvellous, and in part so absurd (*Cf.* Schöttgen, *Hor. heb.* II., p. 533; Eisenmenger, *Entdecktes Judenthum* II. *s.* 401 *sq.*), that not the slightest historical value can be conceded to them. They certainly show, however, the extraordinary estimation in which then and always Elijah stood amongst the Jews. Origen, Jerome, and Eusebius mention apocryphal accounts of Elijah, and even the Mohammedans have their fables about him (See Winer *s.* 320 and Ewald *s.* 548).

In respect now of the narrations in our books, as to form and contents, they are so unmistakably distinguishable from the chapters which precede, and which are inserted amongst them (xv., xvi., xx., and xxii.), as to place it beyond doubt that they belong to another documentary source, the work assuredly of some prophet, and probably incorporated into the great historical collection in the hands of our author (see Introd. § 2). Lately, distinctions between the different accounts have been made; and it has been maintained that they are the product of different periods. According to Ewald, chap. xxi. is the most ancient, and 2 Kings chap. i. 2-17 the latest section (so Thenius also in respect of the latter); but that the main portion, (chaps. xvii., xviii., xix., 2 Kings ii. 1-18) was written by one person, who lived at the close of the eighth or the beginning of the seventh century, *i. e.*, some two hundred years after Elijah. This view rests, however, upon a completely unjustifiable perversion of the history, by virtue of which the punishment of Naboth (chap. xxi.) decided the whole turn of affairs in Israel. When the author of the main portion of the narrative lived cannot be determined. That "he *cannot* have lived before the end of the eighth or the first half of the seventh century," is an assumption which rests only upon the undemonstrated opinion of the unhistorical character of the story of Elijah in general, but which does not necessarily follow from this. Who in that period, far from being an insignificant one, could have been the author?

Recent criticism, on account of the "accumulation of the miraculous" in the expositions of the life and work of Elijah contained in our books, pronounces it more or less unhistorical. At first the attempt was made to explain this miraculous element away by giving to the events concerned a merely natural coloring (*cf. Exeget. Handbuch des Alt. Testaments*, 8 and 9; St. Bauer, *Hebr. Mythologie* II. *s.* 156 *sq.* and *Gesch. der hebr Nation* II. *s.* 406 *sq.; Ausführliche Erklärung der Wunder* II. *s.* 148), but, as Winer mildly expresses it, "not with a very felicitous result," examples of which shall be cited below. Subsequently this was entirely abandoned. The view now current takes this form: we have before us here, "not history strictly speaking, but a tradition-sketch;" the entire delineation wears often "a wholly fabulous character" (Thenius), and is hence full of "the marvellous" (Winer), and yet "the fabulous is so closely connected with the historical that it is scarcely possible to separate the one from the other in all particulars" (Rödiger, Knobel). The latest way of looking at the matter goes still farther, claiming that the documentary source employed by our author "is a poetico-prophetic work of a later age, in which the image of such an extraordinary phenomenon as Elijah had gradually become stronger and more colossal," that in this work, still further, "older narratives and treatises were manifestly made use of," only "the author, conceiving of everything with poetic loftiness, lifted up the reader even to a height often dizzy, has formed anew the whole history of Elijah and of his time." It is "a wonderful, creative representation of the sublimest prophetic truths," and "is freed besides of every fetter of prosaic historical material" (Ewald, *l. c.*, *s.* 534 *sq.*, whose words Eisenlohr, as usual, repeats). Bunsen has expressed this view in the sharpest way (*Bibelwerk für die Gemeinde* V. 2, *s.* 540. *sq.*): "The whole narration of the life of Elijah is a firmly welded popular epic in its execution, from the beginning to end . . . for the wonderful power of this spirit and for his astonishing manifestations our poem serves better than a dry narration of the actual occurrences. It is the fruit of an inspiration which he, like some superhuman being as it were, awakened in his disciples. Nothing but boundless ignorance, or, where historical criticism has not died out, only an hierarchical-dilettanti reaction, foolhardy hypocrisy or weak-headed fanaticism, would wish to demand the faith of the Christian community in the historic truth of these miracles as if they had actually taken place." Reserving details for the particular statements, we remark as follows, in a general way, upon these various modes of view of the new criticism.

(*a*) In respect of "the accumulation of the miraculous," from which the new criticism generally, in disputing the historical character of the account about Elijah, proceeds, Kurtz says—"It must be confessed that these miracles, partly at least, are surprising through their outwardness, and that, were we justified in supposing that mythical embellishments entered into the biblical history at all, here (and in Elisha's story) more than anywhere else would they be found." If indeed it be presupposed that a miracle is an impossibility, and is to be relegated, consequently, to the sphere of legend or of fiction, the history of Elijah must appear certainly as legendary and unhistorical. But if this be not presupposed, the frequent manifestation of the miraculous in this history cannot surprise us. The entire history (*Heilsgeschichte*) of the Old and New

Testament, as the actual revelation of the living, holy God, who is infinitely above all natural, finite being, is a great continuous miracle, and is likewise the soil in which all miracles, in particular, are rooted. But as it has, like every other history, its main epochs, which form the gathering-points of its development, so it is agreeable to its nature, that just at these very points the miraculous should appear stronger, more distinctly and more frequently, and the appearance of any person who stands at the apex of a new epoch should be accompanied by miracles. The concentration of revelation leads, in the nature of the case, to a concentration of the miraculous, and moreover, in a way which corresponds with the steps in the development of the people, and the position of the person who leads them. Such was the case with Moses, the founder of the Covenant, and with Christ its finisher, and it would be surprising if in the case of Elijah, the restorer of the Covenant (see below, Historical and Ethical), miracle should not be present. Ewald confesses this when (*s.* 510) he says: "The sphere of religion is always that of wonder, while that of strong faith in the being and agency of heavenly powers is in action as well as experience; where also there is the strongest intensity of true religion, there will such wonders in part actually take place through the activity of the believing spirit, and in part will be experienced, at least, by believing hearts . . . In so far were the days of Elijah and of Elisha, then, when the true religion was compelled to maintain itself most stringently against its internal foes, as rich in wonders as of old the days of Moses and of Joshua had been." Sartorius also justly remarks: "The activity of these prophets of an older time did not consist in testimonies simply by word of mouth, in long speeches and extended discourses, like those of the later prophets, but in deeds laid upon them by God, wrought by them in the strength of God, which they taught people rightly to understand only, in brief statement, as a sign from the Lord. . . . Especially was the falling away at that time at such a pass that the conversion of souls could not be accomplished by words simply, but by demonstrations of the power of the living God, and these we see now in the miracles of Elijah." What Christ says in John v. 36 of His works, is true, mutatis mutandis, of Elijah. They were signs and witnesses, and there can be no discussion here of a surprising "outwardness" in any particular. They have all a spiritual kernel, and often speak deeper and louder than words. The proof of this devolves upon the exegesis. If the legendary be so cemented with the historical, as the new criticism confesses, that it is "impossible" to separate them, the accounts generally can have no historic worth, and it would be more consistent, critically, to explain them as fiction. For the rest, supposing that tradition has added this or that, it by no means follows, as has been assumed, that *all* the miraculous belongs to the legendary only, and is unhistorical. The miraculous which the Jewish tradition has grafted upon the biblical accounts is of the sort which can be readily distinguished from that which in the Bible itself is explained away as legendary. But never would a tradition, running out into what is irregular and extraordinary, have been formed, had Elijah's appearing been without any miracle.

(*b*) The notion that the accounts of Elijah are portions of a larger poetical work, in fact a national epic, does away readily with many difficulties, but at the same time is involved in irreconcilable contradictions. No one can deny that the author of our books wished to write an historical work. Had he regarded the history of Elijah, as contained in his documentary sources, not as history but as "fiction," he would not have incorporated it into his work, and have placed it side by side with the other documents to which he appealed. Least of all would he have done this in a main portion, in the history of *the* prophet who makes an epoch in the history of the monarchy, yea, of the theocracy of the Old Covenant. Of course, if he held that to be history which he incorporated into his own work he would have claimed in its behalf acceptance upon the part of his readers. If, finally, it were "fiction," that objection of "unlimited ignorance," absence of "historic sense," "foolhardy hypocrisy," or "weak-headed fanaticism" would before all strike him, and he would, at the same time, disclaim for his whole history all trustworthiness and credibility. If the documentary source belonged to the end of the eighth or the beginning of the seventh century, then for the space of two hundred years, down to the days of our author, no one remarked that it did not contain history, but was only a fiction. The history of Israel was likewise the history of the divine revelation, and consequently a matter not for the poets but for the prophets (see Introd. § 2), and nothing can be more certain than that the prophet who composed the documentary source, did not mean to write a popular epic, but history. But apart from every other consideration, the narratives about Elijah, notwithstanding their peculiar coloring, are not related to the remaining portions of our books as poetry to prose. The extreme simplicity and directness of the narratives (*cf.* Thenius, *Comment. s.* 218), the pregnancy of expression, the frequent designation of places, the many individual characteristico-psychological traits impart to the whole an historical impress so unmistakable, that the events narrated cannot possibly be regarded as a poetic costume and "representation of the sublimest prophetic truths" and general religious ideas. Ewald's view, that the author of the documentary source had gathered together everything with poetic elevation, and has lifted his readers up to a height which is often giddy, contradicts flatly his own previous assertion: "How grand everything said of him (Elijah) may be, still all accounts can be but a feeble image of the original grandeur, and the all-conquering might of this great prophetic hero of the ten tribes." If the appearing of Elijah were originally so grand—and "there can be no doubt actually of the marvellousness of his prophetic activity"—if he achieved the "incredible miracle of a complete alteration in the condition of the ten tribes at that time," we see no reason why the author of the documentary source could or would have been moved "to form anew the whole history of Elijah and of his time," "to make an entire new thing," and to "get rid of every fetter in the way of a lower historical material." When Bunsen says, "we have legends, not myths," but adds, "the historical character of the life and of the personality is not at all imperilled thereby," this is simply a contradiction. For legends are no

history, and in the way of history all that remains is that once an Elijah lived and did great things; all besides is insecure and uncertain, is in fact legend presented in a poetic garment.

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

Ver. 1. **And Elijah the Tishbite.** When under Ahab the falling away from Jehovah in Israel reached a degree never hitherto known (chap. xvi. 30–34), then the prophet Elijah appeared and announced to the king, &c. Thenius is of the opinion that the proper opening of the history of Elijah here is missing, and that the manner of his appearance presupposes an activity in the past. Von Gerlach also says, "the history has a great gap here, at its beginning," for Elijah appears as one in connection with whom extraordinary occurrences were known for a long time. But this view is not necessary. It is in the highest degree probable that Elijah lived, up to that moment, in retirement, that his prophetic activity first began with his encounter with Ahab, and that then his history, strictly speaking, began, like that of Mark and Matthew, and of John the Baptist his copy. This sudden coming forth corresponds well with the peculiarity of his appearing, hence also Jesus Sirach (Ecclesiasticus xlviii. 1–12) begins his eulogy upon Elijah with the words: "Then stood up Elias the prophet as fire, and his word burned like a lamp. He brought a sore famine upon them," &c. The name אֵלִיָּהוּ or אֵלִיָּה (2 Kings i. 3 *sq.*), *i. e.*, not, according to the old interpreters: My strength is Jehovah, but: My God is Jehovah, refers to the life's calling of the prophet, which was to bear witness against Jehovah as the one true God over against Baal. It is not at all likely that he gave this significant name to himself (Thenius). In chap. xxi. 17 he is called the *Tishbite* without any addition. In Tob. i. 2 only, is *Θίσβη*, a place, mentioned, "which is at the right hand of that city which is called properly Naphtali, in Galilee above Aser." As there is no mention anywhere of a place of that name, this must be the Thisbe. The addition מִתֹּשָׁבֵי גִלְעָד says that Elijah of Thisbe was born in Galilee, but was living in Gilead, in the land lying over against Ephraim, on the other side of Jordan. Instead of מִתֹּשָׁבֵי Ewald, Thenius, and Kurtz wish, after the Sept. (*ὁ Θεσβίτης ὁ ἐκ Θεσσεβῶν τῆς Γαλαάδ*), to read מִתִּשְׁבֵּי, so that the sense would be, the Tishbite, namely, of the Thisbe which is in Gilead, but which is not the Thisbe in Galilee, mentioned in Tob. i. 2. But there is no proof that there was a Thisbe in Gilead. Even תּוֹשָׁב does not force us to this reading: for it does not designate a stranger, *i. e.*, a non-Israelite, but one who had wandered off into another tribe, and was dwelling there, like the still stronger גֵּר in Judges xvii. 7 of the Levite who was of Bethlehem in Judah, and had settled himself in Ephraim. That the generally *plene* written תּוֹשָׁב stands here without ו makes nothing against the Masoretic punctuation (Keil on the place). Whether Elijah came from the unknown Thisbe in Galilee, or from the equally unknown Thisbe in Gilead, is a matter of no moment, but it is certain that he came over into Samaria from the country east of the Jordan.

Said unto Ahab, &c. It is often maintained that the words of Elijah are the conclusion of a longer conference with Ahab, and the Talmud (Sanhed. xxii. 1) states the occasion and the contents of the same, but most arbitrarily. The prophet surely entered into no dispute with Ahab. According to his constantly observed plan, he appeared before the backslider with a short but incisive word, which he understood well enough without any extended reasoning. *As the Lord God of Israel liveth* is the usual form of an oath, which here at the same time places Jehovah, the only living God, in contrast with Baal, the dead idol. The addition also, *the God of Israel*, stands out in its full meaning: the true living God is He also who had chosen Israel and made a covenant with them, which was now shamefully broken by idolatry. With the words, *before whom I stand* (chap. i. 2; x. 5, 8), Elijah designates himself to the king as the servant and ambassador of Jehovah, and that as such he stands before him and announces the impending punishment. This punishment, that there *should be no dew nor rain*, was not arbitrary and prejudiced, but was threatened in the law for the sin of falling away, and suited the especial circumstances. The fruitful land of Canaan was promised to the people, after their exodus from Egypt, on the condition that they would keep the covenant of Jehovah, and not serve other gods. But in the event of a falling away it was threatened that the heavens should become brass, and the earth iron, *i. e.*, that it should become unfruitful; and this, for an agricultural people, was the direst evil (Lev. xxvi. 19 *sq.*; Deut. xi. 16 *sq.*; xxviii. 23 *sq.*; *cf.* 1 Kings viii. 35; Amos. iv. 7 *sq.*). Never hitherto had the covenant been broken, and idolatry been formally introduced, as under Ahab: if ever at all, now must the threatening be carried into execution. Such a punishment was at the same time an evidence against the Baal-worship; for since Baal was worshipped conspicuously as the generating Nature-power, so was the impending drought and barrenness a tangible proof of the impotence and nullity of this idol. It is not to be overlooked that Elijah, while he announces the coming of the punishment threatened by Moses, and in a certain degree executes it, places himself, at the outset, in the direct position of a mediator and founder of the covenant, as another Moses, *i. e.*, as the restorer of the covenant. The prophet announces the continuance of the drought only in a general way, because it would depend upon the conduct of the king and of the people. He therefore adds, *but according to my word*, perhaps "in opposition to others, particularly the prophets of Baal" (Keil), certainly for the humiliation of the haughty king, who had set himself up above Jehovah and his commandment, and now must feel himself dependent upon the word of a man whom he despised, one of his subjects, but who, nevertheless, "was standing before Jehovah."

Vers. 2–3. **And the word of the Lord came unto him,** &c. How Ahab received the announcement of the prophet, whether angrily or indifferently, is not stated. Certainly he did not lay hands upon him, who seems to have disappeared as unexpectedly as he came. From the more general direction *eastward*, which is followed by the more

especial עַל־פְּנֵי of Jordan, Thenius justly concludes that the brook *Cherith* flowed easterly from Jordan (Gen. xvi. 12; xxiii. 19; Josh. xviii. 14), in opposition to the tradition which locates it this side the same river (see Keil). What recent writers deliver in respect of its situation are, after all, uncertain guesses, and nothing can be gathered concerning it from its name כְּרִית, *i. e.*, separation. The assertion that the "brook" was called Cherith, *i. e.*, drying up, because it used to dry up (Krummacher) much sooner than all others, is a sort of *lucus a non lucendo*. For it seems, on the other hand, to have belonged to the class of perennial fountains, and upon that account to have been pointed out to the prophet in the time of drought. Certainly the prophet was not concealed "in order to get out of the way of importunate prayers for the removal of the punishment" (Keil), for a man of such inflexible will would not find it necessary to get out of the way of such prayers. We surmise rather that his design was to be safe from the persecution of Ahab and Jezebel; for he would be able the more readily to fly into the neighboring kingdom of Judah. It was also requisite, after that great declaration, that he should again retire into the obscurity from which he had emerged, and not appear again "until men were convinced of the truth of his word by the results thereof, and would feel their need of him and of his God, and he could labor mightily and decisively against the idol-worship" (Menken). Since God had appointed him to an extraordinary task, it was necessary, after he had begun it with the announcement of the judicial punishment, to retire into obscurity, in order to prepare for all that his calling brought with it, both great and grievous. The sojourn in the desert was "the time when he grappled and wrestled in prayer for his people, and was himself purified and strengthened for his future deeds" (Von Gerlach). "Most of the saints and great men lived, before their entrance upon their public career, in profound obscurity: so Moses, so Jesus himself, so Paul, who spent three years in Arabia after his conversion. God receives His people first in silence in his school, until He can use them openly (Calwer Bib.). The second Elijah, John the Baptist (Matt. xi. 14; xvii. 12), was in the wilderness when the command of God came to him to appear openly (Luke i. 80; iii. 2).

Vers. 4–6. **I have commanded the ravens, &c.** To command means "as much as to make use of them in the execution of his purposes" (Berleb. Bibel). As the God who hath made heaven and earth and all that therein is, hath "commanded" the serpents (Amos ix. 3), and the clouds (Isa. v. 6; Ps. lxxviii. 23), the sea also (Job xxxviii. 11), so likewise the ravens. By means of these the supply of the prophet with food is promised, not "against their own voracity, because subject to the will of God" (Thenius), but because they have their habitat, and are found in wild and desolate places (Isa. xxxiv. 11; Zeph. ii, 14). As the raven, according to Lev. xi. 15; Deut. xiv. 14, belongs to the unclean class of birds, Kimchi and other rabbins, referring to Ezek. xxvii. 27, explain עֹרְבִים as merchants. But apart from the consideration that עֹרֵב by itself never means merchant, Elijah was not to eat the ravens, and the eating only of unclean creatures was forbidden. It is even still worse to read עֲרָבִים, *i. e.*, Arabians (1 Chron. xxi. 16), or to suppose that the inhabitants of the unknown city Orbo, or of the rock Oreb (Judges vii. 25), are meant (*cf.* on the other hand Bochart, *Hieroz.* II. i. 2). Gumpach is altogether out of the way when he translates ver. 6,—and the ravens coming to him were bread and meat; for then Elijah would have been compelled to eat, in order to be nourished, unclean creatures forbidden by the law.

Vers. 7–12. **And it came to pass after a while, &c.** Not after the course of a year, but after some time; for יָמִים can only be understood of the space of a year when the connection necessarily requires it, as in Judg. xi. 40; xvii. 10; Lev. xxv. 29. Luther's translation: after several days, is also incorrect. Zarephath lay between Tyre and Sidon, also in the native land of Jezebel. There is still extant a village named Surafend with remains of an ancient date (Robinson's *Palestine*, vol. II. p. 474–475). The "commanding" here is the same as in ver. 4.—**The widow woman, &c.**, ver. 10. From the fact that she was gathering sticks it is evident that the woman was poor and forsaken. To test whether she were the person who was to provide for him, wearied by his journey in the heat of the sun, he begs her first of all for a drink of water (by כְּלִי a drinking-cup which he had brought from the brook Cherith is to be understood). As she readily complied with his request he went further, and asked for a mouthful of bread, and observes from her reply, in which she speaks only of her son, and not of her husband, that she was a widow, and also that she knew Jehovah, the God of Israel. Then he was no longer in doubt that she was the person who was to care for him. בְּיָדֵךְ at the conclusion of ver. 11 is not to be connected with לִקְחִי but with פַּת־לֶחֶם: a bit of bread which thou hast (Sep. ψωμὸν ἄρτου τοῦ ἐν τῇ χειρί σου). From the oath by "*Jehovah*," and the addition "thy God" it is obvious that the woman recognized in the man thus asking of her an Israelitish prophet, which, indeed, his dress proclaimed (2 Kings i. 8), and likewise that she also knew of Jehovah the God of Israel. The supposition that she knew only the name of this God, and then, "so much the more to secure confidence" (Thenius), swore not by her own, but by the God of Elijah, makes her simply a hypocrite; for no one swears by a God whom he does not honor and recognize as a God. She indeed names Jehovah the God of the prophet, but while she swears by this God she gives it to be understood that the God of the prophet is also her God. In any event she was not a worshipper of the Phœnician Baal and Astarte, otherwise an Elijah would not have been directed to her. How and where she learned to know the God of Israel, we do not ascertain. But it is certain that she knew him. It is not impossible that she was an Israelite by birth, who had been married to a Phœnician. To dwell in a foreign land, with an Israelitish widow, seems entirely suitable to the prophet's situation. The passage in Luke iv. 25 does not suggest that she was a heathen

and worshipper of idols, but that she was not in the native land of the prophet. By מָעוֹג "the smallest-sized bread in the form of cake is to be understood (Thenius). It is baked in hot ashes; the Sept. has ἐγκρυφίας (*cf.* Ps. xxxv. 16). כַּד is a little vessel for holding meal. Oil was used in baking. The woman was collecting the wood to have her last "baking," for she saw before her death from starvation.

Vers. 13–16. **And Elijah said unto her, Fear not,** &c. The prophet attaches to his word of consolation a demand which was, for the woman, a severe test of her faith. Never would he have made the demand, and still less would she have paid any attention to it (ver. 15), had she been a heathen and worshipped idols. That at the word of Jehovah, the God of Israel (ver. 14), she did what the prophet bade her, certainly shows a faith which could scarcely be found in Israel. תתן is the infinitive תֵּת with the syllable תֵּן repeated as in chap. vi. 19. The addition, *and her house*, ver. 15, while in ver. 12 and 13 her son only is mentioned, means that there was so much meat and oil that even her poor relations came to partake thereof. The Sept. in vers. 12 and 13, without any authority, has τοῖς τέκνοις, and in ver. 15, τὰ τέκνα, and Thenius would like to make the text to conform to this. The same author, without reason, wishes, with the Vulgate (*et ex illa die*), to refer יָמִים to the following verse: and from that time the barrel wasted not. It means simply a long while, like Gen. xl. 4; Numb. ix. 22.

Vers. 17–18. **And it came to pass after these things,** &c. It went so far with the sick son that "there was no breath left in him." The same expression occurs also in Dan. x. 17 (*cf.* 1 Kings x. 5), but where it does not, however, at all describe death (*i. e.*, being in a state of death). It would be a mistake to maintain that these words can mean only that he died. We must rather conclude, that as the text does not say וַיָּמֹת it did not mean to say it. Vers. 18 and 20 likewise do not compel us to think of a being in a state of death, and Josephus, who certainly was not afraid of the miraculous, gives our words thus—"ὡς καὶ τὴν ψυχὴν ἀφεῖναι καὶ δόξαι νεκρόν. The illness was certainly mortal, and the boy would have remained in a breathless and lifeless condition, had not Elijah rescued him from death. The action of the prophet is hence miraculous, which he did not perform by his own human power, but which the God who doeth wonders achieved through him. The formula מַה־לִּי וָלָךְ (*cf.* 2 Sam. xvi. 10; Judges xi. 12; 2 Kings iii. 13; Matt. viii. 29; John ii. 4) has, according to the connection, a somewhat different sense. Here it expresses, as the respectful form of address, "Man of God," shows, not strong dislike, or "the breaking up of outward fellowship and a demand for his departure" (Thenius), but distress and lamentation: Is this the result of my association with thee? Must such sorrow befall me because thou art with me? The words immediately following are to be connected therewith; בָּאתָ, &c., which do not convey a positive accusation or objection, but, with the Sept., Vulgate, Thenius, and others, are to be understood interrogatively: Was it necessary for thee to come to me, &c. As mothers, at the loss of a beloved child, often seek for the reason of it in some definite occasion, so here the troubled woman has the thought that the death of her son is a punishment for her sin, which first becomes known properly before God through the man of God, who, as such, is in a special intercourse with God. We can scarcely find "the presumption" in this thought, that "the appearance of a higher being brings undoubtedly death to the person to whom it happens" (Menken after Hess), but rather the erroneous supposition that by intercourse with the holy man of God, and in contrast with **him**, her sinful nature first becomes clear and known to the holy God. As in contrast with the holy will of God revealed in the law, man in his sinfulness knows himself, the same is true also in contrast with such men as walk before the holy God, and within whom His holy will lives and works (Luke v. 8). The error lay in this—that the woman supposed that in the degree in which she had come to the knowledge and the feeling of her sin, God also was then taking cognizance of it, and punishing her. "Folly indeed in the thought, but in this folly what truth of feeling and humility" (Krummacher). This error the prophet sets aside, not by means of a long didactic reply, but by a rescuing action which must have convinced her that the distress did not overtake her on account of her special sin, but ὑπὲρ τῆς δόξης τοῦ Θεοῦ, and that "the works of God might be manifest thereby" (John ix. 3; xi. 4).

Vers. 19–23. **And he took him out of her bosom,** &c. He goes "into his lonely chamber in order to be alone with his God, and to be able to pray all the more freely. Here he pours out his heart, inwardly moved by sympathy at the grief of the mother, and much distressed at the incomprehensibleness and unexpectedness of this divine providence, in humble trustfulness before his God" (Menken). *Cf.* Acts ix. 40: 2 Kings iv. 33. In the question to God (ver. 20) there is no cavil; it is rather the expression of a man wrestling in prayer with God, who does not doubt that God will hear him (James i. 6).—**And he laid him,** &c. How this was done is more fully stated in 2 Kings iv. 34. Like Christ, the prophet of all prophets, when he healed the dumb, and the blind, and the blind from his birth (Mark vii. 33; viii. 23; John ix. 6, 7), so Elijah proceeded in this case. He employs rational means for warming and re-vivifying, not with the hope that of themselves they would prove effectual, but in the sure confidence that God, in answer to his weeping supplication, would impart supernatural, divine, *i. e.*, life-giving, force to the natural human instruments, and this happened.—**Three times** Elijah stretched himself upon the child, calling upon God, not so much because everything to be thoroughly and completely done must be done thrice (three are the true unit), as rather because the calling upon the name of Jehovah in the old covenant was a threefold act (Ps. lv. 18; Dan. vi. 10); thrice in the high-priestly benediction was the name of Jehovah laid upon Israel (Numb. vi. 22); thrice did the seraphim before the throne of Jehovah cry out holy (Isa. vi. 3).

Ver. 24. **And the woman said,** &c. The sense of her words is not that she had doubted hitherto whether Elijah were actually a man of God, but that now she knew it; for she names him

such in ver. 18, and as such regards him as the cause of her grievous visitation. Rather she explains, now (עַתָּה זֶה Ruth ii. 7; 2 Kings v. 22), she is convinced anew and most assuredly about it. אֱמֶת at the end is not to be taken adverbially: that thou art truly a prophet and speakest the word of Jehovah, but as a substantive: that which thou, in the name of Jehovah, speakest as His word is truth, upon which one can entirely repose. The experience in ver. 14 is confirmed here to its fullest extent. Menken is incorrect here in understanding by דְּבַר־יְהוָה "the whole announcement of the truth, all taken together, which Elijah had said and taught during his stay in her house, concerning truth and error, the worship of idols and the worship of God," &c. The expression never means this, but always simply the word of Jehovah which He Himself speaks or has spoken.

HISTORICAL AND ETHICAL.

1. *The first coming forth of Elijah* is in the highest degree characteristic, and, as it were, the superscription, in the way of action, to his entire appearing; for it throws light, at the outset, upon the peculiarity both of his personality and of his public activity. Living until then in the greatest obscurity and entirely unknown, he stands suddenly there "like one fallen from the clouds, to be compared with the lightning of God, like a lighted fire-brand hurled by the hand of Jehovah" (Krummacher), and after he had spoken his word, which "burned like a torch" (Ecclesiast. xlviii. 1), he again disappears, and no one knew whither he had gone (chap. xviii. 10; *cf.* 2 Kings ii. 16–18; 1 Kings ix. 3, 8). Wholly alone, without any power or influence behind him, he encountered the mighty king fearlessly and courageously, not like a suppliant, but threatening and punishing (*cf.* chap. xviii. 15; xxi. 20; 2 Kings ii. 15 *sq.*). His speech is brief and pithy, firm and definite. He delivers no elaborated address; the word he speaks is like a deed. "There is something great, majestic, divine, in the coming forth of this prophet" (Menken). No less striking is the substance of his first utterance. He announces to the chief of the kingdom of the ten tribes, carried over into formal idolatry by the sin of Jeroboam, and now completely cut loose from the covenant (chap. xix. 10), the punishment which was threatened in the covenant (=law), that he may forsake his evil ways and turn unto the God of his fathers. But in this he does not bring to light merely one side of his prophetic calling, but the core and heart thereof. The peculiar, specific place which he occupied in the economy of grace was *to raise up and restore the covenant which had been communicated and established by Moses, but had become violated.* As restorer and reformer he stands in immediate relation to Moses, the founder of this covenant. Hence we shall see, not only in the course of his history is there much that is analogous with the history of Moses, but he appears also together with Moses at the transfiguration of the Lord (Luke ix. 28–35), and both speak "of his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem." They both represent the Old-Testament economy in contrast with Him who, by his "decease," carries it to its end and fulfilment. As another, second Moses, Elijah's entire personality and work in his calling bears also supremely an historical character. And as the restoring and rehabilitation of the covenant demanded, necessarily, an overthrowing and removal of the idol-worship, already deeply rooted and powerful, not only must glowing zeal and impartial strictness be combined in this character so devoted to the law, but also a judicial activity itself. Hence his acts often have the appearance of hardness and violence. The period of his appearing was, for the covenant-breaking, idolatrous generation, a day of divine judgment, a time of visitation and chastening. But in so far as the restoration of the covenant did not concern outward, political relations, but the ethico-religious relation to Jehovah, the Holy One, and aimed to "turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers" (Mal. iv. 6), Elijah was properly *the prophet of repentance.* This, indeed, he announced by his dress (2 Kings i. 8), which thereafter was the official dress of the prophets and preachers of repentance (1 Kings xix. 19; 2 Kings ii. 13; Zach. xiii. 4), and in which *he* appeared, of whom the Lord said, "and if ye will receive it, this is Elias which was for to come" (Matt. iii. 4; xi. 14; xvii. 11). And what was his first word but a call to repentance? Kurtz is somewhat one-sided in his judgment on Elijah's position in the divine economy. He says: "In his official position the absolute one-sidedness of the exhibition of law, and the limit of his vision and of his activity to the present, which is therewith connected, characterizes him . . . . for the understanding of this, his one-sided position as prophet, having to deal neither with hopes nor with promises, we should not lose sight of the fact that he wrought and lived in the kingdom of Israel, not in the kingdom of Judah. Only there, not here, is the coming of a prophet like Elijah comprehensible. In the kingdom of Judah a prophet like Elijah would certainly have taken a different course . . . . there, all would have worked upon him and would have made something else out of him." If this were so, it is not easy to explain why he, in preference to all other prophets, should have appeared, along with Moses, at the transfiguration of Christ, and why the Lord, in the passages already cited, should attribute to him such high significance for the Messianic age, just as the prophet Malachi had already done (iv. 5, 6). It was not Elijah's calling to refer to the Messiah in words and discourses, he had to do only with the rehabilitation of the broken covenant, and Messianic predictions could follow only upon this. Under existing circumstances, this could be brought about only by great, mighty actions. Elijah, hence, was, as we have already remarked, a *prophet of action,* "the great hero-prophet of the kingdom of the ten tribes" (Ewald). His whole career was active. His person was a living prophecy of him who appeared before the day of the Lord, the day of judgment, so also of grace (*cf.* Hengstenberg, *Christologie* III. *s.* 441 *sq.*)

2. *The three wonderful occurrences* which follow upon the first coming forth of Elijah are in immediate relation to the time in which they took place, and which was a period of general distress in consequence of the drought, and it was also a time of preparation for the coming activity of the prophet. And the transactions here brought together lose in this way the appearance of being only acciden-

tal and arbitrary, which might have happened just as suitably at any other time. Far from being mere "miracles," and from calling up and favoring an unworthy representation of the nature (being) of God, they are signs and witnesses of the living, personal God over against the apotheosis of Nature, and the dead idols which have mouths and speak not, eyes and see not, ears and hear not, hands and handle not (Ps. cxv. 4–7). All that is grand and glorious about this God, which the Scripture teaches, stands here before us in deeds. The God who has made heaven and earth and all that therein is, and given to the world its laws, does not stand beneath but above it, so that "leaves and grass, rain and drought, fruitful and unfruitful years, food and drink, health and sickness, wealth and poverty, and all things, do not come to us hap-hazard, but from His fatherly hand" (Heidel. Katech.). He does not lack the means to deliver out of all distress and even death itself (Ps. lxviii. 21): He is near unto all who call upon Him. He does for all who call upon Him earnestly what they who fear God desire. He hears their cry and helps them (Ps. cxlv. 18 *sq.*). He often leads them by dark paths, but "they are mercy and truth unto such as keep His covenant and His testimonies" (Ps. xxv. 10). For Elijah, indeed, the necessary experiences of this period of preparation for his great career, were both a trial and a strengthening of his faith. When in the most fruitful district itself, where there was scarcity, he is remanded first to a desert in which there is an absence of all food, and only a brook which at any moment might dry up, and then in a foreign land to a widow almost at death's door from starvation. But here a calamity befell, out of which no deliverance seemed possible. He acts, nevertheless, in firm faith and asks no question, like the people in the wilderness (Ps. lxxviii. 19 *sq.*), and the more his faith is proved and exercised, so much the more is it strengthened, so much the more gloriously is the power and fidelity of the living God verified unto him. Thus disciplined and strengthened, he first properly becomes an instrument to destroy the heathen abominations and to bear the name of his God before the Gentiles and before the kings and before the children of Israel (chap. xviii.).

3. *Elijah's subsistence in the desert* is and remains, according to the simple, clear sense of the narrative, miraculous. "It is almost laughable," as Winer rightly says, when many ancient and recent expositors, even Rabbins, make the ravens to be Arabs or merchants; but it is not much better when J. D. Michaelis supposes that Elijah had a hunting-ground for ravens, as well also as young hares, rats, and mice, which they would carry to their nests, or had trained them as hawks for the hunt. Others, like Knobel, perceiving the preposterousness of such explanations, have referred to "the like cases amongst profane writers:" "Semiramis, exposed as a newly-born infant, was nourished by doves; a bitch gave suck to Cyrus, a she-wolf to Romulus and Remus; the same is narrated by *Ælian*, v. 12, 42, of hinds, mares, bears, goats" (*Prophet. der Hebr.* II. *s.* 84; *cf.* Rödiger, *Allg. Encyklop.* Bd. 33, *s.* 322). All these myths of children-nursing animals have grown up upon the soil of nature-religion, and are consequently specifically heathen. Their sense is that the power of nature, revealing itself in the suckling animals, is transferred to the child, or they explain how this or that person, remarkable by a special power, has obtained it by the same being the distinguishing trait of some animal (ζῶον). What has this remote resemblance to do with the fact that the God who holds in His hand all creatures, provided the necessary nourishment for his prophet in the wilderness by the occupants of this wilderness, the ravens. Quite apart from their sense and meaning, not even in their outward form do these myths allow of a comparison with our narrative. That which has been adduced in the way of parallel is equally inappropriate. When Jerome (*Opp.* i. p. 239) states that the hermit Paul was fed daily by a raven provided with a half loaf for the period of sixty years, this obviously is but an exaggerated imitation of our story. *Hess* (*Gesch. der Kön. Isr.* I. *s.* 99) refers to the "credible accounts that exposed children, exiles, fugitives have been sustained for a long time by animals," and remarks thereupon: "Such narrations are rarely questioned, except when they are adduced by the writers of the Bible, as proofs of a special divine providence;" but he adds, that in the case before us much remains that is "inexplicable."

4. *The sojourn of Elijah with the widow of Sarepta*, considered quite apart from the fact that it served as a preparation for his public activity, constitutes a weighty moment in his history, because it shows us one side of the prophet which is thrown into the back-ground in his public career, but which, nevertheless, belongs essentially to a complete portraiture of the great man of God. While over against the fallen, covenant-breaking, idol-serving generation he was inexorable and uncompromising, denouncing and judging, threatening and punishing, to the poor widow he was sympathizing and friendly only, full of fellow-feeling and compassion, comforting, blessing, and helping. He there, for the first time, appears great and wonderful, for it is manifest that that harshness and severity was not characteristic, not inborn, but was founded in the special place which he was destined to occupy in the economy of grace. Never would he have fulfilled his calling to put an end to the crime of a ruinous idolatry, and to be a second Moses, if he had shown the same traits to Ahab and Jezebel which he did to the widow of Sarepta. Elijah had to make good, first of all, obedience and resignation to the will of God at the brook Cherith, compassion and love at Sarepta, then it was that he appeared in the sight of God furnished with iron-severity to judge and to punish. "Now since thou hast learned sympathy, go hence and preach, and speak to the people:" these are the words to him which Chrysostom puts into the mouth of God (*Opp.* vi. p. 109).

5. *The narrative represents the fact, that the meal in the barrel and the oil in the cruse did not fail*, to have been quite as much an extraordinary act of God as the previous support by means of the ravens. The grossest prejudice alone can say: "Here there is not a syllable that this was done by miracle: God gave his blessing so, that by the labor of her hands, assisted perhaps by the prophet, she secured for herself the necessaries of life" (Dinter, *Schull. Bib.* on the place). In that case Elijah's promise, ver. 14, was nothing more than an exhortation to industry, but no prophet was needed for this. Knobel is equally unsatisfactory (as above *s.* 81), when in the whole narrative he

finds nothing more than "the view that the blessing of God rests where men of God are." The words of the Lord, in Luke iv. 25, do not at all authorize us to think that this was simply an ordinary act of divine providence. Hess (as above *s.* 104) says: "As for myself, I find the narrative so beautiful and as suitable to God as anything, and place confidence in the old author, when, without fear of any wisdom, whether of that time or of to-day, he continues, She went and did as Elijah bade her, &c." Menken: This whole history glorifies God, whom the Scripture teaches us to know in His unapproachable greatness and in His affable mercy and condescension. A God such as the human heart in the needs of this present life needs always and desires; the all-governing Ruler, the alone-independent, the free master over all nature, who gives dew and rain, and punishing lands and peoples, withholds and takes away bread and water. But the individual man is not forgotten of Him; no, not even the beggar on the highways. He beholds not only the whole, but the single parts: He looks not only into the palace of kings, but into the huts of poverty. The need and misery of a poor widow are not too insignificant for Him; He observes her sighs and tears, and her silent desolate cabin is for Him a place worthy of the revelation of His glory and goodness (Is. lvii. 15; lxvi. 1 *sq.*).

6. *The revivifying of the child*, on account of the prophet's mode of procedure, has been explained as a physician's act. The narrative has, so Knobel supposes, its foundation "in the circumstance that the prophets exercised also the function of physicians." The boy, in consequence of frequent convulsions, suffered a severe fainting-fit, and was brought back again to life by pressure, animal warmth, and applied restoratives (Meyer in Berthold's *Theol. Journal* iv. 230). According to Ennemosor (*Magnetism. s.* 422) this was a case of animal magnetism (Winer, *R.-W.-B.* I. *s.* 319). But nothing is more certain than that the text adduces no proof of the medical skill of the prophet, nor says anything of a human medical act of healing: it sets forth an act of God done by means of the prophet. Before he stretches himself upon the boy the prophet calls once and again imploringly upon Him who can both kill and make alive (Deut. xxxii. 29; 1 Sam. ii. 6; 2 Kings v. 7): Let the soul of this child come to it again! "and Jehovah hearkened to the voice of Elijah." The revivifying is like an answer to prayer. It is not the prophet, as a "thaumaturgist" or as a physician employing natural means, but Jehovah who hears the prayer of His servant and delivers from death. If in addition to praying he stretches himself upon the child, he did this after the genuine prophetic way; the visible human deed served as substratum for the divine, and this divine deed is affirmed and attested in the prophet's. The deeds of the prophets are signs (אוֹת) which represent what God does or will do by means of them, and are more or less symbolical actions (see above). The outward action was, in the case, the sign of that which God alone could do; it is not the delivering, quickening might and power, but only the medium denoting it.

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

Ver. 1. The first appearing of the prophet Elijah. (*a*) The time when; (*b*) the message with which he appeared. The prophet Elijah, (*a*) his name—my God is Jehovah; (*b*) his origin: Thisbe, an insignificant, unknown place, like Bethlehem and Nazareth; (*c*) his condition and calling: he stands before the Lord, the God of Israel. General distresses, like hunger and famine, sicknesses and epidemics, are not mere natural events, but they are the judgments of God upon the godless and the God-forgetting; they are the trials of the pious, and to all they cry: repent and be converted!—MENKEN: Men in general have never been willing to recognize, and are still unwilling to recognize, the fact that need and misery upon earth stand in the closest relation to their conduct towards God; that through their need they may be called back to Him whom they have forsaken, and feel what it is when God withdraws His hand, when they are left to themselves, when the Almighty withholds His gifts and blessings, and sends His punishments and plagues. The God of Israel is the living God because He has spoken to Israel and has, through His word, revealed Himself to them (Ps. cxlvii. 19, 20). God has spoken to us by His Son, the image of His Being (Heb. i. 2), and has revealed Himself in Him much more gloriously to us; therefore Christendom knows no other living God than the father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Who can venture to say that he stands before God? He who, like Elijah, has firm faith, is unconditionally obedient to the word of God, and fearlessly and courageously pursues the path God has prescribed for him (Isai. xli. 10).—KRUMMACHER: It is the way of our God from of old that he takes people, by whom He will accomplish something great, from the dust rather than from thrones, so that it may be manifest how all things happen according to His purpose, how that flesh and blood have not done this and that, but that to him alone belongs the glory.

Vers. 2–9. BENDER: Elijah at the brook in the wilderness. (*a*) How his faith was tried, and (*b*) how it was crowned.—WIRTH: Elijah at the brook Cherith. How the Lord protects and conceals him; how He leads him into the wilderness; and how He cares for him. Elijah in the wilderness. (*a*) Why the Lord sends him thither; (*b*) what he suffered him to experience there.—Ver. 3. Go away and hide thyself. (*a*) Go away. A hard word for a heroic man like Elijah, who has threatened the king and the whole people, and must now flee and expose himself to scorn and contempt. Going away often requires more self-denial than remaining. For the testimony to the truth, the command at one time is, remain and fear not (Acts xviii. 9 *sq.*), at another, go from that city, &c. (Matt. x. 14, 23 *sq.*); they "must, like their Lord, often appear in the form of a servant, and can wear upon earth no other crown than a crown of thorns, and if at any time their power is so great that they can give or take away dew and rain upon earth, and can punish kings and peoples, at another time they must bow and bend, suffer and be silent, and in the eye of the world appear weak and powerless, so that they and others may thereby know all the more profoundly, that the superabundant might is of God, and not of themselves" (MENKEN). But to every true Christian also the command often comes, go hence, remain not where men are serving the world and Baal, where the word of the Lord is despised, and the fear of the holy and righteous Lord has disappeared. [See *The Hermits* of the Rev. Charles Kingsley.—E. H.] (*b*) Hide thyself. In order to be able to achieve his great, severe,

and holy task and to be fitted for it, Elijah had to go into retirement, where he was alone with his God and learned to say, Lord whom have I, &c. (Ps. lxxiii. 25 *sq.*). Every man who has done anything great in the kingdom of God has passed a long time in retirement and solitude. But to every faithful Christian also the command has come, hide thyself, go into the stillness and solitude. The hidden man of the heart, with soft, still spirit (1 Pet. iii. 4), does not thrive in the perpetual tumult and babbling noise of the world. There is no man who has not felt the need of some time and place to collect his thoughts and to be alone with his God; they who avoid such are not fit for the kingdom of God.—Ver. 4. KRUMMACHER: Every way appointed for us by the Lord has His promise, and we need not fear when once we are assured that God has directed our way.—Ver. 5. Might it be said of us all, in every situation of life and under all relations, he went thither and did according to the word of the Lord.—MENKEN: He went in faith along the hard, dark path into the wilderness, as a genuine son of Abraham the father of all the faithful, who knew that without faith it is impossible to please God, and that man can offer to God no higher and nobler homage than to believe in his promises. Who so chooses the dear God, and always hopes in Him, him will He sustain wonderfully in all need and affliction (Ps. iv. 4; cxlvii. 5). Go whithersoever thou wilt, means shall not fail thee, thy deed is pure blessing, thy course pure light. To Elijah the promise was, I have commanded the ravens to care for thee; but we all have a still more glorious promise: He hath given his angels charge concerning thee, that they shall watch over thee in all thy ways, &c. (Ps. xci. 10-12).—MENKEN: Just under these circumstances in which most men forsake the word of God, it shows itself most gloriously to the few who hold to it. When the world despises it, and ridicules the observance of it as weakness of mind, then is it mightiest, and it justifies the keeping of it by means of the richest experiences, which are the assurance, to those who honor it, of its truth and of the power of God. The ravens, which are not accustomed to care for their own young, must, at the command of God, nourish the prophet, as an evidence that even the unreasoning creature cannot move without His will, and that even the most insignificant must contribute to the glory of the Creator, who has promised, I will not leave nor forsake thee (Heb. xiii. 5).—STARKE: In the case of His servants and children, God sometimes makes use of the ravens, *i. e.*, of abandoned and godless men.

Vers. 7-16. WIRTH: Elijah with the widow at Sarepta. (*a*) The dried up brook; (*b*) The new place of refuge; (*c*) The meal in the barrel and the oil in the cruse.—KRUMMACHER: The departure for Zarephath. Elijah's need, Elijah's departure, his grand deliverance.—BENDER (vers. 10-24): Elijah with the widow at Sarepta. Our history confirms the Psalm-word (Ps. lxviii. 21): (1) we have a God who helps, and (2) a Lord of lords who delivers from death. The widow at Zarephath. (*a*) Her lot (widowed, poor, without influence before the world, but chosen by God, Luke iv. 26). (*b*) Her self-denial and her faith (although on the verge of death from starvation, she will share what she can, and believe the word of the prophet as a word from God). (*c*) Her reward, Matt. x. 41 *sq.* (she is not only delivered from death by hunger, Ps. xxxiii. 19; but she receives continuously what she and her whole household needed, Ps. xxxvii. 19; cxii. 3).—Vers. 7-9. Elijah's second trial of faith. (*a*) Depart (one trial follows another, so that the gold of his faith may become more free from all dross). (*b*) To Zarephath in Sidon (from thy fatherland into a spiritual waste and desert, in the land of idolatry, where Jezebel's father ruled, and where the danger seemed greater than at the brook Cherith; but, courage, it will not be so serious, &c.). (*c*) To a widow (who herself needed protection, and not to a rich, powerful man. The Lord will care for thee, rest assured of that, and do not ask how it shall come to pass. Despise no instrumentality which He points out to thee, no condition and no man He makes use of, for it is not difficult to the Lord to send help by means either of little or of much, 1 Sam. xiv. 6. Things are small before God, and to the Highest all things are alike ['There is no great and no small, to the Lord that maketh all.'] . . . He is the true wonder-worker, who can now exalt and now overturn).—Ver. 7. When without thy fault the brook, from which thou dost quench thy thirst, is dried, and the spring whence thy life was supported has failed, let the word spoken come to thee: Wait upon the Lord, who will help thee (Prov. xx. 22); for they who wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength, &c. (Is. xl. 31). The words of Elijah to the widow. (*a*) The request (vers. 10, 11); (*b*) The consolation (ver. 13); (*c*) The promise (ver. 14). Requests made to a man are often the key which opens to us his most hidden being. They who have but little usually give more than they who have much (Luke xxi. 1 *sq.*). To the weeping widows and orphans the Lord always calls, Fear not! 1 Pet. v. 7; Matt. vi. 25 *sq.*; Ps. xxxvii. 25.—Ver. 12. In a heathen, idolatrous land Elijah finds in a poor widow what he had sought in vain in Israel: faith in the living God of Israel.—KRUMMACHER: He who has experienced it knows how precious it is, when one is far away in a strange country, where the roads toward Zion lie waste, and sees one's self thrown into the circle of the children of this world, and by the streams of Babylon, to meet unexpectedly in the wilderness somebody from Galilee, or a brother or sister in the Lord.—Ver. 13. BERLEB. BIB.: Fear not! Ah! How often has a child of God bemoaned, Now all is lost! I have nothing more and know nothing more. The operations of the Spirit of God have ceased for me: the meal and oil are gone! And yet, where there is nothing more amid the night and the darkness, the morning brings something, upon which one can live and find nourishment for the soul, although the time be miserable.—Vers. 14, 15. When the need is greatest, then is God nearest. On the very day when the poor widow, with her son, will eat the last supplies, her distress comes to an end, and she has thenceforth her daily bread. He helps us before we expect, and permits us to enjoy much good.—Ver. 16. The same God who spoke by means of Elijah: The meal in the barrel shall not be wasted, and the oil in the cruse shall not fail, has also promised, as the earth lasts, seedtime and harvest, frost and heat, summer and winter, day and night shall not cease (Gen. viii. 22). We are astonished at the little miracle in the cabin at Sarepta, but we pass over with indiffer-

ence, and without attention, the large miracle
Vers. 17-24. Wirth: The great deed of God in the case of the son of the widow of Sarepta. (*a*) The lamentation of the mother over the dead body of the son; (*b*) the praying prophet and the answering God; (*c*) the joyous message, Behold, thy son liveth!—Krummacher: The resuscitation at Zarephath. (*a*) The divine stroke; (*b*) the victorious battle; (*c*) the rest after the storm. The school of suffering at Zarephath. (*a*) The suffering with which the widow and the prophet were visited; (*b*) how each behaved under it; (*c*) what both experienced.—Ver. 17. Great manifestations of divine grace follow also great trials, so that our faith may be made more precious (1 Pet. i. 7).—Menken: God willed that the good work begun in her should not be unfinished, and without suffering this could not be, any more than it is in our case and in that of all men. . . . It is pure goodness and fatherly fidelity when the infinitely good, heavenly Father sends to His children sorrow upon sorrow, lays upon them burden upon burden, and leads them from one distress and trouble into others. In eternity, He will be heartily thanked for nothing more than for this paternal goodness and fidelity.—Ver. 18. The first thing which the cross and suffering must do in a man, is to bring about an humble sense of his sin; it is the beginning of all true knowledge of God, the foundation of all true piety. Much that is erroneous respecting God and divine things may adhere to a man, but if he have a living knowledge of his sin, and a living feeling of his unworthiness before the holy God, he is on the pathway to a deepening and higher knowledge of God.—Menken: She does not complain of unrighteousness upon the part of God, she does not accuse God: she acquits God and condemns herself. That was the true bearing in her trouble, and so sorrow wrought good within this soul: it led her within herself, and humbled her in the deeper knowledge of herself. And God giveth grace to the humble. A man does not so readily humble himself too much. . . . The more strictly a man judges and condemns himself, so much the more readily is he acquitted, justified, and pardoned before the divine tribunal (Luke xviii. 13 *sq.*). Intercourse and association with a true man of God become a blessing to us when we are thereby led more deeply into ourselves, and are made genuinely conscious of our sinfulness before God (Luke v. 8; Matt. viii. 8).—Vers. 19-22. The prayer of Elijah. (*a*) The contents; (*b*) the answer to it. Those are genuine and true friends who do not show sympathy and commiseration simply when we are in distress and trouble, but who give us a helping hand, and from their heart call upon Him who can help us. Wrestling with God in prayer is a matter which belongs to the lonely chamber (Matt. vi. 6). He who prays only in public, in the church, has never yet prayed truly.—Ver. 20. In our prayer we may express indeed how dark and incomprehensible the providences of God are to us, only when we do so with submission to His will without complaint or murmur, and humbly committing entirely to His will how and when He will save us, in our hour of need.—Ver. 21. In sickness, we must leave no natural means towards recovery untried, however much we may long for a miracle of God, whilst at the same time we implore God to grant power to these means and bless their application.—Ver. 22. Menken: Even if the Lord do no miracle, there are still a thousand ways and means by which he sends comfort and strength, or help and salvation, in answer to the believing prayer of His faithful servants. Each granting of prayer is indeed a miracle, and never is *one* humble, believing prayer of a righteous soul uttered in vain—no, not even when it is refused.—Ver. 23. For the father and mother heart, which moan and lament over a lost son, what could be a gladder message than this: "This, thy son, was dead and is alive again." (Luke xv. 24.) The miracles in the kingdom of grace are as worthy of adoration as those in the kingdom of nature.—Ver. 24. We must pass through much grief and humiliation before with joyful assurance we can say to Him, who is greater than Elijah: Now know I that thou art Christ, the Son of the living God. Only by means of individual experience does each man come to the blessed confession, that the word of the Lord is truth. He only is a servant of God in whose mouth the word of the Lord is truth, not mere appearance and sham (phrase).
which is repeated year by year for the whole world.—Starke: The way to wealth is cheerful giving (Luke vi. 38), and God crowns beneficence with a blest store (Prov. xix. 17). God can bless even a little store so that it will suffice for a longwhile.

B.—*Elijah at Mount Carmel.*

Chap. XVIII. 1-46.

1 And it came to pass *after*[1] many days, that the word of the Lord [Jehovah]
came to Elijah in the third year, saying, Go, shew thyself unto Ahab; and I
2 will send rain upon the earth. And Elijah went to shew himself unto Ahab.
3 And *there was* a sore famine in Samaria. And Ahab called Obadiah, which *was*
the governor of *his* house. (Now Obadiah feared the Lord [Jehovah] greatly:
4 for it was *so*, when Jezebel cut off the prophets of the Lord [Jehovah], that Obadiah took an hundred prophets, and hid them by fifty[2] in a cave, and fed them
5 with bread and water.) And Ahab said unto Obadiah, Go into the land, unto
all fountains of water, and unto all brooks: peradventure we may find grass to
6 save the horses and mules alive, that we lose not all the beasts.[3] So they divided
the land between them to pass throughout it: Ahab went one way by himself,
and Obadiah went another way by himself.

7 And as Obadiah was in the way,[4] behold, Elijah met him: and he knew him,
8 and fell on his face, and said, *Art* thou that my lord Elijah? And he answered
9 him, I *am:* go, tell thy lord, Behold, Elijah *is here*. And he said, What have I
sinned, that thou wouldest deliver thy servant into the hand of Ahab, to slay
10 me? *As* the Lord [Jehovah] thy God liveth, there is no nation or kingdom,
whither my lord hath not sent to seek thee: and when they said, *He is* not *there;*
11 he took an oath of the kingdom and nation, that they found thee not. And
12 now thou sayest, Go, tell thy lord, Behold, Elijah *is here*. And it shall come to
pass, *as soon as* I am gone from thee, that the Spirit of the Lord [Jehovah]
shall carry thee whither I know not; and *so* when I come and tell Ahab, and he
13 cannot find thee, he shall slay me: but I thy servant fear the Lord [Jehovah]
from my youth. Was it not told my lord what I did when Jezebel slew the
prophets of the Lord [Jehovah], how I hid a hundred men of the Lord's
[Jehovah] prophets by fifty in a cave, and fed them with bread and water?
14 And now thou sayest, Go, tell thy lord, Behold, Elijah *is here*: and he shall slay
15 me. And Elijah said, *As* the Lord [Jehovah] of hosts liveth, before whom I
stand, I will surely shew myself unto him to-day.
16 So Obadiah went to meet Ahab, and told him: and Ahab went to meet
17 Elijah. And it came to pass, when Ahab saw Elijah, that Ahab said unto him,
18 *Art* thou he that troubleth Israel? And he answered, I have not troubled
Israel; but thou, and thy father's house, in that ye have forsaken the command-
19 ments of the Lord [Jehovah], and thou hast followed Baalim. Now therefore
send, *and* gather to me all Israel unto Mount Carmel, and the prophets of
Baal four hundred and fifty, and the prophets of the groves four hundred, which
20 eat at Jezebel's table. So Ahab sent unto all the children of Israel, and gather-
ed the prophets together unto Mount Carmel.
21 And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye be-
tween two opinions?[5] if the Lord [Jehovah] *be* God, follow him: but if Baal,
22 *then* follow him. And the people answered him not a word. Then said Elijah
unto the people, I, *even* I only, remain a prophet of the Lord [Jehovah]; but
23 Baal's prophets *are* four hundred and fifty men.[6] Let them therefore give us
two bullocks; and let them choose one bullock for themselves, and cut it in
pieces, and lay *it* on wood, and put no fire *under*: and I will dress the other
24 bullock, and lay *it* on wood, and put no fire *under:* and call[7] ye on the name of
your gods, and I will call on the name of the Lord [Jehovah]:[8] and the God
25 that answereth by fire, let him be God. And all the people answered and said,
It is well spoken. And Elijah said unto the prophets of Baal, Choose you one
bullock for yourselves, and dress *it* first; for ye *are* many; and call on the name
26 of your gods, but put no fire *under*. And they took the bullock which was
given them, and they dressed *it*, and called on the name of Baal from morning
even until noon, saying, O Baal, hear us. But *there was* no voice, nor any that
27 answered. And they leaped upon the altar which was made. And it came to
pass at noon, that Elijah mocked them, and said, Cry aloud: for he *is* a god;
either he is talking,[9] or he is pursuing, or he is in a journey, *or* peradventure he
28 sleepeth, and must be awaked. And they cried aloud, and cut themselves after
their manner with knives [swords] and lancets, till the blood gushed out upon
29 them. And it came to pass, when midday was past, and they prophesied until[10]
the *time* of the offering of the *evening* sacrifice, that *there was* neither voice, nor
any to answer, nor any that regarded.[11]
30 And Elijah said unto all the people, Come near unto me. And all the people
came near unto him. And he repaired the altar of the Lord [Jehovah] *that*
31 *was* broken down. And Elijah took twelve stones, according to the number
of the tribes of the sons of Jacob,[12] unto whom the word of the Lord [Jehovah]
32 came, saying, Israel shall be thy name: and with the stones he built an altar in
the name of the Lord [Jehovah]: and he made a trench about the altar, as
33 great as would contain two measures of seed. And he put the wood in order,
and cut the bullock in pieces, and laid *him* on the wood, and said, Fill four bar-
34 rels with water, and pour *it* on the burnt sacrifice, and on the wood. And he

said, Do *it* the second time. And they did *it* the second time. And he said, Do
35 *it* the third time. And they did *it* the third time. And the water ran around
36 about the altar; and he filled the trench also with water. And it came to pass
at *the time of* the offering of the *evening* sacrifice,[13] that Elijah the prophet came
near, and said, Lord [Jehovah] God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, let it be
known this day that thou *art* God in Israel, and *that* I *am* thy servant, and
37 *that* I have done all these things at thy word. Hear me, O Lord [Jehovah],
38 hear me, that this people may know that thou *art* the Lord [Jehovah] God, and
that thou hast turned their heart back again. Then the fire of the Lord [Jeho-
39 vah] fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and
the dust, and licked up the water that *was* in the trench. And when all the
people saw *it*, they fell on their faces: and they said, The Lord [Jehovah], he *is*
40 the God; the Lord [Jehovah], he *is* the God. And Elijah said unto them,
Take the prophets of Baal; let not one of them escape. And they took them:
and Elijah brought them down to the brook Kishon, and slew them there.
41 And Elijah said unto Ahab, Get thee up, eat and drink; for *there is* a sound
42 of abundance of rain.[14] So Ahab went up to eat and to drink. And Elijah went
up to the top of Carmel; and he cast himself down upon the earth, and put his
43 face between his knees, and said to his servant, Go up now, look toward the
sea. And he went up, and looked, and said, *There is* nothing. And he said, Go
44 again seven times. And it came to pass at the seventh time, that he said, Behold,
there ariseth a little cloud out of the sea, like a man's hand. And he said, Go
up, say unto Ahab, Prepare *thy chariot*,[15] and get thee down, that the rain stop
45 thee not. And it came to pass in the mean while,[16] that the heaven was black
with clouds and wind, and there was a great rain. And Ahab rode, and went
46 to Jezreel. And the hand of the Lord [Jehovah] was on Elijah; and he girded
up his loins, and ran before Ahab to the entrance of Jezreel.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

[1] Ver. 1.—[A few MSS. supply the preposition, and read מִיָּמִים.

[2] Ver. 4.—[Nine MSS. repeat the word חֲמִשִּׁים, according to the usual formula, as in ver. 13.

[3] Ver. 5.—The k'ri מֵהַבְּהֵמָה is plainly to be preferred to the k'tib מִן בְּהֵמָה. [It is also the reading of many MSS. and editions.

[4] Ver. 7.—[The Sept. emphasize very strongly the privacy of this interview: "And Obadiah was in the way alone, and Elijah came alone to meet him."

[5] Ver. 21.—[For the meaning of the words עַל־שְׁתֵּי הַסְּעִפִּים see the Exeg. Com. The rendering of the Sept., "how long halt ye on both knees," is certainly expressive.

[6] Ver. 22.—[The Sept. adds "and the prophets of the grove four hundred" (the Alex. Sept. omits the number) from ver. 19.

[7] Ver. 24.—[קָרָא בְּשֵׁם אֱלֹהִים "denotes the solemn invocation of the Deity," Keil. *Cf.* Gen. iv. 26; xii. 8; 1 Cor. i. 2, &c.

[8] Ver. 24.—[The Sept. lessen much the force of this contrast, by adding "my God."

[9] Ver. 27.—[שִׂיחַ bears either the sense of conversation (as in the Vulg.), see 2 Kings ix. 11; or of meditation. The latter seems rightly preferred by our author. On the meaning of this and the following words see the Exeg. Com.

[10] Ver. 29.—[Here the לְ in לַעֲלוֹת is not to be overlooked: עַד לַעֲלוֹת means not "till the offering," but "till towards the offering," *i. e.*, till towards the time of the offering, for ver. 36, Elijah had completed all preparations for his offering at the time of the evening sacrifice, Keil.

[11] Ver. 29.—[The Sept. curiously modifies ver. 29. Instead of mid-day they have τὸ δειλινόν; the Vat. Sept. omits "that there was neither voice," &c., to the end of the ver.; and both recensions make the addition given in the Exeg. Com.

[12] Ver. 31.—[Eight MSS., followed by the Sept., substitute the name Israel.

[13] Ver. 36.—[The Vat. Sept. omits the mention of the time, and the Alex. substitutes the name Jacob for Israel.

[14] Ver. 41.—[The Sept. quite poetically translates, "there is a sound of the feet of rain." The word here used גֶּשֶׁם is that denoting heavy rain.

[15] Ver. 44.—[The word *chariot*, supplied in the A. V., is implied in the אֱסֹר in this connection, and is given in several of the VV.

[16] Ver. 45.—[On the meaning of the phrase עַד־כֹּה וְעַד־כֹּה see the Exeg. Com. It is generally rendered in the VV. literally as in the Vulg. *huc atque illuc*.—F. G.]

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

Ver. 1. **And it came to pass, &c., &c.** The whole of the eighteenth chapter is distributed in three sections; the middle one of which is the chief (vers. 21–40); the first (vers. 1–20) is introductory to the second (vers. 21–40), and the last (vers. 41–46) forms the sequel to the transaction narrated in the second. The first verse refers distinctly to chap. xvii. 1. It states when and how the drought announced by Elijah came to an end. The statement in Luke iv. 25, and in James v. 17,

according to which it did not rain for the space of three years and six months, seems to contradict the words *in the third year*. The same statement occurs also in the tractate Jalkut Schimoni; hence several interpreters (Schmidt, Michaelis, Keil) adopt the rabbinical conjecture that Elijah was a year at the brook Cherith, and that he remained two years in Sarepta, and that in the third year Jehovah's command came to him to show himself unto Ahab. But it is very improbable that Elijah remained a whole year (מִקֵּץ יָמִים, chap. xvii. 7, cannot mean this) at Cherith, and that the reckoning should be made from the sojourn at Sarepta to the date of his reappearing, and not from his announcement of the drought, to which the text refers so explicitly. Benson regards the New Testament statement as a complete settlement of the Jewish tradition. As in each year there are two rainy seasons, so the six months before the prediction (chap. xvii. 1), in which it did not rain, are taken into the account, while, in our passage, the reckoning is from the second rainy season. According to Lange (on James v. 17), the equalization lies in this, that in the account in 1 Kings xviii. the exact period of the famine is stated; but it is very natural that the famine should have begun a year after the prediction of the drought, *i. e.*, after the failure of the early and of the latter rain. In this first year the people still lived on the harvest of the preceding year. The וְ in וְאֶתְּנָה is not = that (Luther, Vulg.) nor = for, but, as in Gen. xvii. 20; Deut. xv. 6 = and then. When Ewald says that after another year of drought "Ahab himself at last called Elijah back," he is in direct contradiction with the words, Go hence and show thyself to Ahab, as also with vers. 9 *sq.*

Vers. 2–6. **And there was a sore famine in Samaria.** From here to ver. 6 there is a parenthetical remark, for "an explanation of the circumstances which brought about the meeting between Elijah and Ahab" (Keil). Even in the residence in Samaria the famine was so pressing during the drought that the king himself, with his "palace-master" (see on chap. iv. 6)—"the governor of his house"—traversed the land to find food for his horses and mules. "Entirely without reference to the Old Testament, Menandros (Joseph. *Antiq.* 8, 13, 2) makes mention of a severe drought of a year under the Syrian king Ithobal, a contemporary of Ahab" (Ewald). The name *Obadiah* is a proper name of frequent occurrence in the Old Testament (1 Chron. iii. 21; vii. 3; viii. 38; ix. 16; 2 Chron. xvii. 7; xxxiv. 12; Ezra viii. 9, &c.), and does not here, on account of ver. 4, mean, as Thenius supposes, "chosen." *The prophets* who are mentioned in ver. 4 were, for the most part, "prophet-scholars," *i. e.*, members of the association of the prophets (Prophetenvereine), *cf.* on 2 Kings ii. If Obadiah alone delivered a hundred, their number must have been considerable. Their persecution and extermination was the work of the fanatical, idolatrous Jezebel, whom Ahab allowed to rule and manage. Hess and Menken suppose that she was incited thereto by her idolatrous priests, who represented to her that the public calamity would not end until the prophets, from the secret influence of whom it proceeded, were put out of the way. This conjecture, however, is not necessary. on account of the character of Jezebel, who, from the start, was bent upon the abolition of the Jehovah-worship. The *caverns* in which Obadiah concealed the prophets were certainly not near Samaria, but were, perhaps, on Mount Carmel, "which is full of clefts and grottoes" (Winer, *R.-W.-B.* I. *s.* 212).

Vers. 7–16. **And as Obadiah was in the way,** &c. He recognized the prophet at once by his peculiar clothing (*cf.* 2 Kings i. 7, 8). The profound reverence which he showed to him allows us to conclude that there was a personal acquaintance, and, in any event, it is an evidence of the high consideration in which even then Elijah was held, at least upon the part of the worshippers of Jehovah, which could scarcely be accounted for only on the ground of his prediction of the drought (chap. xvii. 1). The words הַאַתָּה זֶה cannot be translated, Art thou not my lord Elijah? (Luther), or with the Sept., εἰ σὺ εἶ αὐτός κύριέ μου Ἠλία; for he had already recognized him, and had fallen on his face before him. It is rather a question of wonder: Art thou, who hast been looked for everywhere in vain, here? (ver. 10). The reply of Obadiah in ver. 9 is explained by ver. 12. The statement in ver. 10, that Ahab had set on foot inquiries after the prophet in every kingdom, is "an hyperbole prompted by inward excitement and fear" (Keil), but which, nevertheless, is an evidence of the great bitterness and hatred of Ahab. From the anxiety of Obadiah lest the spirit of Jehovah should suddenly carry the prophet away, it has been concluded that something like it had previously occurred, but which has not been related to us (Von Gerlach, Seb. Schmidt, and others). Keil remarks, on the other hand: Elijah was not snatched away after the prediction of the drought, and there is no more reason for supposing a case of this kind during the interval, when he was concealed from his enemies. Obadiah certainly had not in his mind a simple going away, nor does the expression suggest "a wind-storm" (Dereser), nor a mere inward movement from above (Olshaus., *Acts* viii. 39), but divine power. The concluding statement in ver. 12 does not mean he has not as "a God-fearing man and a protector of the prophets any special favor to expect at the hands of Ahab" (Keil), but rather he believes that, as a true servant of Jehovah, for his own and for the sake of the prophet, he deserves, least of all, death. He does not express a doubt of the truthfulness of Elijah, but he supposes that "he will be exposed to a danger from which God will rescue him by an abreption, while he himself will thereby be placed in the greatest peril in respect of Ahab" (Menken). By the expression in ver. 13, he seeks to justify his refusal to fulfil Elijah's commission, and to say that he will suffer a death he does not merit, but he does not mean to boast of his action, or to claim any reward. The צְבָאוֹת with יְהוָה (see Keil on 1 Sam. i. 3), elevates the solemnity of the oath (*cf.* on chap. xvii. 1). הַיּוֹם means here: at this time, now (1 Sam. xiv. 33; 2 Kings iv. 8), not to-day (Luther, De Wette).

Vers. 17–20. **And it came to pass when Ahab saw Elijah,** &c. As Ahab went, at Obadiah's instigation, to meet the prophet, and not the prophet to meet him, Ahab's query does not mean "Dost thou dare to appear before me?" (Thenius), but, rather, Do I meet thee at last, thou bringer of

trouble? עָכַר does not, as in Gen. xxxiv. 30; Josh. vi. 18; vii. 25, mean here, to perplex, as Luther translates. Ahab lays all the blame of the famine upon Elijah, not merely because he had predicted the drought, but he had added that it would come to an end only at his word, without thinking that the prophet had done this only in the name and at the command of Jehovah. In the reply of Elijah (ver. 18) the plural form בְּעָלִים is not, with Gesenius, to be understood of images or statues of Baal, but of the various surnames of Baal according to their special signification—Baal-Berith, Baal-Zebul (Winer, *R.-W.-B.* I. *s.* 120). Elijah's desire (in ver. 19) probably admits of a closer explanation in respect of its ground and purpose; it was not so much on account of Ahab as to influence the whole people to another course—it was to bring all Israel to a decision. That was the right point of time when the longing for deliverance from the famine was universal. Elijah appointed *Carmel* as the place of assemblage, probably because its situation was central, and it was also near the sea, from which quarter rain-clouds came. There was, moreover, an altar to Jehovah there, as on other conspicuous high places, but which, like other such altars, had been thrown down in consequence of the introduction of the Baal-worship (*cf.* ver. 30 and chap. xix. 10). *The whole of Israel, i. e.*, the heads of the tribes and families, and the elders as the representatives of the people (chap. viii. 1–62). *The prophets of Baal* (*cf.* ver. 26 *sq.*) are the priests of Baal, who were likewise the god's soothsayers and foretellers. As the male divinity, Baal had more priests than the female. That the Astarte-priests ate at Jezebel's table, *i. e.*, were entirely supported by her (see chap. ii. 7), is expressly remarked, because therein her blind, fanatical passion for the worship of idols is shown over against the prophets of Jehovah, whom she persecuted and murdered (ver. 4). When, according to ver. 20, the enraged and excited king at once acceded to the demand of Elijah, this is quite in harmony with his character as he often exhibited it subsequently. He bowed before the spiritual supremacy of the prophet, which impressed him. Notwithstanding his apparent scorn, he had a secret fear of Elijah since the prediction of the drought had been verified (chap. xvii. 1), and all the sacrifices of the priests of Baal to avert the famine had been in vain.

Ver. 21. **And Elijah came**, &c. Ewald, whom Thenius follows on the ground of the Septuag., translates the question of the prophet to the people: "How long will ye go limping on both hocks, *i. e.*, always staggering about hither and thither insecurely between truth and falsehood, Jahve and Baal?" But סְעִפִּים is never used in the sense of ἰγνύαι, *i. e.*, hocks, which translation Schleusner properly pronounces a *mera conjectura*. The root סָעַף means to divide, to dissever, and all the derivatives point back to this signification. The סְעִפִּים, Ps. cxix. 113, are those which are divided within themselves, the double-minded or ambiguous. In Ezek. xxxi. 6: סְעַפֹּת means branches, because these are the divided tree, and in Isai. ii. 21; lvii. 5, the clefts of the rocks are named סְעִפֵי הַסְּלָעִים. The Vulg. hence translates rightly, *Usquequo claudicatis in duas partes?* Keil, "up to the two parties (Jehovah and Baal)." This agrees perfectly with the word פָּסַח, *i. e.*, to go over from one to another, and עַל is here with פסח, as in ver. 26, where it cannot possibly mean "to the." But when Keil remarks further: The people were wishing to harmonize the Jehovah worship and that of Baal, not to stand, by means of the Baa worship, in hostile opposition to Jehovah, he is evidently mistaken. The people rather were divided between the two forms of worship, that of Jehovah and that of Baal; to the latter belonged also the Astarte-cultus, which it was impossible to identify or reconcile with the Jehovah-worship. The persecution and extermination of the Jehovah prophets by Jezebel must have shown the people, most explicitly, that between the two religions the most decisive antagonism existed. Jeroboam's calf-worship might still seem to be Jehovah-worship, but the Baal and Astarte worship, never. The large number of the "sons of the prophets" shows that, in spite of Ahab and Jezebel, the people were divided into two parties.

Vers. 22–25. It by no means follows from the לְבַדִּי "that those also who had been concealed by Obadiah were discovered and destroyed" (Thenius). *cf.* 2 Kings ii. 3, 5. Elijah means to say: All the other prophets have been murdered, or are reduced to a state of inactivity: I stand here alone over against four hundred and fifty priests of Baal; what, humanly speaking, can one do against so many? Be this as it may, the issue will decide all the more certainly with whom rests the Right יָתַר, as in Gen. xxxii. 35; Jos. xviii. 2. To the four hundred and fifty Baal priests the Sept. adds: καὶ οἱ προφῆται, τοῦ ἄλσους τετρακόσιοι, which Thenius holds to be original, but is here evidently filled out from ver. 19. In ver. 25 and in ver. 40, moreover, the priests of Baal only are named. A thrice repeated omission of the Astarte-priests cannot be explained by the rule, *a potiori fit*, etc., least of all in ver. 40; they might indeed have been summoned, but under the protection of Jezebel they might have been able to escape the requisition of Ahab (Keil). As the issue was a decision between the worship of Jehovah and that of Baal, Elijah employed, in connection with it, an *act of sacrifice*, because both amongst the Jews and also the heathen, sacrifice was the explicit expression of all worship. The significance of fire in sacrifice was the reason why he suspended the decision upon *the fire* which should consume the offering; it wafts the sacrifice upwards, and, as it were, presents it to the deity. Should the latter send the fire, this would be a sign not only of power, but also that the sacrifice was accepted and well-pleasing. Besides this, fire, especially that which came from heaven, was the general symbol of deity. Baal also was the God of heaven, of the sun, and of fire (heaven-fire-sun-god). If he could not consume the offering, that would show him to be no God. The *cutting in pieces*, vers. 23 and 33, belongs, according to Lev. i. 6, to the proper dressing of every burnt-offering. After the people had signified their agreement to the proposition of Elijah he proceeded further (ver. 25); and, to avoid all appearance of encroachment or of partisanship, he allowed the priests of Baal a choice between the two "bullocks," as also precedence in the act of sacrifice, giving as a reason: *for ye are many.*

This was scarcely said "somewhat scoffingly" in the sense of "the crowd shall have the precedence! You are the prevailing religious party in Israel" (Menken), but wholly in earnest; he, only one, will take no advantage of the many; they shall not feel themselves slighted. When, too, as he himself knew in advance, the vanity, the nothingness of Baal became manifest, the impression produced by his offering would be all the greater, while inversely the priests of Baal, under every kind of pretext, would have wholly omitted the sacrifice.

Vers. 26–29. **And they took the bullock, &c.** By וַיְפַסְּחוּ the dance customary at heathen sacrifices is indeed suggested to us (see with Keil the passage from Herodian *Hist.* v. 3). The view prevails that limping, "in derision of the unaided sacrificial dance of the Baal priests," stands here for dancing (Gesenius); but neither here nor in ver. 21 does it denote ridicule. It expresses only the reeling to and fro; "the dance, as we may infer from its climax in vers. 28, 29, may have had somewhat of the bacchantic, reeling way about it" (Thenius); the Sept. has διέτρεχον, the Vulgate *transiliebant*, and here ridicule disappears. This first follows in ver. 27; here we are simply informed of what actually happened. Elijah is not the subject in עָשָׂה; it is impersonal. Nearly all the versions seem to have read, with many MSS., עָשׂוּ. In ver. 27 Elijah urges the Baal priests to cry louder, and gives as his chief reason: in your opinion he is the real, true God; he must be hindered in some way, so that, as yet, he has not heard you. The thrice repeated כִּי heightens the effect of the discourse. שִׂיחַ means neither *loquitur* (Vulg.), nor: he imagines (Luther), nor: ἀδολεσχία αὐτῷ ἐστίν (Sept.); but it denotes turning within one's self, reflection, *meditatio*, and then, also, sadness (1 Sam. i. 16; Ps. cxlii. 3). Thenius: his head is full; perhaps, better yet: he is out of humor. שִׂיג the Vulg. wrongly gives: *in diversario est;* it means *secessio* (from שׂוּג to withdraw, 2 Sam. i. 22), euphemistic expression for: he is easing himself. Everything that Elijah here derisively attributes to Baal must not, with Movers (*Rel. der Phöniz. s.* 386), be regarded as that which the Baal priests actually believed of him as the sun-god (his journeys, labors, sleeping), for it had ceased to be a matter of sport. They cried louder (ver. 28), so that Baal, by hearing, might stultify the derision. By וַיִּתְגֹּדְדוּ, we must not understand a mere "nicking with knives and punches" (Luther); for חֶרֶב means sword, and רֹמַח the lance belonging to heavy armor (Ezek. xxxix. 9; Jer. xlvi. 4). The פָּסַח, ver. 26, changed into a weapon-dance, which custom many ancient writers mention (*cf.* Doughty, *Analect. Sacr.* p. 176), and Movers (as cited *s.* 682), after them, describes more particularly. This custom assuredly has not, as Movers supposes, its reason in the consciousness of "committed sins," but in the superstition that blood, especially the blood of priests, has a special virtue, moving, even compelling the divinity (Plutarch *De superstit.*: *Bellonæ sacerdotes suo cruore sacrificant, cf. Symbol. des Mosais. Kultus* II. *s.* 223, 262). In ver. 29, וַיִּתְנַבְּאוּ is commonly translated: and they raved; in the sense: their behavior reached to a sort of mania. But 1 Sam. xviii. 10; Jer. xxix. 26, places to which an appeal is made, cannot prove that נבא means, in itself, μαίνεσθαι; the Sept. never translating it so. The Baal priests are constantly called here נְבִאִים, and as such, they prepared the sacrifice, danced around the altar, called upon Baal, wounded themselves; all that they then did, and the time they consumed, is summed up when it is said that יִתְנַבְּאוּ; this word does not refer to anything besides. Piscator: *fuit vero quum præteriisset meridies, ut prophetas agerent,* &c. They went on with their various functions until past noon, yet without any result. מִנְחָה is here not specially food (vegetable) offering (Luther), but it denotes offering generally (Gen. iv. 3–5), and here the usual daily evening sacrifice, which, nevertheless, as is to be seen from vers. 36 and 40 *sq.*, was not offered first at dusk, but before it (Numb. xxviii. 4). The Sept. adds to ver. 29: "And Elijah the Tishbite said to the prophets of the idols, Stand back! I will now make ready my offering. And they stood back and went away," an addition which does not at all "bear the unmistakable stamp of genuineness" (Thenius), but is plainly a supplementary gloss.

Vers. 30–32. **And Elijah said unto all the people, &c.** Elijah did not, designedly, build a new altar, but repaired the old one (see above on ver. 19), and meant thereby to show that the issue of the day was the restoration of the ancient Jehovah-worship, for *cultus* is expressed *synecdochice per altare* (Petr. Martyr). He shows, moreover, still more explicitly the object of the restoration and renewal of the broken covenant (chap. xix. 10), in that, as Moses had once done at the conclusion of the covenant (Exod. xxiv. 4), in like manner he repaired the altar "*with twelve stones, according to the number of the tribes of the children of Israel.*" This was a declaration in act, that the twelve tribes together constituted one people, that they had one God in common, and that Jehovah's covenant was not concluded with two or with ten, but with the unit of the twelve tribes. Since the kingdom of the ten tribes named itself "Israel," over against the other tribes, it is expressly remarked that Jacob, the one progenitor of the entire people, had received from Jehovah the name "Israel," *i. e.*, God's soldier, because he commanded his entire house: Put away from you the strange gods (Gen. xxxv. 2, 10 *sq.*). Only the people who did as he did had a claim to this name. In ver. 32 the בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה is not to be connected with the remote יִבְנֶה; he built in the name, *i. e.*, by the command, of Jehovah (for everything that he did, he did no less by the command of Jehovah), but with the immediately preceding מִזְבֵּחַ; he built this that Jehovah might reveal and authenticate himself; as inversely, according to Exod. xx. 24, an altar was to be built where Jehovah had revealed and authenticated himself. *The ditch* was not designed as a hedge, "so that the people might not press too much upon the altar" (Starke); it was made rather to receive the water (vers. 34, 35), as תְּעָלָה, 2 Kings xx. 20; Is. vii. 3; xxii. 9; xxxvi. 2; Ezek. xxxi. 4, means properly aqueduct. Not only was the altar to be soaked, but it was to be surrounded

with water, so as to remove all suspicion about the burning of the sacrifice. Impostures of this kind occurred certainly in later heathendom. The author of the *Orat. in Eliam* (I. p. 765), attributed to Chrysostom, says: "I speak as an eye-witness. In the altars of the idols, there are beneath the altar channels, and underneath a concealed pit; the deceivers enter these, and blow up a fire from beneath upon the altar, by which many are deceived, and believe that the fire comes from heaven." The words כְּבֵית סָאתַיִם זֶרַע are not altogether clear. Keil and Thenius translate: like the space whereon one can sow two seahs of grain. But בֵּית never signifies a superficies measure, but that which holds something; and one does not measure a ditch by a superficial space which it covers, but according to its capacity for holding; hence Gesenius here: a ditch which could hold two seahs. The ditch, then, was about as deep as the grain-measure containing two seahs. The seah is the third part of an ephah; according to Thenius, two Dresden pecks; according to Bertheau=661.92, according to Bunsen 338.13 Paris cubic inches. Without doubt the ditch was so near the altar that the water poured upon it flowed into it and remained there. Elijah took upon himself the *preparation of the sacrifice, juré prophetico, minoribus legibus exsolutus, ut majores servaret* (Grotius). The levitical priest was no longer in the kingdom of Israel (2 Chron. xi. 13; xiii. 9).

Vers. 33–35. **And said, Fill four barrels** (cad) &c., &c. כַּד is a pail (Gen. xxiv. 14) without definite measure. The solemnity and the emphasis with which the prophet commands the soaking with water stamp this act as prophetic, *i. e.*, as a significant religious act, done for some other than the merely negative purpose "of cutting away all ground of suspicion of the possibility of some cheat" (Keil). The form of the transaction shows this. For when the prophet orders thrice four cads of water poured upon an altar composed of thrice four stones, the intention—*i. e.*, the significance of this combination of numbers—is unmistakable. The numbers three and four, as well singly as in their combination with each other, in seven and twelve, meet us constantly in the cultus, where the significance is beyond all question. (See above. *Cf.* my *Symbol. des Mos. Kultus* I. *s.* 150, 169, 193, 205.) But we can conclude nothing definitely, with full certainty, respecting the meaning of the prophetic act. Perhaps the abundant soaking of the altar bearing the sign-number of the Covenant people with 3×4 cads of water expresses what is promised in Deut. xxviii. 12 to the Covenant people if they observe the covenant: "Jehovah shall open unto thee his good treasure, the heaven, to give rain unto thy land in his season;" after, on account of the breach of the covenant, "thy heaven over thy head was brass, and the earth under thee was iron" (Deut. xxviii. 23). Elijah is not the subject to מִלֵּא ver. 35 ("he caused the trench to be filled with water," as De Wette and Keil translate); but מַיִם, which also is elsewhere construed with the singular (Numb. xx. 2; xxiv. 7; xxxiii. 14; Gen. ix. 15); Luther: and the trench also was full of water. There was so much water that it ran over the altar and filled likewise the trench. The question, whence so much water could have been obtained, in such a drought, cannot shake the trustworthiness of the narrative. It is plain, from ver. 40, that the brook Kishon was near, and was not dried up. Its supply of water was very abundant. *Cf.* Judg. v. 21, and the passage from Brocard (in Winer, *R.-W.-B.* Bd. I. *s.* 660): *Cison colligit plures aquas, quia a monte Ephraim et a locis Samariæ propinquioribus atque a toto campo Esdrelon confluunt plurimæ aquæ et recipiuntur in hunc unum torrentem.* (*Cf.* also Robinson, *Palest.* III. p. 114, 116.) Carmel, moreover, was full of grottoes and caves (Winer, "some say 2,000"); if there were water anywhere, it would be there. Van de Velde (in Keil on the place) has proved that the place where the sacrifice was offered is at the ruin El Mohraka, and that here is a covered spring: "under a dark, vaulted roof, the water in such a spring is always cool, and the atmosphere cannot evaporate it. I can understand perfectly that while all other springs were dried up, here there continued to be an abundance of water, which Elijah poured so bountifully upon the altar."—[Really this is very unsatisfactory, and not to the purpose.—E. H.]

Vers. 36, 37. **And at the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice,** &c.—The time of day was that appointed for the daily sacrifice. In his prayer Elijah calls Jehovah, not his God, as in chap. xvii. 20 *sq.*, but the *God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Israel* (*i. e.*, Jacob, ver. 31, with unmistakable reference to Exod. iii. 15). This designation of God points to him as the God who had concluded the covenant of promise with the progenitors of the entire people, and brings to mind the proofs of the grace which Israel had shared from the first. Here where the broken covenant was to be renewed and cemented afresh in this designation, both the assurance and the entreaty are expressed that the God who had declared himself to the patriarchs would now, as to these, so also to his whole people, declare himself. *In Israel*, *i. e.*, that thou alone art God, and as such wilt be recognized and honored in Israel. And *I am thy servant*, *i. e.*, that I do not speak and act in my own cause and in human strength, but in thy cause (Septuag. διά σε), and in thy name, as well in respect of what has happened hitherto as what shall happen hereafter. The הַסִבֹּתָ in ver. 37 does not depend upon כִּי, and is not to be translated, "so turn thou their heart around" (De Wette), but "that that which shall happen is ordained by thee for their conversion" (Thenius).

Vers. 38–40. **Then the fire of the Lord fell,** &c., *i. e.*, a fire effected, produced by Jehovah. The text certainly does not say, as is commonly thought, a stroke of lightning from heaven; and Keil remarks, as against this opinion, a natural stroke "could not have produced such an effect." We can conclude nothing definite of the how of the wonder. To give full expression to the intensity of the fire it is stated that even *the stones and the ground* were burned, *i. e.*, according to Le Clerc, *in calcem redegit.* Usually it is supposed that the earth means that which was thrown up in the building of the altar, but it can also be that with which the altar, built of twelve stones, was filled up (Exod. xx. 24). The impression which the event produced upon the people was overpowering, and must have filled them all with contempt and wrath against the priests of Baal, so that Ahab, even had he desired it, could not have

prevented their destruction. That Elijah did not *slaughter* them in his own person is self-evident; he demanded it on the ground of the law (Deut. xiii. 9). Josephus, ἀπέκτειναν τοὺς προφήτας Ἠλιά τοῦτο παραινέσαντος. It is more than rash when Menzel maintains that the people seized the Baal priests (we must remember that there were 450 of them), and "delivered them to the prophet to be slain by his own hand." The Kishon empties itself at the foot of Carmel into the sea. Not where the sacrifice was offered were the Baal priests to be put to death, but by the stream which could carry their blood and corpses from the land and lose them in the sea.

Vers. 41–45. **And Elijah said unto Ahab,** &c. From the words, *Get thee up*, it follows that Ahab had gone to Kishon, and was present at the execution of his Baal priests; but he had scarcely joined in the shout of the people (ver. 39). Whether the words "eat and drink" are to be interpreted as derisive (Krummacher, Thenius) is very doubtful. The prophet may well have derided the dead idol Baal; but that he should have mocked the king, whom he wished to win over, is scarcely credible, and does not agree with what is mentioned in ver. 46. According to Ewald, Elijah invited him "to eat of the sacrifice offered to Jehovah, and thereby to strengthen himself;" but the offering, apart from the consideration that it was a burnt-offering, of which nothing was eaten, was entirely consumed (ver. 39). Others think that the king had eaten nothing during the suspense of the issue of the contest, from the morning until the evening; hence Elijah advised him to return quickly, before the coming storm hindered him, to the place of the sacrifice, where preparation had been made for his needs (Keil, Calw. Bib.). But the sense of the words of the prophet was, Be of good heart (Luke xii. 19). Israel has turned back again to his God, soon the famine will come to an end; already I hear (in spirit) the rain rushing. רֹאשׁ (ver. 42) does not mean here top, summit, but it denotes the outermost promontory towards the sea. Both Elijah and Ahab went from Kishon "up;" the former betook himself to the promontory, which was not so high as the place where the altar stood, and Ahab had his tent. Hence Elijah could say to his servant: Go up and say to Ahab, &c. To the promontory, however, Elijah betook himself, because thence one could look far across the sea, and first be assured when rain-clouds were forming in the distance. Here he bowed himself down and concealed his face, to abstract his eyes from everything outward and visible, and to turn himself wholly and completely to what was inward. It was the natural, involuntary expression of sinking into the most earnest, wrestling prayer; and there is no reason why, with Keil, we should refer to the dervishes, amongst whom Shaw and Chardin have found similar prayer-postures. Elijah did not wish, in order to be alone in prayer, and so to strengthen himself, to look at the sea; he commissioned his servant with that. Probably he promised to give him information in a very short time; and when the servant, at the outset, saw nothing, he said to him, *Go again seven times*, *i. e.*, make no mistake, though it be a matter of seven times. Seven times is here as in Matt. xviii. 21; *cf.* Ps. cxix. 164; xii. 7; Prov. xxiv. 16. Elijah wished also to be informed of the first appearing of a cloud before any one else observed it, to notify Ahab, and to convince him that the rain, as he had predicted in chap. xvii. 1, would be the consequence of his prophetic word (prayer). Thenius remarks on ver. 44: "A very little cloud on the farthest horizon is, according to sea accounts, often the herald of stormy weather." The doubled עַד־כֹּה in ver. 45, according to Maurer and others, means: until so and so far, and is a form of speech borrowed from the quick moving of the hand also: before a man turns his hand. But the rain did not come so swiftly. According to Exod. vii. 16, and Is. xvii. 14, עַד־כֹּה means: until now, up to this moment. Gesenius: in the mean while; so also De Wette and Winer.

Ver. 45. **And ran before Ahab,** &c. [But Ahab went towards Jezreel.] He had there a summer palace (chap. xxi. 2). The city was situated in the tribe Issachar (Is. xix. 18), in the elevated plane of the same name, about from five to six miles (seventeen to twenty Eng.) distant from Carmel. He betook himself thither, because Jezebel was then at this summer residence, and he wished to let her know the news (chap. xix. 1). The form of expression, *the hand of Jehovah*, &c., ver. 46, occurs also in 2 Kings iii. 15; Ezek. i. 3; iii. 14, 22; viii. 1; xxxiii. 22; xxxvii. 1; and as in all these places it denotes an inward impulse excited by God, so there is no reason why here it should be understood of a wonderful accession of natural bodily strength, which enabled him, as the older interpreters thought, to run in advance of the royal chariot, as it required the swiftest course (J. Lange, Calmet, and others). Over and above the ordinary use of the form of expression, what makes against it is, that it does not stand before וַיָּרָץ, but before וַיְשַׁנֵּס; but for the girding of the loins no extraordinary strength was requisite. The prophet concluded, from a higher divine impulse, to accompany Ahab, and made himself ready. The object and motive was neither to bring the king unharmed to his residence (S. Schmidt), nor "to furnish him a proof of his humility" (Keil), or "to serve him in this fashion as a courier" (Berleb. Bib.); rather he went before him "as his warning conscience" (Sartorius), as "a living tablet, reminding him of all the great things which the God of Israel had done by his prophets" (Krummacher). There "was reason for supposing that he (Ahab) would cast off the yoke of his scandalous wife, and give himself thenceforth wholly to Jehovah. The prophet wished to stand by his side, counselling and helping him in his resolution, and to miss no opportunity when the king, left to himself, might become a victim to the corrupting influence of Jezebel" (Von Gerlach). The servant whom Elijah had with him on Carmel (ver. 43), and whom, on the flight from Jezreel into the wilderness, he left at Beersheba (chap. xix. 3), must have been with him on the road from Carmel to Jezreel; so much the less can we suppose that a miracle carried the prophet thither.

HISTORICAL AND ETHICAL.

1. *The day on Carmel* was the central-point and climax in the public career of the prophet Elijah. If his peculiar calling and his place in the history

of redemption were, essentially, to restore the broken covenant with Jehovah, and to lead Israel back again from idolatry to the recognition of Jehovah (see Hist. and Ethic. on chap. xvii.), it was necessary that there should be a decisive action in the matter; and for this no moment was more appropriate than after Ahab as well as the whole people had become bowed down and humiliated in consequence of the famine of several years, which the Baal-priests were not able to remedy. This decision took place on Carmel; and in the most solemn way, before king and people. It was a day of judgment, and of the most splendid triumph over the Baal-worship, which received a blow from which it never again recovered. On this account, too, this day has great meaning for the entire Old Testament history, and marks an epoch in the divine economy of redemption. A just comprehension of all the particulars narrated can be gained only from this stand-point, which must be kept steadily in sight.

2. *The decision whether Baal or Jehovah be the true God* was not brought about in the way of indoctrination, or by a warning and threatening discourse; it is connected rather with an actual declaration of Jehovah's, prayed for from him. This mode of decision was not chosen accidentally or arbitrarily, but was founded in the nature of the Old Testament economy, and corresponded with the special relations there prevailing. The Old Testament religion recognizes Him only as the true, living God, who declares and reveals himself as such. The gods of the heathen, who serve the creature instead of the Creator (Rom. i. 25), are deified nature-forces and world-powers. Over against these, the God who can create as He wills, who has made heaven and earth and all that therein is, reveals and declares Himself thereby, in that He proclaims His absolute power over all created things, and his infinite exaltation above nature and the world. Such declarations (authentications) are, in Scripture language, "wonders." Jehovah as the only true and living God is hence so often designated as the God "who alone doeth wonders" (Ps. lxxii. 18; lxxvii. 15; lxxxvi. 10; xcviii. 1; cxxxvi. 4); He is not bound up in the laws and forces of nature, but is absolutely independent of it, both as its Creator and also its sovereign. By the "wonder" it is that He stands above all the gods of the heathen, which, over against Him, are but deified nature-powers, absolutely without (personal) power, and can do no "wonders." The conception of the self-declaring and of the revelation of God is connected, in the God-consciousness of the Israelites, with the conception of the wonder, and every extraordinary declaration is accompanied, more or less, by wonders; as the choice to be a peculiar people, the exodus from Egypt, the giving of the law on Sinai, which were prized as tangible witnesses of the true, living God, and were placed beside the creation. As now the decision was to be made upon Carmel, whether Jehovah or Baal (*i. e.* deified human nature-force) were the true living God, so here there was a self-declaration of Jehovah as of the God who is lifted up above the world and all that is in it, *i. e.*, who doeth wonders. It was a nature-wonder which brought the people (especially Israel, inclined to nature-life, see above) to the confession: Jehovah, He is the God! and as here the matter involved was a devotion and prayer, this wonder was connected with sacrifice, the palpable expression and centre of all prayer. It is well worth our while to notice the difference between the Israelitish God-consciousness and that of the modern deistic or rationalistic. The latter knows nothing of "the wonder" and pronounces it absolutely impossible. To it, the just true God is He who doeth no wonders, *i. e.*, who is bound up with the laws of nature and of the world, and, consequently, cannot declare and reveal himself in his absolute being above the world, and in His creative omnipotence. According to the Israelitish conception of God, such a God is not the living, but a dead, powerless god, because he is not lifted absolutely above the world. That God works wonders, and through them announces and reveals Himself, does not rest upon a false, low notion of the divine being, but, on the contrary, presupposes the loftiest conception of God.

3. *The prophet Elijah* appears, in the present portion of his history, both at the acme of his activity as the restorer of the broken covenant, and also in his whole personal grandeur as the peculiar and true hero amongst the prophets of the Old Testament. All that he said and did gives evidence of a courage and strength of faith which is scarcely paralleled in the entire history of the divine economy. To the call: Go show thyself to Ahab, he is obedient, without questioning and objections about the consequences, being assured that not a hair can fall from his head without the will of God. While Obadiah himself, who still retained the favor of the king, trembled before his wrath, and was afraid of his life, Elijah goes fearlessly to meet his angry, powerful foe, who had already sought for him everywhere in vain, and who had permitted the murder of so many prophets; and when Ahab meets him in a stern and threatening way, he is not terrified, he does not bow down, but declares boldly to his face: Thou art the cause of all the misery of Israel. Alone, and without any human protection, he went to Carmel to meet all Israel and the 450 Baal-priests, his bitterest enemies. He does not flatter the people, but puts to their conscience the cutting question, How long halt ye upon both sides? and with the army of priests he undertakes to do battle alone. He ridicules their idols and their whole conduct. The only weapon he employs in the contest is prayer; before the vast assemblage he calls upon his Lord and God, as humbly, so equally confidently. He is assured of an answer. After the decision from on high is obtained, and all the people returned to the God of their fathers, he hands over, resolutely, the propagators of the idolatry to judgment, and his heavy task is done. Then first he beseeches Jehovah, in the solitude, that He will be gracious again to the repentant people, and will relieve them from their distress. When the longed-for rain comes on, he advises the departure of the king, and in joyful hope of further fruits of this fought-for victory, refreshed and quickened, he runs before him to the residence in Jezreel, where Jezebel the murderess of the prophets was sojourning. Independent now as Elijah appears in everything, there are analogies with the history of him to whom, as the founder of the covenant, its restorer naturally points. Like Elijah, Moses also dwelt for a long time amongst strangers, and in retirement receives the call: Go hence, I will send thee

to Pharaoh, &c. (Exod. iii. 11); he concludes the covenant before and with the people collected at Mount Sinai; he builds an altar with twelve stones and offers there a sacrifice; the whole people, with one voice, answer him: All the words which Jehovah hath spoken will we do, &c. (Exod. xxiv. 3 *sq.*); as by the erection of the golden calf the covenant was broken, he caused the Levites, who had polluted themselves by the worship of the calf, to be punished; but then he earnestly beseeches Jehovah to turn away the punishment from the people, and again to be gracious unto them (Exod. xxxii.).

4. *That Elijah ridiculed the calling upon Baal* might seem unworthy of a prophet and man of God, from whom rather sympathy with error might be expected. But this ridicule did not proceed at all from a frivolous sentiment; it was rather the expression of the gravest religious resoluteness and of the profoundest earnestness. Over against the one God, to whom only true being appertains (יִהְיֶה), all other gods are *not*, to all of whom, in common, the conception of nothingness belongs, and who are to be designated with various expressions as not being, *cf.* אֱלִילִם, Lev. xix. 4; xxvi. 4; אַיִן, אָוֶן, Is. xli. 24, 29; הֶבֶל, Deut. xxxii. 21; Jer. ii. 5; viii. 19, &c. The most resolute contempt and rejection of idolatry is thus expressed, which consists in this, viz., that man makes what is nothing, the not-existing, his highest and best—his God. If now it be the calling and task of the prophets and men of God to do battle with idolatry, and to represent it in its thorough perverseness and blameworthiness, it is quite proper to hold it up to contempt; this is done by ridicule, which, when reasons and proofs are unavailing, is the most effective instrument. The prophets have a divine right of ridicule of idolatry, which they often employ (*cf.* Isa. xl. 17 *sq.*; xli. 7; xliv. 8–22; xlvi. 5–11; Jer. x. 7 *sq.*) in the sense in which it is said by the holy God Himself that he mocks and ridicules the ungodly (Ps. ii. 4; xxxvii. 13; lix. 9). As, in the time of Ahab, idolatry was so strong and powerful that it threatened to overwhelm the worship of the true God, so in the moment when a choice was to be made between Baal and Jehovah, the opportunity was at hand to make by ridicule the worship of idols contemptible. Krummacher remarks very appositely upon this: "What a free, undaunted courage does it presuppose, what inward repose and elevation, what an assured confidence of the genuineness and truth of his cause, and what a firm certainty that he will win,—that at his momentous appearance upon Mount Carmel Elijah can employ ridicule!"

5. *The slaughter of the priests of Baal* is in many ways adduced as a serious objection against the prophet, and is characterized as "fanatical hardness and cruelty" (Winer, *R.-W.-B.* I. *s.* 318). But it appears otherwise if instead of taking the stand-point of the New Testament or of modern humanitarianism, we occupy that of the Old Testament and of the prophet. The first and supremest command of the Israelitish covenant declares: I am Jehovah, thy God; thou shalt have none other gods before me: upon it rest the choice and the separation from all peoples, the independent existence of the nation; with it stands and falls its world-historical destiny. The actual rejection of this command carried with it *per se* exclusion from the peculiar and covenant people, and was hence punished with death (Exod. xxii. 19; Deut. xiii. 5–18; xvii. 2–5). But idolatry had never been so rampant in Israel as under Ahab. It was not merely tolerated, but had become the State-religion, and threatened to overwhelm the adoration of the one true God, and so at the same time to destroy the covenant, and to take from Israel its character as the chosen, peculiar people. Elijah was called to restore the broken covenant, and to put an end to idolatry. Through the extraordinary, wonderful assistance of God, he had in fierce battle achieved this result—that the people turned again to Jehovah their God. To make this permanent, it was necessary that an effectual bar should be placed against any further activity of the foreign supporters and representatives of the idolatry. Now, if ever, the attestation of Jehovah ought not to be fruitless; satisfaction should be made to the law, and execution take place. The restoration of the covenant, without the slaughter of the Baal-priests, was but half accomplished. As every ἀποκατάστασις is in its nature more or less a κρίσις (Mal. iv. 5 *sq.*), so also was the day upon Carmel a day of judgment. Elijah there stood, not as a private person, nor as a leader of a popular party, but as the second Moses, as an executor of the theocratic law. The objection about hardness and fanaticism falls not upon him, but upon the law, the consequences of which he executed; and he who blames him must object to the whole Mosaic institution as hard and fanatical. When even he who was gentle and lowly of heart says: "But those mine enemies which would not that I should reign over them, bring them hither, and slay them before me" (Luke xix. 27), certainly still less can it be concluded from the slaughter of the Baal-priests that Elijah was a cruel, blood-thirsty man, especially when proofs to the contrary are at hand (chap. xvii. 9–24). According to these, we must rather think "how hard, how terribly hard this procedure must have been to a man like Elijah; how powerfully it must have gone . . . . against his whole natural feeling" (Menken). When Knobel (as above *s.* 77) maintains that Elijah returned to Israel "chiefly to revenge the murder of the prophets by the slaughter of the Baal-and-Astarte-priests," this is a gross slander upon the prophet, whom not thoughts of murder and of revenge, but the calling of his God, whose behests he fulfilled in spite of the attending danger, carried to Carmel. It is quite beside the mark to explain Elijah's conduct by the "retaliation-right" (Michaelis, Dereser, and others); for that Jezebel had murdered the prophets at the instigation of the Baal-priests is an unproved assumption. For the rest, Keil very properly observes: "From this act of Elijah's to desire to deduce the right of the bloody persecution of heretics would be not only an entire misunderstanding of the difference between heathen idolaters and Christian heretics, but also a morally wrong confounding of the New Testament, evangelical stand-point with the Old Testament, legal (stand-point), which Christ, in Luke ix. 55, blamed in his own disciples." Very truly does the Berleburg. Bib. say, on this place, "The economy of the new covenant does not allow one to imitate Elijah."

6. *King Ahab*, in the present section, appears indeed as saying and doing but little, yet even here

the traits of his character, which become more prominent in the subsequent course of the history, can be plainly recognized. The period of the famine, which Elijah had announced to him as a retributive judgment, did not bring him to reflection, still less to repentance. He is very anxious about his cattle, but not about his people. He does not himself murder the prophets, but nevertheless he permits his wife. He looks about for Elijah, in the foolish fancy that he, and not God, is the cause of the famine, and with the preposterous intention of forcing him to make it rain. His highest official, Obadiah, to whom he intrusted his horses and mules, cannot trust him, and is compelled to fear that he may be unrighteously put to death by him. He carries himself with all severity and anger towards the prophet, who freely encounters him, as one who has the power of life and death; nevertheless he does not venture to seize him: he rather bows before him, as the latter encounters him reprovingly with his brave message, and he does at once what Elijah bids him. He was present upon Carmel with the great assemblage; but that which there made an affecting impression upon the whole people left him, as it seems, unmoved. He witnessed the slaughter of his Baal priests, and in no way hindered it. We hear nothing of him than that "he went up from the brook Kishon to eat and drink." In respect of the news that rain was coming, what to him was most important, he started thereupon to get back to his summer residence, and to tell everything that had happened to his wife. When we sum up all these things, it is evident that he was a man utterly without character, at one time high-flying and impetuous, at another feeble and without power of resistance, occupied only with what is on the surface, without moral pose, without receptivity for religious and higher things.

7. *Obadiah's meeting with Elijah*, which forms the introduction to the day upon Carmel, affords us a glimpse into the condition of things which preceded this day. The thing which especially strikes us is not so much the great general misery in consequence of the long drought, as the fact rather, that in this time when the prophets were driven from the court, and their extermination was a settled matter, at the court itself there should have been a man of the highest official station who feared Jehovah so much that he ventured upon the risk of hiding not less than a hundred prophets, and of supplying them with food during the general distress. The Calw. Bibel says justly: "We are at a loss at which to wonder the most—the God-fearing man at the court, or at the king who tolerated him there;" and Menken observes very truly: "So we see in this history that even in the most corrupt times there are some who are free from the general corruption, who remain in their faith in God, in their fear of God, oftentimes even where one would least of all suspect and look for such." It is characteristic of the biblical history that it brings out such cases into prominence, as in this instance, with unmistakable design. But it must no less strike one, that in that period of the deepest religious apostasy and of bloody persecution, the number of the prophets was so great that Obadiah alone secured the safety and cared for a hundred of them. A long time gone, under Jeroboam, the ordained supporters of the Jehovah-worship, the priests and levites, had departed from all Israel into Judah (2 Chron. xi. 13); and now that, under Ahab, a formal idolatry had spread, the number of the prophets so increased that Jezebel was not able to destroy them all; they were a silent, hidden power, which defied all the outward power of the idol-serving fanaticism. Who does not recognize therein the wonderful ways of the fidelity of God in the guiding of His people?

8. *The recent criticism explains the statement now in hand*, chiefly on account of the miracle narrated in it, as fabulous or poetical. "As a matter of fact," says Thenius (on ver. 46), "it can be seen that, in answer to Elijah's prayer, rain followed after a long drought, and that the people, convinced afresh on this occasion of the power of Jehovah, prepared a great blood-bath from amongst the idolatrous priests." According to Bunsen (*Bibelwerk* V. 2. *s.* 539), it appertained to Elijah "to go through the land as the prophet of the Eternal, and as the awakening leader of the people. . . . In the presence of the Baal-party he inspires and rouses the people, who, before the living spirit which is in man, recognize the nothingness and the moral baseness of the masquerade and legerdemain, and of the incomprehensible solemnities of the Baal-worship, and at the word of Elijah the 450 Baal-priests were slaughtered at the brook Kishon." Ewald (as above *s.* 539) finds in the delineation of the contest "of the great champion of Jehovah and of the Baal-prophets, as it were the antithesis of the beginning of the one and of the other religion, represented not without earnest raillery. They who in their mind and work do not sacrifice to the true God, build the altar, and prepare the sacrifice, and call loudly upon their god and worry themselves, the more vain their trouble, so much the more vehement and senseless it becomes, as if somehow by dint of importunity the thing desired might come from heaven: but nevertheless with all their trouble and with all their excitement they cannot bring down from Heaven *the* fire which they seek, and which alone would repay them for their trouble. Elijah otherwise." The whole is also a prophetico-poetic garment of a general religious truth. Eisenlohr, as usual, agrees with this (as above, *s.* 177). He explains the consuming of the sacrifice by fire from heaven as "a beautiful image for the burning eternal power which is imparted from above to every truth, over against the death which everything fabricated, false, lying, bears within itself;" that "no voice, nor answer, nor heed was there," is "the inimitable delineation of the emptiness and vanity of heathenism, which is overladen with every species of superstition, and is vanquished by self-torture." In respect of these various views we refer generally to our preliminary remarks upon chap. xvii.; in details, however, the following comes into the account. The whole account, excepting ver. 38, contains nothing which can with any reason be objected to as unhistorical. This portion of the history of Elijah especially bears completely the impress of the usual simple Hebrew way of historical composition, and it would not occur to any one to regard it as legendary did it not contain ver. 38. The miracle here narrated is not such as could be wanting without detriment to the whole, and to the further historical development about the famine, as may be maintained in respect of this or of the other miracle; it is not

subordinate, is not a side-matter, but the chief criticism acknowledges that at the day on Carmel "there was a noticeable sudden decision," and that "a mighty upturning of things took place" (Eiseulohr); that "here a victory was won which, at that day, could not have been greater and more beneficial" (Ewald). But this victory was the immediate effect of that miracle, and as generally the day upon Carmel forms the central point and climax of Elijah's activity, so again this day culminates in "the fire of Jehovah," which consumed the sacrifice. All that is said before and after refers to this fact; he who lowers it takes the heart out of the body of the whole narration, and then nothing is left but either to interpret it as a fraud, or to look upon the whole as fiction. The view that Elijah "alone and by nothing but the power of his spirit and word achieved the prodigious wonder of a complete alteration of the then posture of the ten tribes" (Ewald) is most emphatically contradicted by the day upon Carmel. He was the prophet of action and not of speech. Even here, at the climax of his career, we hear only a few isolated expressions from him, but no prophetic discourse with which he sought to indoctrinate or to convince the people. To his impressive question: How long halt ye, &c., the people kept silence; they accepted his proposition to obtain an attestation of Jehovah, but only after it took place did they fall down and cry, overpowered: Jehovah, He is God! Where in the whole history of Elijah is there even a trace that he "inspired and roused" (Bunsen) the people by public discourse; and how does it happen that this people of the ten tribes, who were inclined to nature-worship, and since the days of Jeroboam were addicted to the worship of images and even of idols, and were dull about spiritual impressions, should have at once "recognized the nothingness and perverseness of the Baal-worship in presence of the living spirit which is in men (*sic*)"? An extraordinary act alone could have produced within *this* people such a sudden, complete revolution that they actually put to death the priests of Baal, who were of the highest consideration and under the royal protection. To regard this latter as an effect of the rain which had come (Thenius) is an arbitrary perversion of the historical order. Not the rain, but the return of Israel to their God was the mark of the day upon Carmel: the punishment of the drought ought and could cease only when this end was reached. The rain followed not *before* the "blood-bath," but *after* it; before it rained, something extraordinary must have happened to rouse wrath in such a degree against the Baal-priests. But supposing that the rain produced the abrupt overturn, this itself, "had it followed Elijah's prayer," would have been essentially a miracle; we must then grant that Elijah appears, "when he announces now a drought and then rain, and both happen conformably with his prediction, as a nature-expert" (Knobel I. *s.* 56): but in this event his prayer for rain would have been an intentional deception of the people and jugglery. The interpretation, finally, according to which the transaction upon Carmel is a poetic image of the consuming power of divine truth (Eisenlohr) is a desperate reversion to the old allegorical method of interpretation, with which one can make what one pleases out of history.

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

Vers. 1–16. KRUMMACHER: Elijah and Obadiah What brought Elijah from Zarephath; what happened at this time at the court at Samaria; how Elijah and Obadiah met.—BENDER: The return of Elijah to his native country: (1) the effect of divine chastisement upon Israel; (2) the expedition of Ahab; (3) the meeting of the prophet with Obadiah.

Ver. 1. KRUMMACHER: Let no one imagine that God will lead us into any darkness whatsoever, without also arranging how we may be supported through it. He never calls upon us to walk through darkness, unless He Himself is our staff and stay, and thick and heavy as may be the night with which we are veiled, He leaves us here and there always a gleam of light, which tells us there will be a dawn to the darkness. Hence the promise: I will send rain.—Ver. 2. STARKE: God's commandments must be obeyed, and neither death nor danger avoided. Where there is living faith, there is also obedience and courage (Ps. xci. 1–4). The great famine in Samaria, both bodily and spiritual. Daily bread was scarce, for the land was dried up and unfruitful, but the bread of life, the word of God, was likewise scarce, for the nation itself was dried up, and those who would have sown the seed of the Word were persecuted, and compelled to silence and concealment. Woe to that country and people upon whom famine, bodily and spiritual, both fall, and who yet are driven by neither to repentance and conversion.—Ver. 3. The God-fearing Obadiah. (1) The time in which he lived. (A time of apostasy, of godlessness, and a licentious idol worship. In times when unbelief has grown universal, and is the prevailing fashion, and represents enlightenment and civilization, *not* to swim with the stream, but greatly to fear the Lord, is as noble and great as it is rare; we may then say with truth: "Although all shall be offended, yet will not I," &c.) (2) The place. (At the court of an Ahab and a Jezebel; not in a remote, lonely place, but in the midst of the world, where he saw and heard nothing good, surrounded by godless men, and exposed to every temptation to godlessness, frivolity, rioting, and licentiousness. To be pious with the pious, to maintain one's faith in the midst of the faithful, is not difficult; but in the midst of the world, to preserve one's self unspotted from it, to keep a pure heart, and have God before our eyes and in our hearts, wherever the Lord places us, *this* is indeed greatly to fear the Lord.) (3) The position which he took. (He filled one of the highest offices, was one of the most distinguished men of the kingdom, to whom nothing was wanting which pertains to an indolent, careless life. The noble and powerful often fancy that the fear of the Lord is fitted only for common people, for the poor, the lowly, and the oppressed. But God is no respecter of persons; the first in this world are often last in the kingdom of heaven. He is indeed exalted who, whilst he stands upon the highest pinnacle of earthly fame, can still say with St. Paul: I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for, &c.) Ahab calls Obadiah, because he reposes singular confidence in him.—MENKEN: The world may hate and persecute, nay, even scorn a God-fearing man for his fear of God, but must feel and acknowledge at heart, if not with the mouth, that this very man is truer, more reliable, and better

in every way than the whole throng of idle, wanton, though perhaps witty and polished people, whose law is their own pleasure, and whose God is their belly or their pride. More than one godless king can be found, who desires God-fearing men for his ministers and counsellors; and many a prince, although himself no Christian, holds in his service a Christian, and esteems him more highly than the others who are *not* Christian; and many more than one unbelieving and godless king, who respects piety and the fear of God in the person of one of his generals.—KRUMMACHER: It is not an unusual occurrence that in times when there is no use for triflers, suddenly the hated sect are brought to power, and the fierce opponents of the Gospel are rejoiced to have in their midst a few Galileans whom they can take into their secret counsels. The Lord often has His true disciples and worshippers where they are least expected, in courts and high offices, and they, their innermost hearts untouched, serve him with soft and quiet spirits, without any display of piety or without excitement.—STARKE: When good and conscientious men occupy exalted worldly or ghostly positions, so long as conscience does not require them to lay down their offices they must retain them, for although they may not be able to do much good, they still may have many opportunities to prevent evil.

Ver. 4. STARKE: Good and righteous servants of God can have no bitterer or fiercer enemies than ungodly, licentious women (Matt. xiv. 8; Mark vi. 24). KRUMMACHER: In our Ahab and Jezebel days there is no lack of those who are persecuted on account of their creed, and exposed to misery. Many a preacher must leave his pulpit, many a professor his chair, nay, many an handicraft's man his bench and workshop, because he is a Christian. But it was Obadiah's to make an offensive and defensive alliance! The proof of a godly fear: (*a*) Especially by works (Jas. ii. 14–17); religious words and feelings without deeds are leaves without fruit; by their fruits ye shall know them (Matt. vii. 16–21). (*b*) Especially by works of self-denying love, which are done in secret (Gal. v. 6); by such works the Lord recognizes His own (John xiii. 34; 1 John iv. 8).—MENKEN: Obadiah could not do this without great risk, and the exposure of his own person to great danger . . . . neither, in that extreme famine, could he maintain those hundred prophets without great expenditure of his own substance . . . . . Obadiah not only preserved the lives of a hundred innocent men,—he saved a hundred worshippers of Jehovah, and, yet more, a hundred men who, immediately the persecution was over, and the Baal-worship in Israel destroyed, became useful to the ignorant and bewildered people as their instructors in doctrine. Thus although Obadiah, as the lieutenant of the royal watch, could not do much for the kingdom of God by direct testimony and instruction, yet indirectly he did a great deal, by preserving these witnesses for the truth, at the peril of his own life and at the expense of his own fortune. Thus many people, by the maintenance of the witnesses for evangelical truth, by the spread and promotion of the Christian Scriptures, etc., do much for the kingdom of God and the truth, which otherwise they could not do, and lay up a reward in heaven, if they do not shun disgrace, nor prefer earthly and perishable gains to the celestial and imperishable.—Vers. 5–6. STARKE: Godless masters often care more for their horses and hounds than for their subjects.—KRUMMACHER: Pitiful man! Anxious care for the life of his horses, and the maintenance of his stables; this is all that the three and a half years of chastisement of the Almighty had called forth in his soul . . . . How often does one think of a person—"Now he will be quite a different person". . . . and then, behold! where one hopes to find at length thoughts of God and eternity, there are only thoughts of horses and mules; and in place of holy emotions, instead of aspirations, prayers, and reflections upon the great and eternal interests of life—you find a thick swarm of pitiful cares and considerations which hover about the soul, and hover with it into an awful eternity. Ahab and Obadiah both journey on together through the land, but each goes his own way alone; a picture of their life-journey: Ahab walks in the broad, Obadiah in the narrow path; the latter alone leads to the green pastures and still waters which refresh the soul (Ps. xxiii. 2–3).

Vers. 7–15. Obadiah's meeting Elijah, a divine leading for the strengthening of the one and the proving of the other. That Elijah, journeying on his weary way, should meet the very man who was the only true friend of the prophet at the court, was no more accidental than that Obadiah, going forth in search of provender for the cattle, should find the man who was to test severely his faith and his fear of God.—Ver. 7. STARKE. Obadiah, himself a distinguished man, addressed the prophet as "My Lord," not out of mere courtliness and courtier-like flattery, but in evidence of his reverence for the man of God, and to show that he did not regard scornfully a servant of God, as was the custom with all the courtiers of that day.—He who greatly fears the Lord will likewise honor and reverence those whose vocation it is to make known the Lord's name, and preach his word (Luke x. 16; John xiii. 20).—Vers. 8, 9. The courage of Elijah, and the fear of man shown by Obadiah. Even those who fear the Lord, and walk by faith, are sometimes in the hour of peril overcome by an agony of fear, which bows them down as reeds before a whirlwind. Peter, who first threatened with the sword, became suddenly terror-stricken before a damsel. It is good for us to recognize our human weakness, for this knowledge preserves us from over-security, and leads us to pray: Lord, strengthen our faith.—CALW. BIBEL: Exclaim not against Obadiah, for in a hundred ways thou thyself showest no more faith. Eager and busy as the world is to pursue and get rid of the true servants of God, who oppose their sins and unbelief, they move neither hand nor foot to seek and find them when in want.—Ver. 12. If we permit ourselves to be overcome by the fear and dread of man, our senses become so bewildered, and our imagination so excited, that we lose, in our self-made fancies, a clear view of our own position.—Ver. 13. MENKEN: This is not the speech of an idle self-glorification, anxious to display the good which has been done, to the first person approaching—it is the speech of truth and honest uprightness, the speech of a noble spirit greatly excited, which would not thus speak of itself except in a moment of great excitement. An appeal to any special pious or good actions done by a man, when made not in pharisaical

self-justification nor self-commendation, but conscientiously, and in self-defence, with all humility, is unobjectionable. As St. Paul says (1 Cor. xv. 10; 2 Cor. xi. 21 *sq.*), From my youth up.—MENKEN: So much the more easily then when a man, could he greatly fear the Lord, and preserve his fear of God under great temptations. What is done and practised in youth will remain the rule of old age; so it is with the fear of God, which is the beginning of wisdom. Therefore Prov. vi. 20-23; *cf.* 2 Tim. iii. 15.—Vers. 15-16. A strong resolute word of faith exercises power over the heart: it strengthens the weak, supports the tottering, encourages the fearful, and tranquillizes the anxious-minded. —STARKE: A teacher must not shrink from his office through fear or cowardice, let tyrants look grim as they may (1 Pet. iii. 14).

Vers. 17-20. KRUMMACHER: Salvation out of the very lion's jaws. (*a*) The wonderful protection experienced by Elijah; (*b*) the unjust accusation made against him; (*c*) the bold reply which he made; (*d*) the quiet power which he exercised. —BENDER: Elijah's second encounter with Ahab; (*a*) the king's reproach to the prophet; (*b*) the prophet's reply to the king.—WIRTH: The meeting with Ahab. (*a*) The grievance and the counter-grievance; (*b*) the commanding prophet and the submissive king.—Ver. 17. Ahab sees Elijah, but he, the fierce, powerful king, sword in hand, and a great retinue, dares not to lay hand upon the solitary, unarmed man standing before him, for: The heart of the king in the hand of the Lord is as a water-brook, he directs it whither he will (Prov. xxi. 1).—KRUMMACHER: The Lord our God knows how to shut the lions' mouths, and the same God who surrounded Elijah with a fiery wall, who saved Moses from the clutches of Pharaoh, and Daniel out of the lions' den, still lives, and will unto this day be a wall of defence to his children and disciples.—If those, &c.—MENKEN: Men are disposed to seek the cause of their misery everywhere in the wide world rather than in themselves, where only it exists; but it is the peculiar error of the world to lay the charge of all the misfortune and turmoil of the world upon the most innocent and best of men. . . . . Thou art he that troubleth Israel, says Ahab to Elijah. We find this man a stirrer up of the people, was the lying accusation of the enemies of Jesus; and under the name, "enemies of the human race," were the first Christians hunted, persecuted, and slain.—STARKE: When the godless work mischief, the good and pious must often bear the blame (Amos vii. 10; Acts xvi. 20).—J. LANGE: Here one sees the evil fashion of the children of this world, and of great men seduced by false prophets in their judgments of the righteous servants of God. For, though the latter move on quietly, orderly, and circumspectly, yet ever making appeal to the conscience by their testimony to the truth, whilst the former are ever disquieted, though they will yield no place to the truth, but rage against it and prejudice the higher powers against it,—still the latter are the disturbers of Israel, even as the lamb troubled the water for the wolf.—CALW. BIB.: In our days true believers are thus unjustly accused as Rationalists, Philosophers, and Freethinkers. They are called Jesuits, corrupters of the people, obscurantists, and blockheads, &c.—Ver. 18. J. LANGE: This is the true way for a righteous servant of God—let him, according to the necessities of the case and the given circumstances, testify boldly to the pure truth, without fear of man, but preserving all due reverence for authority. Such a testimony, given with due boldness, produces a much greater impression than if the truth is spoken with half covert and mumbled utterance.—KRUMMACHER: This Elijah-speech is seldom now heard in the world. The earth is filled with flatterers and sinners, who not only gather round the palaces of the great, but crowd into smaller societies, and even creep into the pulpits of God's church. . . . . Much greater things should we behold if this noble and wholesome—"Thou, thou art the man of death!" were not entirely dead and silent. Elijah is thus a pattern for all repentance-preachers, in that he admonishes every one, bewailing misfortune and ruin, of his especial ruin (Jer. iii. 39), and does not generalize over common sinfulness: even so did Nathan with David, John with Herod, and Paul with Felix.—MENKEN: Elijah is silent concerning all the other sins of Ahab and his family—concerning their luxury, their pride, their injustice, and the whoredom and witchcraft of Jezebel—(2 Kings ix. 22). He pointed out to the king the chief cause, the real source from which had sprung all the other evils to himself and his family, and wherein lay the misdoing which had brought such a plague upon Israel. The misdoing was this—that they had forsaken the word of God, the commandments, the testimony, and the claims of the Lord, and had followed after Baal. . . . . No truth is more general or surer amongst men than this—that contempt of God and his word brings with it inevitable ruin and decay—and the history of the human race sets forth and teaches no truth more clearly or more fearfully.—Vers. 19, 20. KRUMMACHER: How the scene changes: The slave has become king, the king a slave; the subject commands, the monarch obeys. Here is the concealed sceptre in the hands of the children of the spiritual kingdom, and the skill and marvellous power which they exercise upon earth.—Here it says: A single little word can confound him. We can do nothing against the truth, &c. (2 Cor. xiii. 8). If it strike the conscience of a man, he cannot resist its pricks. —Whilst the prophets are compelled to hide in holes, and live on bread and water, the priests of Baal sit at the king's table and live in pomp and pleasure. So likewise has it come to pass in Christendom. But much better is it to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season (Heb. xi. 25).

Vers. 21-45. Elijah upon Mount Carmel. (*a*) How he rebuked the divided belief of his nation, and exhorted them to a decision; (*b*) how he brought to shame the idol-worship, and exalted the name of the Lord; (*c*) how he executed a heavy judgment upon the lying prophets, and besought from God merciful showers upon the earth.—Vers. 21-39. The decision upon Carmel. (*a*) The division among the people (vers. 21-24); (*b*) the strife of the four hundred and fifty priests of Baal (vers. 25-29); (*c*) the victory of the one man (vers. 30-39).—Vers. 21-24. KRUMMACHER: Elijah and the people upon Carmel. (*a*) How rebuked; (*b*) how he scorned; (*c*) how he believed. WIRTH: The assembling of the people upon Carmel. (*a*) One against four hundred and fifty; (*b*) the questioning of the people; (*c*) the reasonable proposal.—Ver. 21. The halting between two opinions. (*a*) What this means (Matt

vi. 24); (*b*) what are its results (Jas. iv. 4; Rev. iii. 16); *cf.* the hymn book of LEHR.: "Was hinket ihr, betrögene Seelen," &c.—MENKEN: How hateful in the sight of the Lord is this "halting," this neutral state amongst Christians, where one does not yield himself up to God and his cause with his whole soul, does not renounce unholy sin, the world, the spirit, and service of his age. How completely God demands an undivided heart we plainly see where he says to the lukewarm, "Because thou art indifferent, leanest to both sides, and dost not espouse one side, since I will not overlook everything, therefore I will spue thee out of my mouth." —KRUMMACHER: Indifference is the order of the day, now in this, now in that form. Whole-heartedness and determination in the divine life a rare pearl. Woe to thee, thou wavering generation, who thinkest to share thy love and service between God and the world, and dost lean now to this, now to that side. The Lord says: He who is not with me is against me (Luke xi. 23). In our day, the man who holds entirely with Him is esteemed partial; it is thought to be might and wisdom for a man to hover between two parties, and leave it undecided whether He be mere man, like ourselves, or the only begotten Son of God. So that, finally, halting between two opinions is more esteemed than true Christianity. "But uncertainty and lukewarmness are the most pitiable of all weaknesses. Lord, teach us to tread in safer paths! Grant us now a new, firm spirit" (WIRTH). For it is a precious thing to have the heart fixed (Heb. xiii. 9). There is no reconciliation between belief and unbelief; to strive to unite both is a vain effort (2 Cor. vi. 14, 15). The people answers him not.—CALW. BIB.: Thus on many a Sunday does many a congregation remain dumb before their preachers. The people were silent and confounded, since they could not answer, especially to Joshua (Jos. xxiv. 15); but to-day, if one cries out to the multitude: How long, &c., they say, What will the priest? We are good Christians.—Ver. 22. MENKEN: In cases where faith and reverence for God are concerned, no human authority or majority of voices avails; one opposed to a thousand may be right, and each individual has the right to acknowledge and maintain his belief in the truth against thousands. He is lost whose convictions depend upon the authority of man or of numbers. He who intrenches himself firmly in his faith in God and his holy word, must also resolve to stand alone and be forsaken by the world, for faith is not a thing for everybody.—Vers. 23, 24. He alone is the true and living God who shows himself in divine acts. A religion which means nothing of the saving, beneficent works of God cannot proceed from the living God. Christianity is therefore the true religion, because it publishes the great work of God in Christ (Ps. cxi. 6). Not words and doctrine only, but divine works are the foundation of our salvation.

Vers. 25–40. KRUMMACHER: The fire upon Carmel. We see the god of the blind, mad world, and the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob.

Vers. 25–30. WIRTH: The assembling of the people upon Carmel. (*a*) The vain crying aloud to Baal; (*b*) the rebuilding of the fallen altar of the Lord.—Vers. 25–39. The twofold sacrifice upon Carmel. (*a*) The sacrifice of the priests of Baal; (*b*) the sacrifice of the prophet.—Vers. 25–29. The service of Baal. (*a*) The resistance; (*b*) the manner and way of the worship. The generation of to-day thinks itself elevated far above the Baal worship, which in its nature was deification of nature and the world, and yet, how often does it happen that it serves the creature rather than the Creator (Rom. i. 25). Men no longer make gods out of wood and stone, but construct them out of their own thoughts, and worship their own ideas. The world wishes to hear nothing of the God who is holy, and ready to sanctify the sinful heart of man; who is just, and metes to each man the measure which he deserves; who does not suffer himself to be scorned, but rebukes and chastises of such a God as He has revealed himself in His word the world makes nothing, and will only hear of a God who never rebukes or punishes, who is no avenging judge, who works no miracles, can hear no prayers. Elijah, could he return to earth, would scorn such a divinity no less than he did the idol Baal.—Ver. 25. For you, the many. Thus, even as Elijah allowed them the numbers which gave them due rank in man's eyes, so it becomes most evident to us that numbers have no influence in God's sight (Luke xii. 32).—Ver. 27. Righteous and unrighteous scorn (*vide Histor.* 4).—Ver. 28, RICHTER: At the present day, Indians and other heathens fancy they can win the favor of their deities by fire-tortures and self-torments. Satan demands far greater and heavier sacrifices than God. It is an heathenish error to believe that we can appeal to God, or become reconciled to or merit aught from Him by any outward corporeal act, and yet this error prevails in manifold forms in Christendom. Some think to make themselves pleasing to God and to obtain His mercy by the repetition of many prayers; others, through fasts and painful pilgrimages; yet others by self-inflicted tortures and penances. The sacrifice pleasing unto God is (Ps. li. 19) within, and the gift of the heart. All outer works are dead and useless. Those who belong to Christ have crucified the flesh, with the lusts and affections thereof (Gal. v. 24; Is. v. 3–5).—Vers. 26, 29. Well for us if we recognize that God who sleeps not nor is silent when we call upon Him *de profundis*, who hears the voice of our weeping, and listens when we open our hearts unto Him. Greatly can we rejoice in Him, that if we pray according to His will He will hear us (1 John. v. 14; *cf.* Ps cxxi. 4, cxxx. 1).

Vers. 30–40. Elijah at the height of his mission. (*a*) He rebuilds the broken altar. (*b*) He calls on the Lord, who hears him. (*c*) He executes judgment upon the idolatrous priests.—Ver. 30. WIRTH: The altar of the Lord is ruined in many places, in many houses, in many hearts, ye servants of the Lord, ye directors of congregations, ye teachers of youth, ye fathers and mothers.—Ver. 31 *sq.* Even as the altar which Elijah built out of the twelve stones reminded the nation of its old covenant, that its twelve tribes together should frame a building unto God, so every church edifice should remind us that we,—built upon the foundation of the prophets and apostles, Jesus Christ being the corner-stone,—fitly framed together, should grow into an holy temple, an habitation of God, through the spirit (Eph. ii. 20 *sq.*).—Ver. 34. Every shadow of delusion or deception must be removed from anything done for the honor of God and the glorification of His name.—Vers. 36–39. The prayer of Elijah. (*a*) Its purport. (He

prays for the glorification of God and the conversion of the hearts of the people.) (*b*) Its granting. (The Lord declares Himself, and all the people acknowledge Him.)—Ver. 36. The God of the old covenant is the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, because to them was the promise given. The God of the new covenant, upon whom we as Christians should call, is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, because in Him are all the fulfilled promises, the yea and amen (2 Cor. i. 20).—Ver. 37. All knowledge and recognition of God is inseparable from the conversion of the heart to Him. That is the aim of every testimony and revelation of God, and for that every true servant of God should daily pray in behalf of those intrusted to his care.—Elijah, unlike the priests of Baal, who called upon their god the whole day, used few words, yet was he heard, because in those few words he expressed infinite meaning, and his prayer came from the depths of a believing, unquestioning soul.—Vers. 38, 39. The fire of the Lord upon Mount Carmel. (*a*) Its significance. (*b*) Its efficacy. What is the miracle of that fire which devoured the burnt-offering and compelled the whole people to cry out: "The Lord He is God," in comparison with the miracle that God has sent His son into the world to kindle the greatest fire which has ever burnt in the world; compared with the miracle that the Word has become flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen His glory, even the glory of the only-begotten Son, full of grace and truth? In Bethlehem and upon Golgotha the glory of the Lord is infinitely higher in its manifestation than upon Carmel, wherefore should all tongues confess that Jesus Christ the Lord is the glory of God the Father.—Ver. 39. The joyful recognition: The Lord He is God! (*a*) What is herewith recognized, and what promised (*cf.* the hymn: "*Sei Lob und Ehr*," &c., vers. 8 and 9).—Ver. 40. See Hist. and Critical. 5. The sentence upon the idol-priests was a terrible but necessary one, which should serve us, not as an example, but as a warning; for although, under the new covenant, superstition and unbelief, idol-worship and apostasy are not chastised with fire and sword (Luke ix. 54-56), yet there is not wanting a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries (Heb. x. 27-31). Those who tread under foot the blood of the Lamb will shrink from the wrath of the Lamb (Rev. vi. 16).

Vers. 41-46. KRUMMACHER: The prayer upon Carmel. (*a*) The preparation for it; (*b*) the prayer itself; (*c*) the granting of it.—WIRTH: The end of the divine chastisement upon Israel. (*a*) How the prophet announces this end; (*b*) how he supplicates; (*c*) how the Lord sends merciful rain.—The prayer of the righteous availeth much when it is earnest (James v. 16). Elijah a just man, his prayer an earnest one, and therefore effectual (Ps. cxlv. 18, 19). The king and the prophet on the evening of the day upon Carmel. (*a*) Ahab goes up to eat and to drink, Elijah goes up to pray in solitude; (*b*) Ahab rode on to Jezreel, Elijah suffers him not to go alone, but runs thither before him.—Vers. 41, 42. KRUMMACHER: Wretched man! He was no more touched by the great, heart-searching events of the day, than if he had witnessed an interesting but very long play, after which refreshment is most welcome and food tastes well. Yet where are not such Ahab-souls to be found? Ah! woe to you who permit the strongest evidences, the most powerful appeals to conscience, and the most touching works of God to glide before you like a magic-lantern before your eyes: you enjoy it a little, perhaps, but you bring home from the churches and meetings nothing except some complaints over the long divine service, or some matter for lively conversation or self-satisfied criticism, and a good appetite for the meal which now follows, and a gay looking-forward to the pleasures and enjoyment which the evening of the Sabbath-day will bring you.—Who has greater cause than Ahab to seek solitude, fall down upon his knees and say, God be merciful to me and blot out my sins after Thy great mercy (Ps. li. 3), make us glad according to the days wherein Thou hast, &c. (Ps. xc. 15)? But of all this not a word. The rain alone was of importance to him, not the Lord and His mercy. How many like-minded ones in our day!—Ver. 42. MENKEN: From the earnestness, the ardor, the abasement of Elijah, we may take pattern from his attitudes in this prayer.... The outward posture, indeed, is of the least consequence; bowing of the knee and outward mien, as well as even the words of the mouth, avail little, be they great or small, stately or humble; but the man who prays without reverence to God, and is ashamed to let it be seen in his life, is no better than the heathen who knows not God....In comparison with this the prayers of most men are cold, dead—without reverence and devotion, without earnestness and longing. Many a one thinks that when his eyes are heavy with sleep, when he has neither strength nor mind for any one earthly pursuit or affair, when everything besides is done, then he is in a fitting mood for prayer; that when he lies drowsily on his bed, in the morning or evening, that he is fit to commune with the Divine Majesty! That is entitled "prayer"! Is it a wonder that men should pray thus for an half century without having any experience in real prayer, and, in the end, knowing nothing of what prayer is and should be?—Ver. 43. MENKEN: Oftentimes we look in vain and yet see nothing of the comfort of the Lord, nothing of His help and salvation; He leaves us awhile prostrated in dust and misery, does not at once, hearkening and comforting, raise us up, but appears as if the voice of our crying reached Him not. But if we do not lose our confidence in Him, if we redouble our prayers and entreaties, He will not "let us be ashamed" (Is. xlix. 23). He will comfort, help, and hearken to us at His own, the best time.—STARKE: A man must not weary of prayer, even though it appears to him useless. (Jer. xviii. 1; Col. iv. 2; Eph. vi. 1.)—KRUMMACHER: The dear God is not always at hand when we come before Him with our prayers, but generally allows us to stand awhile at the door, so that it frequently seems as if "there was nothing there." Then do we begin to reflect, and become conscious that we properly have a right to ask nothing, but that, if anything be granted, it is in sheer mercy.—Vers. 44, 45. STARKE: All the merciful works of God seem small and unimportant in the beginning, but thence they are seen to be nobler and greater in the end.—KRUMMACHER. Let the man rejoice who sees even so much as a little cloud of divine mercy and grace arising upon the horizon of his life! The time approaches when this cloud will cover his whole heaven.—CALW. BIB.: When the hour

strikes, help comes in with mighty power, and, to put thy mistrust to shame, it must come unexpectedly. — The mighty rain after the prolonged drought seems to call out to Ahab and to all the people: Behold the mercy and the severity of God: severity to those who have perished, and mercy to you so long as you deserve mercy, otherwise thou also wilt be hewn down (Rom. xi. 22). —Ver. 46. Elijah a true shepherd. He goes after the lost sheep, and leaves them not when he sees the wolf coming; but the Lord, who is neither weary nor faint, giveth power and strength to the faint and to them that have no might, so that no way is too far, no toil too heavy.—CRAMER: The righteous are often rejoiced by means of the Holy Spirit, and hope for the conversion of many, but are afterwards obliged to confess, with great heaviness of heart, that the prince of this world is powerful with many men, holds them in captivity, and finally plunges them into ruin.

C.—Elijah in the Wilderness and upon Horeb; his Successor.

CHAP. XIX. 1–21.

1 AND Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done, and withal [1] how he had
2 slain all the prophets with the sword. Then Jezebel sent a messenger unto
Elijah, saying, So let the gods [2] do *to me*,[3] and more also, if [4] I make not thy life
3 as the life of one of them by to-morrow about this time. And when he saw [5]
that, he arose, and went for his life, and came to Beer-sheba, which *belongeth* to
4 Judah, and left his servant there. But he himself went a day's journey into the
wilderness, and came and sat down under a juniper-tree [broom plant]: and he
requested for himself that he might die; and said, It is enough; now, O Lord
5 [Jehovah], take away my life; for I *am* not better than my fathers. And as
he lay and slept under a juniper-tree [broom plant], behold, then an angel [6]
6 touched him, and said unto him, Arise *and* eat. And he looked, and behold,[7]
there was a cake baken on the coals, and a cruse of water at his head. And he
7 did eat and drink, and laid him down again. And the angel of the Lord
[Jehovah] came again the second time, and touched him, and said, Arise *and*
8 eat; because the journey *is* too [8] great for thee. And he arose, and did eat and
drink, and went in the strength of that meat forty days and forty nights unto
9 Horeb the mount of God. And he came thither unto a [the [9]] cave, and
lodged [10] there; and behold, the word of the Lord [Jehovah] *came* to him, and
10 he said unto him, What doest thou here, Elijah? And he said, I have been
very jealous for the Lord [Jehovah] God of hosts: for the children of Israel
have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets
11 with the sword; and I, *even* I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it
away. And he said, Go forth,[11] and stand upon the mount before the Lord
[Jehovah]. And behold, the Lord [Jehovah] passed by, and a great and strong
wind [12] rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the Lord [Jehovah]; *but* the Lord [Jehovah] *was* not in the wind: and after the wind an earth-
12 quake; *but* the Lord [Jehovah] *was* not in the earthquake: and after the earth-
13 quake a fire; *but* the Lord [Jehovah] *was* not in the fire: and after the fire a
still small voice. And it was *so*, when Elijah heard *it*, that he wrapped his face
in his mantle, and went out, and stood in the entering in of the cave. And
behold, *there came* a voice unto him, and said, What doest thou here, Elijah?
14 And he said, I have been very jealous for the Lord [Jehovah] God of hosts:
because the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine
altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, *even* I only, am left; and
15 they seek my life, to take it away. And the Lord [Jehovah] said unto him, Go,
return on thy way to the wilderness of Damascus [13]: and when thou comest,
16 anoint Hazael *to be* king over Syria: and Jehu the son of Nimshi shalt thou
anoint *to be* king over Israel: and Elisha the son of Shaphat of Abel-meholah
17 shalt thou anoint *to be* prophet in thy room. And it shalt come to pass, *that* him
that escapeth the sword of Hazael shall Jehu slay: and him that escapeth from
18 the sword of Jehu shall Elisha slay. Yet I have [14] left *me* seven thousand in
Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which
hath not kissed him.

19 So he departed thence, and found Elisha the son of Shaphat, who *was* ploughing *with* twelve yoke *of oxen* before him, and he with the twelfth: and Elijah
20 passed by him, and cast his mantle upon him. And he left the oxen, and ran after Elijah, and said, Let me, I pray thee, kiss my father and my mother, and *then* I will follow thee. And he said unto him, Go back again: for what have
21 I done to thee?[15] And he returned back from him, and took a yoke[16] of oxen, and slew them, and boiled their flesh with the instruments of the oxen, and gave unto the people, and they did eat. Then he arose, and went after Elijah, and ministered unto him.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

[1] Ver. 1.—[וְאֵת כָּל־אֲשֶׁר הָרַג. The כָּל, which creates the difficulty of this clause, and which is represented in the *withal* of the A. V., is omitted in several MSS., and passed over unnoticed by the Sept., Vulg., and some other VV. Its use is to be explained by the combination of great fulness with ellipsis: "He told all that Elijah had done, and (he told) all how he had slain," &c.

[2] Ver. 2.—[Since the verb is in the plural, all the VV. here understand אֱלֹהִים, as the A. V., of Jezebel's false gods. The Sept. makes the oath of Jezebel still more emphatic by prefixing to this clause the words Εἰ σὺ εἶ Ἠλιοὺ καὶ ἐγὼ Ἰεζάβελ.

[3] Ver. 2.—[Many MSS. supply לִי, necessarily understood and expressed in the VV., as in the English.

[4] Ver. 2.—[On the use of כִּי in connection with oaths see Nordheimer Heb. Gr. § 1091, 3, and *cf.* Gen. xlii. 16; 1 Sam. xiv. 44, &c.

[5] Ver. 3.—[The form וירא admits either of the pointing given by the Masorets: וַיַּרְא, fut. from the root רָאָה *he saw*: or וַיִּרָא, fut. from יָרֵא *he feared.* The latter is followed by the Sept., Vulg., and Syr., and is expressed in six MSS. by the fuller form ויירא. As to which sense should be preferred here, see Exeg. Com.

[6] Ver. 5.—[The Sept. omits the word *angel* here, supplying its place by the indefinite τις, as the Vat. Sept. has omitted the *messenger* in ver. 2 (the Alex., however, there has ἄγγελον); but in ver. 9 it is given.

[7] Ver. 6.—[The A. V. has overlooked the word מְרַאֲשֹׁתָיו *at his head*, which is given in all the VV.

[8] Ver. 7.—[Our author, in his translation, avoids the comparative sense, and sustains this view in the Exeg. Com. Others prefer to retain the usual comparative force of מ in מִמְּךָ in connection with the adjective רַב. In 1 Sam. xx. 21, to which the author refers, there is no adjective.

[9] Ver. 9.—[The article points doubtless to some especially known cave.

[10] Ver. 9.—[Notwithstanding the remarks in the Exeg. Com. our author in his translation renders וַיָּלֶן (as in the A. V.) by übernachtete; of the VV. the Chald. avoids the word altogether, the Syr. and Arab. give the sense of the A. V., the Sept. κατέλυσεν admits of either sense, and the Vulg. accords with the Exeg. Com. The primary meaning of the Heb. לִין is unquestionably to *pass the night*, but it hence comes in its secondary sense to mean simply *remain*.

[11] Ver. 11.—[The Sept. inserts here the word αὔριον, on the morrow, thus showing that the translator meant the κατέλυσεν of ver. 9 of passing the night. It also changes the punctuation, putting the clause, "And, behold, the LORD passed by" into the future as a part of the previous sentence, with a period following, and then a new sentence beginning, "and, behold, a great and stormy wind," &c., see Exeg. Com.

[12] Ver. 11.—[The Chald. rendering of this verse is remarkable and instructive, as bringing out the ancient Jewish view:—"and before him was an host of angels of the wind rending the mountains and breaking the rocks before the LORD, but the glory of the LORD (Shekinah) was not in the host of the angels of the wind; and after the host of the angels of the wind was the host of the angels of the earthquake, but the glory of the LORD (Shekinah) was not in the host of the angels of the earthquake; and after the host of the angels of the earthquake, a fire, but the glory of the LORD (Shekinah) was not in the host of the angels of fire; and after the host of the angels of fire, a voice of [angels] singing in silence." The Sept. describes the voice as φωνὴ αὔρας λεπτῆς, and the Alex. Sept. adds "and the Lord was there."

[13] Ver. 15.—[Our author translates "the wilderness towards (gen) Damascus." It may be questioned, however, whether the Heb. is not better represented by the A. V.

[14] Ver. 18.—[The Heb. verb is in the future וְהִשְׁאַרְתִּי, and this tense is preserved in all the VV. except the Arab. (The Sept. puts it into the second person καταλείψεις). The A. V. may have been unnecessarily influenced by a regard to the κατέλιπον of Rom. xi. 4, where the tense is a matter of no consequence to the argument.

[15] Ver. 20.—[On the question whether this clause should be rendered interrogatively, see the Exeg. Com. The VV. are divided.

[16] Ver. 21.—[The Vat. Sept. puts this in the plural τὰ ζεύγη, as if Elisha had slain the whole twelve yoke; the Alex. Sept. preserves the singular.—F. G.]

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

Vers. 1–2. **Then Jezebel sent, &c.** She could hardly have done this without the knowledge of her husband, who was too weak-minded to prevent it, and so drew upon himself new guilt. Older commentators held that Jezebel was so lost to all discretion that, instead of keeping her purpose secret, or carrying it out at once, she made it known to the prophet, without considering that he might in the mean time escape. But the sense of the message is evidently this: "If thou art still here to-morrow at this time and hast not betaken thyself out of the kingdom, the same thing shall be done to thee as thou hast done to my priests." To have him killed without further ceremony did not seem to her advisable, for the impression which he had made on the people was still too fresh in their minds; but she was determined to have him out of the way as soon as possible, in order at least to prevent all further influence on the people and the king, and so, under cover of a threat of death, she gave him time for flight. For the expression, So let the gods do to me, *cf.* on chap. ii. 23.

Ver. 3. **And when he saw that, he arose,**

&c. The Sept. translates וַיַּרְא by καὶ ἐφοβήθη; the Vulgate, *timuit ergo;* they read therefore וַיִּרָא, which Thenius explains as undoubtedly correct, because ראה is used of mental vision only when a simple conclusion from outward circumstances is referred to. But this is exactly the case here, as the Targum also renders it by חזא. From the (outward) circumstance of the message, Elijah saw clearly how matters stood; he perceived that he could no longer remain here, as he had wished and hoped, and that he could not carry his work of reformation through to the end. Since he did not as on a former occasion (chap. xviii. 1) receive a divine command to hazard his life, *i. e.*, to remain in spite of the threat, he arose and left the kingdom, as he had done once before. רָאָה is therefore used here just as in 2 Kings v. 7; if יָרֵא, were the true expression, the person of whom he was afraid would have to stand in connection with it, as in 1 Sam. xviii. 12; xxi. 13. Moreover, how should the man who had just been standing all alone over against the whole people, the king, and 450 priests of Baal (chap. xviii. 22), who especially appears as an unequalled prophetic hero in the history of Israel, have become all at once afraid of a bad woman?—אֶל־נַפְשׁוֹ is used here just as in 2 Kings vii. 7, and can only mean: in consideration of his soul, *i. e.*, for the preservation of his (threatened) life; this meaning, moreover, is demanded by the connection with v. 2, and we can hardly find expressed here the thought: "in order to care for his soul in the way indicated in v. 4, *i. e.*, to commend his soul or his life in the loneliness of the desert to God the Lord, as he should determine concerning him" (Keil). Decidedly incorrect is the translation of the Vulgate (*quocumque eum ferebat voluntas*), which Luther follows: "Whithersoever he would," which has led to the erroneous conception that Elijah fled in his own will and strength, without awaiting an intimation from the Lord. Equally incorrect is the explanation of Gerlach: without end or aim, and certainly that of Krummacher: He was only travelling off haphazard.—*Beer-sheba* lay on the border of the wilderness. Since it belonged to the tribe of Simeon (Joshua xix. 2), the clause: which לִיהוּדָה, must mean that he betook himself out of the kingdom of Israel into the kingdom of Judah, to which at that time the tribe of Simeon also belonged.—*His servant* he left behind in Beer-sheba, not perchance through fear of being betrayed by him, nor because "he expected to have no further need of him" (Thenius), nor because the wilderness afforded no sustenance, but: "he wished now to be entirely alone, as men often do in times of sorrow or discouragement; therefore he sought the wilderness." (Calw. B.)

Ver. 4. **But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness,** namely, the Arabian, through which the people had once been compelled to wander. רֹתֶם is not juniper-tree (Luther), but "a kind of broom plant, that is the most longed-for and most welcome bush of the desert, abundant in beds of streams, and valleys where spots for camping are selected, and men sit down and sleep, in order to be protected against wind and sun" (Robinson, Palestine I. p. 203). The words: **It is enough,** &c., do not mean: "I must, as a human being, fall a victim to death some time, and I wish to die now" (Thenius), nor: "I have already endured tribulations enough here below" (Keil), but: I have now lived long enough. This is imperatively demanded by the sentence: *for* I am not better than my fathers, which forms the ground of his request: Jehovah, take away my soul (life). Long life, old age, is looked on, under the old covenant, as a special gift of God (Ps. lxi. 7; cii. 25; Prov. iii. 2; iv. 10; ix. 11; x. 27); Elijah, therefore, means to say: for I do not deserve nor desire to be distinguished and favored above my fathers by a specially long life. It is an entirely mistaken view which supposes that Elijah made this request "from a weak-minded weariness of life" (Thenius), or "with a murmuring heart" (Krummacher). In that case he would have deserved a reproof or a correction; but instead of this the Lord sends a heavenly messenger, who strengthens and refreshes him, and speaks to him only animating, encouraging words. Elijah's whole life and labor had no other aim than to bring Israel back to their God; *to this end* were directed all the toils and privations to which he subjected himself. When he believed himself to have finally reached this end on Carmel, suddenly there came an incomprehensible turn of events; he saw himself deceived in his holiest and most blessed hopes, king and people abandoned him, the labor and struggle of a lifetime appeared to him fruitless and vain; the deepest, most bitter sorrow pervaded his soul. In this frame of mind he began the journey into the wilderness, and as he now sits down there wearied and exhausted by the journey, bowed down by sorrow and grief, what was more natural and human than for this man, who besides was already well-stricken in years, to pray his Lord and God to take from him the heavy burden and let him come to the longed-for rest; "it was a holy sorrow and sadness, such as no common man is capable of, which filled him at that time and brought to his lips the prayer: It is enough," &c. (Menken.)

Vers. 5–9. **An angel touched him.** Although מַלְאָךְ in verse 2 is used of the messenger of Jezebel, yet here it denotes no human messenger, but a messenger of Jehovah (v. 7). The Sept. has in all three places ἄγγελος.—עֻגָה is a thin cake baked on a stone plate by means of hot ashes laid over it (chap. xviii. 13. Winer, *R.-W.-B.* 1, p. 95).—After the first awakening Elijah had eaten only a very little, on account of his great weariness, and had fallen asleep again.—The closing words of verse 7 Keil explains, after Vatablus: *iter est majus, quam pro viribus tuis;* but since מִמְּךָ (*cf.* 1 Sam. xx. 21) is not =לְךָ, we may better follow the Sept.: ὅτι πολλὴ ἀπὸ σοῦ ἡ ὁδὸς, or the Vulgate: *grandis enim tibi restat via.* This moreover presupposes that Elijah had already determined to go to Horeb: for that he is not to be considered "as in a manner summoned thither" (Thenius) is shown by the question of verse 9: What doest thou *here?*—Horeb (=Sinai) is here designated as "*the mount of God,*" because God declared and revealed himself upon it in a special manner as the God of Israel; it was here that he appeared to Moses in the fiery bush and called him to bring forth Israel out of

Egypt (Ex. iii. 1–15); it was here also that he made the covenant with the chosen people, "talked" with them, and gave them through Moses the law, the testimony of the covenant, the foundation on which all further divine revelations rest. Horeb is the place of the loftiest and weightiest revelation for Israel (Deut. i. 6; iv. 10–15; v. 2; 1 Kings viii. 9; Mal. iv. 4). Elijah wished to go thither in the hope that in that spot Jehovah would grant a disclosure to him also, as he had once to his servant Moses, and make known to him what further he had to do.—The *cave* into which Elijah went was, according to most commentators, that in which Moses once tarried while the Lord passed by (Ex. xxxiii. 22); this view is favored also by the definite article. According to Ewald it must have been the cave "in which at that time wanderers to Sinai commonly rested."

Ver. 8. **Forty days and forty nights.** Since Horeb is not more than 40 geographical miles from Beer-sheba (according to Deut. i. 2, there are only eleven days journey from Kadesh Barnea, situated somewhat to the south, to Horeb), older commentators have assumed that Elijah, because old and weak, spent 19 or 20 days on this journey, remained 1 day on Horeb, and accomplished the journey back again in 19 or 20 days. But the text says very plainly that he went 40 days and 40 nights "unto Horeb." According to Thenius, "the legend" leaves the actual relations of space out of sight here, for by this reckoning Elijah would have accomplished in each 24 hours' time only 2 hours' distance. But even the legend could not arbitrarily make a distance, which every one knew and had before his eyes, three or four times too great; in any case the actual distance was not unknown to the author of our books. The text is not intended to make prominent the idea that Elijah kept on 40 days and 40 nights uninterruptedly, in order to reach Horeb, but that he was wonderfully preserved during this time which he spent in the wilderness before his arrival at Horeb. We must not overlook in this connection the reference to the 40 days and nights during which Moses was on Sinai without eating bread or drinking water (Ex. xxxiv. 28; *cf.* xxiv. 18; Deut. ix. 9, 18, 25; x. 10), and the indirect reference to the 40 years which Israel spent in the wilderness, where the Lord fed the people, when they had no bread, with manna, to make it known that man does not live by bread alone.

Ver. 9. **And behold, the word of the Lord, &c.** These words do not, as is commonly supposed, begin a new paragraph, but are rather to be connected with the immediately preceding portion of the same verse, "while he was spending the night in that spot, behold, the word of Jehovah came unto him." It cannot be maintained from ver. 13 that לִין here means not: to spend the night, but: to remain, as the Vulgate has it: *cumque illuc venisset, mansit in spelunca.* The question מַה־לְּךָ פֹה. is, after the example of Josephus (*τί ταρεὶη, καταλελοιπὼς τὴν πόλιν, ἐκεῖσε*): often taken as implying a censure, *quasi Deus diceret, nihil esse Eliæ negotii in solitudine, sed potius in locis habitatis, ut illic homines ad veri Dei cultum adduceret* (Le Clerc); also Thenius considers it intended "to remind Elijah how he, a prophet whom God would everywhere protect, and who in the service of God must endure everything, had not waited for a divine intimation, but from fear of man had fled to save his life, and then, in weak-minded weariness of life, had been able to wish himself dead." This conception is radically false, and leads to an erroneous understanding of the entire passage. For, if a censure were to be inflicted on Elijah, it would not have been delayed until now, but would have been given when he had fled a day's journey into the wilderness (ver. 4), and longed to die; but instead of this he was even tenderly encouraged by an angel and wonderfully strengthened, in order to be able to continue the journey still farther. Why does not the angel say to him there, what does not follow till ver. 15? Elijah had indeed no divine command to flee into the wilderness, but still less had he any command to remain in Jezreel and bid defiance to Jezebel, as formerly (chap. xviii.) he had the command to show himself to the irritated king. When now during his journey, weary in body and soul, bowed down with grief and sorrow, he prayed that his end might come, but this prayer was not listened to, he longed so much the more "for a revelation and disclosure of what might be God's will now, whither he should turn, what begin, whether and how God would employ him yet further in the service of Israel" (Menken). *This* drove him to the "mount of God," *i. e.*, to the place where, once before, his prototype Moses, the founder of the covenant, beheld the Lord and received comfort and strength; to the place where the Lord had spoken to his people and made with them the now broken covenant. If now he is asked: What doest thou here? What desire has driven thee hither? this was "a question of tender kindness, to relieve the full, burdened heart of the prophet, that he, to whom the great privilege of being able to complain of his sorrow had so long been denied, might be moved to reveal his desire, to pour out his whole heart before the Lord. So the Lord, after his resurrection, asked Mary, as she stood at the grave and wept: Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou, that thou mayst change thy sorrow into joy" (Menken). So also this is connected with the question Rev. vii. 13.

Ver. 10. **I have been very jealous, &c.** As the question is not to be considered a censure or rebuke as against Elijah, so also his answer is not to be considered a justification or a reproach as against Jehovah; entirely mistaken is the assertion that there is expressed in this answer "only the greatest despondency concerning his fate" (Thenius), and "a carnal zeal that would at once call down the vengeance of the Almighty on all idolaters" (Keil), or that it bears witness to an "internal strife and murmuring" (Krummacher); it is rather, as the Apostle expressly declares, an indictment of Israel (Rom. xi. 2: *ἐντυγχάνει τῷ θεῷ κατὰ τοῦ Ἰσραήλ*). "The prophet lays the facts, whose weight had fallen upon him with such fearful power, before the Lord, that *He* might see how they appear, and he leaves the riddle which is therein presented to Him, for *Him* to explain" (Gerlach). He brings forward for weighty accusations; (1) they have fallen away from the covenant relation; (2) they have thrown down the altars still remaining here and there, dedicated to thee; (3) instead of listening to thy servants who admonished and warned them, they have slain them; (4) as for myself, the last one who has openly ap-

peared and been zealous for thee, they are seeking my life. The words: I have been very jealous, form the introduction to this fourfold accusation: I have used every means, but all in vain; what then is now to be done, what will and should be brought about? The complaint of the prophet was at the same time again a question to the Lord, to which he then receives a twofold answer (with signs, vers. 11, 12, and with words, vers. 14–18). He speaks of his zeal, moreover, not in order to boast or bother himself about *his* fate: "God's honor and Israel's welfare were of far greater value to him than his own honor or welfare; he mentions his own person and his own need only in so far as they stood in nécessary and most intimate connection with the cause of God and the truth, and so his complaint was a holy one, as all his sorrow and sadness were holy" (Menken). He mentions his zeal in order thereby to confirm and strengthen his accusation against Israel.

Ver. 11. **And he said, Go forth,** &c. It is common to translate with Luther: "Go forth, and stand upon the mount before the Lord. And behold, the Lord *passed* by, and a great and strong wind . . . before the Lord." According to this Elijah must have gone out of the cave *before* the wind, &c. But according to ver. 13 he did not go forth till he heard the gentle breeze; it is therefore absolutely necessary to consider the words וְהִנֵּה יְהוָֹה עֹבֵר as connected with the address to Elijah, and to begin the narrative portion with וְרוּחַ. That is, the participle עֹבֵר is not preterit, but, as usual when it stands for the *verbum finitum*, present: Jehovah passes by, *i. e.*, he is on the point of doing it; *cf.* Is. v. 5; vii. 14; x. 23 (Gesenius, Gram. (Conant) p. 240). The Sept. translates: Ἐξελεύσῃ αὔριον καὶ στήσῃ ἐνώπιον κυρίου ἐν τῷ ὄρει· ἰδοὺ παρελεύσεται κύριος. **Καὶ** ἰδοὺ πνεῦμα μέγα κ. τ. λ. This division of the sentences is entirely correct, only *αὔριον*, which is not found in a single manuscript, is an unauthorized addition borrowed from Ex. xxxiv. 2. The narrative in that place, moreover, serves in several ways to explain the one before us: especially the expression יְהוָֹה עֹבֵר gives clear and definite evidence. Moses desires to see the glory (כָּבוֹד, see above p. 76) of Jehovah, whereupon he receives the answer: "I will make all my goodness (טוּבִי) pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of Jehovah" (*i. e.*, what he is), and farther: "while my glory passeth by . . . I will cover thee with my hand, until I have passed by;" then follows "And Jehovah passed by before him and proclaimed, Jehovah, Jehovah is a God merciful and gracious, long-suffering and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, but that will by no means clear," &c. (Ex. xxxiii. 18, 19, 22; xxxiv. 6). The expression עָבַר is nowhere else used of Jehovah, and doubtless marks this highest revelation as one that is possible only for a moment, in distinction from a permanent, abiding revelation, for which שָׁכַן (שְׁכִינָה) is used. When now Elijah complains here of Israel that they have broken the covenant, as they did once in the wilderness through the golden calf, and desires a disclosure concerning the dealings of Jehovah, which are dark and incomprehensible to him, the answer thereupon imparted to him: Behold! יְהוָֹה עֹבֵר, is designed to express the idea: Jehovah will reveal himself to thee as he did once to Moses, and show thee what he is in his essence, and with this thou shalt receive the desired disclosure.

Ver. 11. **And a great and strong wind,** &c. Tempest, earthquake, and fire, as awe-inspiring natural phenomena, are in the Old Testament especially signs and attestations not only of the absolute power of God, but particularly of His anger, *i. e.*, of His penal justice against His enemies, the ungodly. Thus they appear in connection with one another Is. xxix. 5 *sq.* and Ps. xviii. 8–18, and they have the same significance here also. But since they occur here separately, one after the other in regular succession, they plainly indicate a succession of punishments differing in degree and kind. The tempest points to the rending, scattering, and turning to dust (Is. xvii. 13; xl. 24; lvii. 13), the earthquake to the shaking of the foundations and the falling down (Is. xxiv. 18 *sq.*; Ps. xviii. 8, 16; Jer. x. 10), the fire to the complete consuming (Is. lxvi. 15 *sq.*; Ps. xviii. 9; xcvii. 3). In none of these three now was Jehovah, only out of the gentle whispering does He speak, *i. e.*, the punishments come indeed from Him, pass before Him and bear witness of Him; but He Himself, that which he is, his essence (name) is not to be discerned in them; to this corresponds, rather in contrast with those destructive phenomena of nature, the gentle, soothing, refreshing, revivifying breeze after the storm. The word דְּמָמָה from דָּמַם to be silent, in Poel to silence (Ps. cxxxi. 2), means properly stilling, and is used in both the other places where it appears, of the rest and refreshing which have followed pain, distress, and terror (Ps. cvii. 29; Job iv. 16). When now Jehovah "passes by" here in *this*, the same thing is expressed symbolically which Moses there heard in words, as Jehovah passed by; Jehovah is a God merciful and gracious, &c. The significance of the whole phenomenon is accordingly this: Jehovah, the God of Israel, will indeed display His punishing, destroying might to His despisers and enemies, but His own true and innermost essence is grace, rescuing, preserving, and quickening love, and though the people have broken the covenant of grace, yet He maintains this covenant, and remains faithful and gracious as He promised. For the bowed down and accusing prophet this was the well-attested divine answer, which contained comfort and consolation as well as incitement to carry on His begun work, and not to despair of Israel, nor allow Himself to be wearied out or led into error by the apparent fruitlessness of His efforts thus far. According to Ewald (*loc. cit.* p. 542) the words before us can "in the first place be rightly conceived of only as describing how Jahve will here appear to Elijah, and how He will talk to him. His passing by announces itself first in the most distant way by the fiercest storm; but that is not He Himself; then more subtle and near by thunder and earthquake; but this also is not He Himself; then in the most subtle way by fire (as in the tempest, according to Ps. xviii. 18 (16), Hab. iii. 4); but this is not He Himself; only in the soft whispering that then follows, in the most

subtile spiritual voice does He reveal Himself, and to this attention is to be given (as Job iv. 16; xxvi. 4 in like manner)!" Also Thenius says: "It is the most incorporeal object possible for the illustration of the presence of the divine being, such as Job has selected, iv. 16." This conception is in itself very unnatural; for why should thunder and earthquakes be regarded as "more subtile" (*i. e.*, more immaterial) than a stormy wind, and the all-consuming fire "more subtile" than an earthquake? The gradation is rather just the reverse, from the weaker destroying element to the most powerful, and not from the grossly material to the most immaterial possible. But in general, the entire context is adverse to this conception; for by no means is the revelation to be made here to Elijah, that God's essence is spiritual and that He is incorporeal (Elijah needed no revelation for that), but that Jehovah in His own innermost being is not a destroying, annihilating God, who only punishes, but rather a quickening, saving and preserving, a gracious and faithful God.

Ver. 13. **When Elijah heard it**, &c. During the storm of wind, the earthquake, and the fire, then Elijah was still in the cave, and he came out of it only at the soft whispering, in obedience to the command, ver. 11.—**He wrapped his face in his mantle**, although Jehovah did not pass by in visible shape, "from awe before the unapproachable one" (Then.), as Moses did once when the Lord appeared to him in the fiery bush, "for he was afraid to look upon God" (Ex. iii. 6; *cf.* xxxiii. 20, 22). Even the Seraphim stand with covered faces before the throne of the Holy One (Is. vi. 2). The question already addressed to Elijah *before* the significant phenomenon and now repeated *after* it; מה־לְּךָ פה, has this sense: Hast thou now any further reason for lingering here? Elijah's repetition of his complaint expressed in ver. 10 can have only *this* reason, that he does not yet feel satisfied with what has happened to him (vers. 11–13), because it is not clear to him what this is intended to signify. He therefore receives now a reply in definite words (vers. 15–18); and it appears from other cases also that revelations are made to the prophets first in sensible signs (symbols) and then in definite words (*cf.* Jer. xix. 1–13; xxiv. 1–10; Ezek. v. 1–12; xii. 1–12; xv. 1–8; xxxvii. 1–14). But in this case the verbal revelation is constantly not merely an explanation or interpretation of the symbolical revelation, but it carries the latter out still further by showing how that which the phenomenon attested rather in a general way concerning the being of Jehovah, is to be historically verified in the special case under consideration.

Vers. 15–18. **And Jehovah said unto him**, &c. This address has always been a source of great trouble to commentators, because in respect to that which is here laid upon Elijah and predicted of him the succeeding history makes known nothing or something entirely different. Elijah anointed neither Hazael nor Jehu; the former was not anointed at all, not even by Elisha (2 Kings viii. 11 *sq.*), the latter was anointed long after the departure of Elijah by a disciple of the prophets, and therefore certainly not by Elisha, and Elisha himself was indeed summoned to be the successor of Elijah, yet not by being anointed, but by being covered with the prophet's mantle (ver. 19). Still less does the history know anything of the fact that Elisha, whose life and work are nevertheless related so minutely, ever slew any one, to say nothing of an equal number with Hazael and Jehu. The older, ordinary solution of the difficulties is best presented by Gerlach, who says: "Still it is to be supposed that Elijah executed literally what the Lord commanded him, since he was expressly told to go to Damascus for the purpose of anointing Hazael. For reasons which are not known to us, this anointing may have been kept secret, as was the first anointing of David by Samuel (1 Sam. xvi.), and, just as in the case of this king, the anointing of Jehu may have been repeated at a later date by Elisha, when the moment for Joram's downfall had come. That prophets were anointed appears, apart from this passage, only figuratively in the prophecy Is. lxi. 1; the more this office now became the mightiest in the falling kingdom of Israel, the more natural was it to bring it, by means of the symbolical consecration, into conformity with the royal and priestly officers." This forced artificial explanation is seen at once to be a makeshift and to rest on untenable assumptions. The more recent criticism has made easy work of it: this affirms: Out of the whole of Elijah's history, as contained in the original manuscript, the author of the books before us has everywhere taken only so much as served his purpose; here now, after ver. 18, he has left out the account of the execution of the commission which had been received in regard to Hazael and Jehu, because the other original manuscripts, from which he composed the history of Hazael and Jehu, cannot be reconciled with it (Thenius, followed by Menzel). But how can we attribute to our author the carelessness or unskilfulness of having wholly failed to observe the inconsistency between vers. 15–18, and his own reports concerning Hazael and Jehu (2 Kings viii. and ix.)? If he had considered them irreconcilable, he would not have stopped with the pretended omission of the account concerning the execution of the commission, but would naturally also have omitted either the verses before us, 15–18, or the reports concerning Hazael and Jehu which cannot be harmonized with these. In order to remove the difficulty we must take a wholly different course. In the beginning it is well to observe that the address of Jehovah, vers. 15–18, is a reply to Elijah's repeated severe accusation of Israel, and therefore already bears the character of a divine judicial sentence, which at once contains a prophecy, and is in the fullest sense a divine oracle. As now is generally the case with such oracular sayings, so also here the tone is evidently lofty and solemn, and the form is sententious, axiomatic; what Ewald (*The Prophets of the O. T.* I. p. 49) observes in reference to the strophic rhythm of the prophetic oracles, that the triple rhythm comes in with great force, especially when the language possesses a certain stately elevation, fits the present case completely. The tripartite character of the whole passage is sharply defined; vers. 15, 16 are the first strophe, ver. 17 the second, ver. 18 the third; and each of these three strophes has in turn three members. But in such an oracle a strictly literal understanding of the individual expressions is the less necessary, when, as is here the case, it stands opposed to plain statements that follow. This is eminently true of the expression "anoint," which is not to be taken literally, because then the immediately succeeding

verse 19, according to which Elisha is not really anointed, would contradict it. To "anoint" a person or thing means simply to bring them into the service of God. Thus not only kings and priests, but also implements of worship (Ex. xxix. 36; xxx. 26 *sq.*), yes, even stones (Gen. xxviii. 18) were anointed, because they were to serve for the fulfilment of the divine will. Here too the word is used in this sense; it signifies not the actual outward anointing, but what the anointing means, just as in Judges ix. 8. All three, Hazael, Jehu, and Elisha, are to serve for the execution of God's will and counsel, and each, indeed, in a different way. By Hazael, the foreign Syrian king, Israel was continually hard pressed from without (2 Kings viii. 12, 29; x. 32; xiii. 3, 7); he was the rod of correction in the hand of Jehovah, the instrument of his anger, *i. e.*, of his punishment (*cf.* Is. x. 5). By Jehu the kingdom of Israel was shaken within; he put an end to the house of Ahab, from which the idolatry proceeded and was kept up (2 Kings ix. 24, 33; x. 1–28), and was the divine rod of correction for the idolatrous within Israel. By Elisha, as successor of Elijah, who strove with fiery zeal against all idolatry, the reformatory work of the latter was to be continued, and he also served as God's instrument in correcting and punishing Israel, if not by means of the sword, yet through his whole prophetic activity. Since now Elijah, immediately after receiving his commission to anoint, still did not anoint Elisha, easily as he might have done this, but summoned him to be his successor, by covering him with the prophet's mantle, we have here the clearest evidence that he did not understand the anointing literally in the case of Hazael and Jehu, any more than in that of Elisha. He took the whole oracle in general as a divine revelation of what was soon to happen in Israel. In connection with the words: *Go and anoint*, it is to be remembered that in other cases also of oracular sayings the prophets are commanded to do something (symbolically), which (in reality) is to be brought to pass by the Lord (*cf.* Jer. xix. 1 *sq.*; xxvii. 2; xxviii. 10 *sq.*; Ezek. v. 1–12; xii. 3 *sq.*). The disciple of the prophets, who anointed Jehu under the direction of Elisha, was obliged to begin this action with the words: "Thus saith Jehovah: I have *anointed* thee king over Israel" (2 Kings ix. 3); the real anointing was performed, therefore, by Jehovah himself.

Vers. 15–17. **Go, return on thy way, &c.** The words מִדְבַּרָה דַמָּשֶׂק are not to be translated, *per desertum in Damascum* (Vulgate, Luther), nor hardly "into the wilderness of Damascus" (Keil after Le Clerc), but "to the wilderness (through which he had come after ver. 4) to Damascus" (Thenius). This command cannot be taken literally with any more safety than the following: Anoint; it merely indicates whence the divine punishment is to break in upon Israel. For details concerning Hazael and Jehu, *vide* on 2 Kings viii. ix. and x. Of the expression "slay," used of Elisha ver. 17, the same thing is true as of "anoint;" for that Elisha did not actually slay, our author knew as well as we do now, and indeed our knowledge comes only from his own reports concerning him. He cannot possibly, therefore, have understood the word literally, but only in the prophetic sense in which it is used of the Messiah in the oracle Is. xi. 4; "he shall smite the earth (the land) with the rod (*i. e.*, the rod of correction) of his mouth and with the breath (יָמִית) of his lips shall he slay (רוּחַ, as in the passage before us) the godless." *Cf.* Is. xlix. 2; where the mouth of the prophet is called "a sharp sword," into which the Lord has made it; just so Rev. i. 16; ii. 16; xix. 15. The fundamental and main thought of the oracle is in general this, that the judgment of Jehovah will come, but the judging and dividing will be brought about by the sword, now with the actual sword, now with the sword of the רוּחַ of God (Job. iv. 9); so far could Elisha very well be joined with Hazael and Jehu in the otherwise very much contracted oracle.

Ver. 18. **Yet I have left, &c.** In the three strophes of this passage also the symbolical mode of expression is continued. For the number *seven thousand* is no more to be taken arithmetically than the number an hundred and forty and four thousand (twelve times 12,000) in the Apocalypse (Rev. vii. 4; xiv. 1–5). Seven is the symbolical numeral sign of holiness, the covenant and ceremonial number (*cf.* Symbol des Mos. Kult. I. *s.* 193); and it marks those who are left as a holy company, faithful to the covenant, as the "holy seed" of the covenant people (Is. vi. 13; *cf.* Is. iv. 2; Rom. xi. 7). In like manner the expressions, *all the knees*, etc., and *every mouth*, etc., are a figurative rhetorical description of those faithful to Jehovah. The *kissing* is not to be understood of kisses thrown with the hand (Gesenius), but of kissing the feet of the image which stands on a pedestal (Hos. xiii. 2; Cicero in Verr. 4, 43: *Quod in precibus et gratulationibus non solum id sc. simulacrum venerari, verum etiam osculari solent*). Menken has a striking observation on ver. 18: "Now the prophet understood why the still, small voice was preceded by the desolating storm, the devouring earthquake, and the consuming fire; and beyond all, the anxiety, terror, bloodshed, destruction which were contained therein for Israel. His heart received abundant consolation from the further revelation of the Lord; for this gave him now, in addition to the still, small voice of the Spirit of Life, a disclosure touching the mercy of the Lord to Israel, that infinitely surpassed all his hopes and expectations: and if the revelation of the wants and plagues which were to come upon Israel produced in him the same feeling as the destruction and ruin of threatening storms, still by this disclosure he felt himself encouraged and quickened, as in the refreshing blessed coolness after the storm." In the Return (v. 15) there is contained therefore anything rather than a rebuke for the prophet; but it is the expression of comfort and encouragement.

Ver. 19. **So he departed thence, &c.** The city Abel Meholah, where, according to ver. 16, Elisha lived, lay in the valley of the Jordan, about three German miles from Beth Shean, in the tribe of Manasseh (Judges vii. 22; 1 Kings iv. 12). Though he may indeed have been already known to Elijah, yet he hardly belongs with the "sons of the prophets," among whom Ewald wrongly places him; adding, at the same time, "He had just ploughed round his twelve yoke of land, being at work on the twelfth and last." But צֶמֶד, as appears from ver. 21, and as לְפָנָיו also demands,

is not a yoke of land, but a yoke (pair) of oxen. One ploughman belonged with each yoke. Elisha was with the last, the others all "before him." The conjecture that the "twelve yoke of cattle represented the twelve tribes" (Hengstenberg, von Gerlach), like the twelve stones of the altar on Carmel (xviii. 31), has very little in its favor. The number appears to be mentioned only to show that Elisha was a man in good circumstances, who, nevertheless, left his property in order to follow the call of Elijah. אַדֶּרֶת is here the prophetic official garment (Bech. xiii. 4; 2 Kings i. 8; ii. 13). The throwing it over Elisha was a symbolical act, which denoted the summons to become a prophet (the investiture), and was intelligible to Elisha, even without any words. Elijah seems to have withdrawn at once; he wished, indeed, to leave the doubtless astonished Elisha some time for making up his mind; yet the latter did not meditate long, but hastened (יָרָץ, he ran; not he followed) after him, and declared his purpose to accept the summons, only he wished first to take leave of his father and mother (*cf.* Gen. xxxi. 28). Elijah's answer, לֵךְ שׁוּב, is not to be translated with Luther: Go (to thy parents) *and* come (then) again; but just as in ver. 15, where both words together express only one conception—Return, namely, to thy parents, as thou wishest. The following sentence, *For what have I done to thee?* should, according to Keil, have the meaning, "I have not wished to coerce thee, but I leave the decision concerning the prophetic call to thy free will." In a similar manner Ewald: "As if indignant at this reawakening of desire for the world, Elijah gave him permission to return altogether if he wished." This does not agree with the fact that, according to the Divine will (*cf.* ver. 16), Elisha was destined to be the successor of Elijah, and Elijah, therefore, certainly did not leave the acceptance of the summons wholly to his free will. Had he given over to him the decision of the matter he would not have first thrown the prophetic mantle over him, but would have waited till Elisha decided. When Elisha prays that he may be permitted to take leave of his parents, his idea is that he is ready to follow Elijah, and he only wishes first to satisfy a natural filial obligation, not that he prefers to remain with his parents. That Elijah was unwilling for him to fulfil this filial duty is therefore not to be imagined. Thenius translates: "Go, return! yet! what have I done to thee?" and observes: "He gives the permission, but recalls the lofty meaning of the symbolical action which had just been performed on him, by which he had been devoted to the service of the Lord." This gives indeed a good meaning, only it is very questionable whether כִּי can have here, where no contrast is expressed, the signification, yet! The fundamental idea: for, is never entirely lost: Go, take leave of thy parents, *for* what have I done to thee? I have summoned thee to the prophetic service; thine abode is henceforth no more with thy parents: thou art to follow *me*.

Ver. 21. **And he returned back from him, &c.** Elisha had run after him (יָרָץ, ver. 20), and now returned to take a formal leave of his people. He took (not "a" yoke, as Luther has it, but) the yoke of cattle, viz., that with which he himself had been ploughing (ver. 19), which was his in an especial sense. These he *slew* for a farewell feast (זָבַח, as in Chron. xviii. 2; 1 Sam. xxviii. 24; Ez. xxxix. 17), not, he offered it (as a thank-offering), for the whole context shows that the reference is not to a religious, priestly act, for which also an altar would have been necessary. To offer is here the equivalent of to dispense, to give up (Keil), and is not to be understood in its strict sense. *The instruments of the oxen*, *i. e.*, the yoke and the frame of the plough, he applied not forsooth as would necessarily be expected, if a sacrifice were the matter in hand, to the burning of them up, but to the *boiling of the flesh;* certainly not because there was no other wood at hand (1 Sam. vi. 14; 2 Sam. xxiv. 22), but rather in order to indicate that he gave up for ever his previous calling. The *people* that took part in the feast can hardly be "the inhabitants of his place" (Thenius), but those who up to this point were laboring in common with him in the field, and of them he now took leave as of his parents. The conjecture that this farewell feast occurred immediately in the field where Elijah met him, and that he withdrew from it to take leave of his parents (Calw. B.), is as groundless as it is unnecessary. So far as the words are concerned, the Lord, in Luke ix. 61, may very likely have been thinking of this passage, but the sense and meaning are very different. "Elisha did not wish first to bury his father and mother, *i. e.*, wait until they were dead, but only to take leave of them; moreover, when he wished this, he had not already put his hand to the plough, like the man in Luke ix. 61 and 62, for he had not presented himself to succeed Elijah (Calw. B.). There the Lord is expressing censure, whereas what is here related should not prove a reproach to Elisha, but rather an honor and praise. There can, accordingly, be no talk of a "close affinity" between the two places (Thenius). Krummacher represents the matter thus: Elisha gave the feast to his parents at once, became thereby their "host," and appeared "here already as a prophet, supplying and blessing," &c. This is pure fancy, and has an incorrect explanation of the text for its basis.

HISTORICAL AND ETHICAL.

1. *With Elijah's arrival in Jezreel* the life of the great prophet enters upon a new stage. From the height of the victory which he had won, with God's wonderful help, on Carmel, he is led down now into the dark depths of temptation, in order to come forth from them with only the greater glory. "The smelter of Israel must be content to go down now himself into the crucible" (Krummacher). As the "servant of God," which he was in a special sense (xviii. 36; 2 Kings ix. 36; x. 10), he is led the way which, in accordance with the Divine economy, is the way of all true servants of God. For in the great historical idea of the "servant of God," which is actually realized under the old dispensation only in *disjectis membris*, but under the new dispensation, in its complete fulness in Christ, there is contained the thought that every servant of God is made perfect through trial and temptation, through suffering and tribulation, and in that which he

suffers he learns obedience (Heb. ii. 10; v. 8; Luke xxiv. 26; Is. liii; Acts ii. 23, 24; iii. 13; iv. 27). All the great men who, as servants of God, occupy an integrant position in the history of salvation, have had to go through this experience; and the life even of an Elijah or a Moses would lack an essential element of that which belongs to a "servant of God," if he had remained untempted and untried, free from suffering and tribulation. From this standpoint must be contemplated and estimated what the section before us announces concerning him. He stands now, not as before, acting and giving, commanding and judging, but enduring, suffering, and receiving. It is the Lord who is purifying him through suffering; the temptation becomes for him the way to the most glorious revelation of God.

2. *The removal from Jezreel* into the wilderness should not, as is so often done, be looked on as properly a "flight," a lack of faith, courage, and firmness (Krummacher: "Faith to remain was wanting in him this time"). The text has no more knowledge of a flight (בָּרַח), like that, *e. g.*, in the case of Jonah (Jon. i. 2, 3), than of his being afraid. He recognized in the threat of Jezebel a providential admonition, which, however dark and hard it might appear to him, he did not believe himself at liberty to resist, since no higher direction to remain had come to him. For him, the strong man, firm as a rock, heroic in temper, it was an infinitely more difficult and humiliating duty to give up to the anger of a godless, wicked woman, than to bid her defiance, and make trial of the Lord. He bowed beneath the inscrutable decree, as becomes a true servant of God; and so his going away was an act of faith no less than his appearing before the persecuting Ahab (xviii. 15 *sq.*). "To force martyrdom upon himself, of his own choice, without necessity, he did not consider a part of his calling, nor did he regard it a great and holy act, nor has this ever been the case with the prophets and apostles. In behalf of the truth and the glory of God's name the prophet would have given up his life with joy; but at the present crisis this end would not have been attained through his death; it would have been a triumph for Jezebel" (Menken). There is no greater mistake than to suppose that Elijah withdrew from Jezreel "through fear of man," and that then, because he had arbitrarily relinquished the prosecution of his prophetic calling, he was "summoned, so to speak," to an account and justification of himself on Horeb (Thenius). It was just there that he was favored with the most glorious revelation.

3. *The state of mind* into which Elijah fell in the wilderness has nothing to do with the common "weak-minded weariness of life" (Thenius). His righteous and holy sorrow over the fruitlessness of all that God had done, through him, to save His people from ruin and destruction, overpowered him, being as he was, according to the apostle's expression, ὁμοιοπαθὴς ἡμῖν (Jas. v. 17; *cf.* Acts xiv. 15); so that he was subject to the frailty and weakness of human nature, from which no mortal is free, so long as he lives in the body. Even he, this mighty hero, was obliged to go through this experience for himself, and pay his tribute to it. Similar states of mind appear even in the lives of the firmest and strongest men of God. Thus, in the case of that other Elijah, John the Baptist in the prison, who believed, in like manner, that he must give up all hope, and sent, in the hard hour of temptation, to inquire of the Lord, "Art thou He that should come," &c.; yet at that time the Lord testifies of him that he is no reed which the wind blows to and fro. And the Author and Finisher of faith himself, in the days of his flesh (John i. 14), offered up prayers and supplication with strong crying and tears (Heb. v. 7), and called out: "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death" (Matt. xxvi. 38). As here Elijah, so there the Lord in Gethsemane was strengthened by an angel—a clear token that his condition was one indeed of severe temptation, but not of guilt or sin, such as would merit censure or reproof, or even a summons before the tribunal of God.

4. *Elijah's spending forty days and forty nights in the wilderness* before reaching Horeb, while he might have attained his end in a much shorter time, was anything rather than accidental or meaningless; concerning Moses the fact is made prominent, not once merely, but repeatedly, with a certain emphasis, that he, before receiving on Horeb the highest revelation from Jehovah, spent forty days and forty nights without eating or drinking (Ex. xxiv. 18; xxxiv. 28; Deut. ix. 9; xviii. 25; x. 10). Since, now, the same thing took place in the case of Elijah also, and in that of no other servant of God, this very fact marks him out as the other, the second Moses; but it follows at once from this that the season of forty days and forty nights had the same significance for Elijah, the restorer of the covenant (*vide* above on chap. xvii.), as for Moses its founder. It was a season of preparation for the highest possible revelation of God that can be given to a mortal, but, as such, a season of abstinence from all earthly enjoyment, of absorption in God and a higher world, of contemplation and prayer. This significance is impressed upon it by the number forty, which is in the Scriptures generally the measure of every season of abstinence, of purification and trial, of conflict and correction, and so also of expectation (Gen. vii. 4–17; Deut. viii. 2, 3; xxix. 4–6; Jon. iii. 4; Ex. iv. 6; xxix. 11–13; Matt. iv. 2). Elijah now spent this time, not like Moses upon the mountain itself, but in the wilderness lying before it, which was just the most appropriate locality for him. "Here the whole wonderful history of the old fathers passed in review before him. . . . With every step which he took forward into the silent desert, new pictures and scenes came before his gaze out of that wonderful past" (Krummacher), he was most vividly reminded "how even in this wilderness God the Lord had manifested Himself to His servants and to His people in the most varied and most glorious manner. . . . and so he was gradually prepared for the revelations and consolations which awaited him in this wilderness" (Menken).

5. *The revelation which Elijah received on Horeb* furnishes, indeed, an unmistakable parallel to that which once fell to the lot of Moses, but the account of it is in no wise copied by our narrator from that earlier one, as more recent commentators suppose. (Thenius thinks that he surpasses his model almost.) The common characteristic of the two revelations consists in this, that Jehovah here, as there, "*passes by*," which designates, as observed above, the highest state of revelation under the old dispensation. When now Elijah is fa-

vored with the same revelation, such as fell to the lot of Moses only and of no other servant of God beside Moses under the old dispensation, he is thereby placed over against Moses; in fact, to a certain degree, on the same line with him; and this is owing to the position which he holds in sacred history as the restorer of the broken covenant, the other, the second Moses. The nature and method of the "passing by" were, on the contrary, very different; the accompanying natural phenomena are wholly wanting in the earlier instance, and are in the higest degree peculiar, for they have reference to the special relations and circumstances in which Elijah found himself, as is moreover expressly attested by the explanatory language of God (ver. 15 *sq.*). The whole of this revelation bears in general a predominantly prophetic character, referring, that is, to the future, while this element is almost entirely absent from the revelation to Moses. However, it is a matter of greater importance that here, as there, Jehovah reveals saving grace as His most real and inmost essence, and that *this* revelation fell to the lot of just these two, Moses and Elijah, *i. e.*, the founder and the restorer of the covenant, the representatives of the law and of the prophets, and so of the Old Testament economy in general (Matt. xvii. 3; Luke ix. 30). This fact is the best refutation of the common assertion that the God of the Old Testament is entirely different from the God of the New Testament—an angry, despotic, national God, not the God who, under the new dispensation, has revealed Himself as "Love." That which became evident to all, Jews and Gentiles, when the time was fulfilled, was already disclosed by the Lord to the two representatives of the old dispensation, although with "veiled countenance," for it was just they who, in their higher historical position, needed to take a deeper look into the essence of God, and so into the counsel of His mercy and love.

6. *The whole transaction on Horeb* may indeed be designated a "vision" (Niemeyer, Herder, Von Gerlach, Keil), only by this must not be meant that it was merely a transaction within the prophet, a pure vision which he had during sleep, perhaps "in a dream" (Thenius). The expression in ver. 9: "And behold the word of Jehovah came to him," which is constantly used of an inner revelation, points doubtless to the fact that Elijah found himself in a visionary condition, into which he seems to have been brought already, more or less, during the forty days and nights (ver. 8); but the account certainly does not mean to designate the natural phenomenon, the medium of the theophany, as an object of purely internal perception, but as an object of external experience, as appears from the fact that Elijah went out from the cave and veiled his face with his mantle. Yet this does not remove the visionary condition, for the theophanies are, as Lange (on Gen. iii. 8) observes, "universally effected by means of visionary frames of mind." We have before us here a theophany which is not, as in xxii. 17 or Ez. 1, a mere vision, still less as in Ps. xviii. 7 *sq.*, only poetry, but which, like that in Ex. iii. 2 *sq.*, has an occurrence in nature for its substratum. This kind of theophany has, as even Knobel (*Prophet. der Hebr. I. s.* 160) says, "an objective truth in so far as every occurrence in nature is a revelation of the moving God." As in general the whole of created nature makes known the Creator and reveals His glory (Ps. xix. 1 *sq.*), so also single special objects in nature, and phenomena or occurrences in nature, serve for His special revelation, for they correspond to the relations of the special time and person, as is here the case.

7. *Of the various explanations which the appearance on Horeb has received*, that one, first of all, is to be rejected as wholly mistaken which finds represented here for Elijah the fact that the peaceful rest of eternity is to follow the unrest, the conflicts and tribulations of this life (Seb. Schmidt), for this has no connection with the explanatory oracle in ver. 15, or rather is directly contradictory to it, even were it not Jehovah, but Elijah's life, that "passed by." Much more probable and widespread is another explanation, according to which the appearance expresses a censure of Elijah's "zeal as not wholly free from human passion," and aims "to quiet his zeal, which demeans itself too passionately, although it is commendable so far as concerns the sentiment lying at its foundation," and to "show to him that his zealous activity for the honor of the Lord is not in harmony with the love, grace, and long-suffering of God," and at the same time also to remind and admonish him not to go too far in the matter (Keil after Ephraim the Syrian, Theodoret, certain Rabbis, Le Clerc, *et alii*). But where, then, had the prophet, thus far, demeaned himself too passionately, and where did he go too far in his zeal? It could only have happened upon Carmel. But since, then, "by slaying the priests of Baal he only fulfilled what the law demanded" (Keil on xviii. 40), he certainly deserved no censure or reproof; and since later he caused fire from heaven to fall upon the company sent against him (2 Kings i. 10 *sq.*), he would certainly have paid no heed to the pretended admonition not to be too zealous. The gentle whispering in which Jehovah was, and out of which he spoke, can by no means have set forth what Elijah was to be, and how he was to control himself; it was no censure, but comfort and encouragement, consolation and support for him.—A third explanation sees on the appearance a picture of the two economies: the law, which terrifies and crushes sinners, and the gospel, which makes them alive and quickens them (so Irenæus, long ago, Grotius, and many more modern ones), or, at the same time, of the judgments and chastisements which came upon the people under the old dispensation, and of the New Testament season of refreshing and peace, in which the Lord Himself will appear and dwell among His believing ones (Jo. Lange, Calw. Bib., *et alii*). This, however, is opposed by the fact that the appearance would, in that case, stand in no direct connection with Elijah's complaint (ver. 10), to which, nevertheless, it was the first reply; and moreover the following oracle (ver. 15 *sq.*), which makes it refer to the relations existing at that time, contains no allusion to the Messianic age. When Paul (Rom. xi. 5) cites Elijah's complaint and the divine response (ver. 18), and then continues: "Even so, then, at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace," he does not mean to say: What is there predicted is now fulfilled, but: As in Elijah's time God according to His grace had left alive a number of such as did not give themselves up to the service of Baal, so now also, in the time of salvation, there is an "election of grace," which does not, with the hardened multitude, reject the offers of salvation, but embraces it and is saved. In

Isaiah a recurring theme of prophecy is this: that after all the chastisements and judgments which would come upon Israel, there should still always be in existence a "remnant" of the peculiar and faithful people of God, therefore also at the end of the Old Testament age, resp. at the beginning of the Messianic age (Isai. iv. 2; vi. 13; x. 16 *sq.*; xi. 11). But the reference in the oracle before us is not to *this* remnant, but to that which in Elijah's time does not bow the knee before Baal, although it can always be looked upon as a type of the later one and the last. The truth presented in the natural phenomenon on Horeb is of such a kind that it finds application to various times and relations, because it is universal and eternal, and in so far it may be valid also for the Messianic age, but it was revealed to Elijah only with reference to his own time, that of the Old Testament.

8. *The calling of Elisha* to become a prophet naturally connects itself directly with the revelation on Horeb. What filled Elijah with the greatest solicitude, and drove him into the wilderness and to Horeb, was, that he alone remained of all the prophets, that with him his work of restoring the covenant would go down and the prophetic office die out. On Horeb now he learned that Jehovah had appointed as prophet one who would step into his place and carry on his work, so that there should never be in Israel a lack of such as do not bow the knee before Baal. This it was that brought him out of his depressed state of mind, since the cause of God was the only matter of importance to him, and filled him with new courage, and because this was the chief matter for him, he felt himself impelled to summon at once as his successor that Elisha whom Jehovah had appointed and elected to become a prophet, and so he betook himself "thence" to him directly, and without delay. There can, therefore, be no thought of a "gap" in the account before us between vers. 18 and 19 (Thenius, *vide* above on vers. 15–18). The calling of Elisha was the most urgent thing in his eyes, the time for the "anointing" of Hazael and Jehu he left with the Lord.—Krummacher (Elias, *s.* 294) repeatedly expresses such a conception of the calling of Elisha as that, with it, "an entirely new period was to begin in the history of the education of Israel, a period of divine condescension after the days of punishments and thunderings of the law, a term of the gentle breeze after that of the storm, the flame of fire, and the earthquake;" but this is in direct contradiction of the oracle (vers. 16 and 17), where Elisha is put in the same rank with Hazael and Jehu, the instruments of divine punishment, and it is said: "Him that escapeth from the sword of Jehu shall Elisha slay," which can scarcely mean: Elisha, in contrast with them, will be a bringer of salvation and peace. It was just the time of Elisha that was farthest from being the period of the gentle breeze, for from without Israel was continually hard pressed by the Syrians, and from within the kingdom was thoroughly shaken by the turbulent Jehu, who put a bloody end to the house of Ahab.—We shall return to the relation in which Elisha stands to Elijah in sacred history when he really steps into Elijah's place (2 Kings ii).

9. *Elisha's being called away from the plough* to become a prophet and indeed the successor of an Elijah, an historical position of such elevation and influence, is one of the not infrequent examples of the manner in which God has selected and equipped with light and power from above, for the carrying out of his counsels of salvation and for the founding and extending of His kingdom, just such men as were living unseen before the world and neglected by it, in quiet and retirement, faithful and submissive to their inglorious earthly calling, and were not thinking or wishing to become anything great, to the end that all the world might know that the work which they have been called to carry out is not of men but of Him (Acts v. 38 *sq.*; 2 Cor. iv. 7). His apostles, who went into all the world and accomplished the greatest and most difficult task which has ever been achieved, were called by the Lord from the fishing-smack and from the custom-house. It is a rule of the divine government: "God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to naught things that are, that no flesh should glory in His presence" (1 Cor. i. 27 *sq.*).

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

Vers. 1–18. The course which God takes with His servants. (*a*) He leads them down into the depths (wilderness, conflict, vers. 1–8); (*b*) but then He sets them on high (Horeb, vision of God, ver. 9–18; *vide* ethical remarks).—Vers. 1–8. BENDER: Elijah in his flight from Queen Jezebel. (*a*) The situation into which he came; (*b*) the state of mind into which he fell; (*c*) the comfort which was imparted to him.—WIRTH: Elijah under the juniper-tree (*a*) The deep despondency into which the prophet of God was fallen; (*b*) the wonderful strengthening which he received.—Ver. 1–4. KRUMMACHER: The flight into the wilderness. (*a*) The persecution; (*b*) the flight; (*c*) the dejection.—Vers. 1–2. Ahab after the day on Carmel. (*a*) Ahab tells his wife everything that he has experienced and witnessed there (every man should tell his wife the great deeds of God, in order to bring her to the way of life and keep her there; thus marriage becomes what it should be, Eph. v. 23–27). (*b*) He lets his wife's anger and spite have free course (instead of her being subject to him, he is subject to her; instead of holding before her the command: Thou shalt not kill, and turning her from her wicked way, he suffers himself to be contented, keeps quiet, and bows beneath her will; such weakness is not conjugal love, but sin and shame).—WÜRT. SUMM.: Hardened sinners allow themselves to be won over and converted neither by the punishments nor by the favors of God, but become more wicked, the longer they live.—Ver. 2. There is no anger so bitter as the anger of women. When hatred and revenge have once entered a woman's heart, she does not shrink even from the greatest crimes (Mark vi. 19, 24).—To bind one's self to wickedness by an oath is the highest step of religious and moral infatuation (Acts xxiii. 12). CALW. BIB.: A profligate man often determines to bind himself thus in order that his wicked plans may not be repented of. Would that men would seek to bind themselves to the right.—Ver. 3. CALW. BIB.: So long as we can escape martyrdom we may and should do so (Matt. x. 23). How much more must it be folly to seek it. It is enough for us to stand firm when escape from persecution is *impossible*. The Scripture says: He that believeth shall not make haste (flee), Is. xxviii. 16; and, Fear not them, &c. (Matt. x. 28); but every flight is not

unbelief; fleeing is reprehensible and disgraceful only when it leads away from the fulfilment of a duty, or when it results from dread of toil or suffering, from love of rest and ease. It is often the part of faith and self-renunciation to yield before the wicked and godless rather than to stay and bid them defiance. If God shows us ways and means for saving our life and our honor, we are not at liberty to hope for, and presume upon, miracles and extraordinary assistance.

Ver. 4. The deep sadness of the prophet. (*a*) Its origin (it was not the sadness of the world, that arises from the loss of temporal goods, honor, respect, joys and pleasures, but a sadness in view of the fact that every great act which God had performed with reference to his people, every labor and every contest for the salvation of their souls had remained without result. This is the noblest and rarest sadness. But where are the parents, where the preachers, who are troubled over nothing so deeply and seriously as over the blindness and deafness of the souls intrusted to them)? (*b*) Its manifestation (Elijah wishes death for himself because it is intolerable for him to see God abandoned and his people running to destruction).—MENKEN: This outbreak of the full, oppressed heart of the prophet does in no wise justify the thoughtless, light-minded, irrational utterances of many men who wish death for themselves, and has nothing in common with the unholy gloom of unholy men, who. . . are weary of life because they cannot conquer their will, because they set no limits to the passions and demands of their heart, and neither seek nor know the truth which could free them from all their discontent and unhappiness, if they would be obedient to it.—WIRTH: There is no Christian's life, even though it were the most pious and perfect, which does not also have its hours of despondency; there is no child of God who might not also, for once perhaps, like Elijah, sit under the juniper-tree and wish to shake off his burdens and sigh: It is enough, &c. Those are dangerous moments; the word of the Lord is applicable to them, Luke xxii. 31 *sq*.—Elijah's prayer in the moment of temptation. (*a*) It is enough! the measure is full (we may indeed sigh under the burden, which is pressing us to the ground, and entreat: Put an end, O Lord, put an end to all our necessity! But whether it is enough, when *we* think it is enough, is known only to Him; to determine the measure of life and of suffering is not our business but His (Matt. xxvi. 39; Luke xxii. 42). Many a man before now has called out: It is enough! and yet afterwards thanked God that the Lord did not at once listen to his request, but suffered it to be not yet enough). (*b*) Now, O Lord, take away my life (because Elijah's soul belonged to the Lord and his whole life was devoted to Him, he ventured to say: Take my soul, which thou gavest me, back to thyself, and give it rest in the everlasting tabernacles of peace.—MENKEN: In order to be able to say with Paul: I desire to depart and to be with Christ, we must know and love the Lord Jesus Christ as Paul knew and loved Him, and also be able to say like him in truth: For me to live is Christ! In order to be able to pray with Elijah: It is enough; now, O Lord, take away my life! we must, at least on a small scale, have worked and suffered and maintained ourselves well amid temptations, and labored over ourselves with the grace and gift of God as Elijah did). (*c*) I am not better than my fathers (the particular gift of a long life Elijah does not believe himself to have deserved, although he always walked in the ways of God. Not because he considers himself too good for this world does he wish himself out of it, but because he feels himself to be not better than his fathers; he does not rest his prayer on his merit and good works, but in the consciousness of his sinfulness and in the hope of God's grace and mercy he awaits death. He who dies so, dies well)!

Vers. 5-8. KRUMMACHER: The visit under the juniper-tree. The guardianship of divine grace becomes evident (*a*) in the hearing vouchsafed to the prophet's prayer; (*b*) in the appearance of an angel which the Lord sends to him; (*c*) in a wonderful nourishment which he experiences; (*d*) in a delightful prospect which God opens before him; (*e*) in a supernatural strengthening for his wandering through the wilderness.—Ver. 5. MENKEN: There have been in all ages faithful servants of God and Christ who have been weakened and discouraged by the thought that it was all in vain, all their anxiety and labor were fruitless, nothing more could possibly be gained for the Lord, and no more work of any importance could be done by them for His cause and kingdom, and they have been on the point of finding joyous, spirited, zealous work in the service of the Lord, nay, even life itself, distasteful. But they have always found consolation from the Lord in his Word, and have been aroused and strengthened by His spirit to new courage and to unremitted perseverance in their work for the truth. They have learned to think of Him who endured similar contradiction of sinners against himself. . . . The Lord Jesus Christ had taught them not to estimate the value of their labor according to the effect which they produce by it, nor according to the visible results perceptible to themselves, but with joy and confidence to persevere unweariedly, even though it should appear as though all they said was addressed to an uninhabited desert.—Ver. 6. CRAMER: When the children of God are forsaken by every human being, and lie in the midst of a wilderness, God with his holy angels, like a heavenly host, ministers to them. (Heb. i. 14; Gen. xxxii. 1.—MENKEN: God is present in the desert also, and can prepare a table for your soul even there, and just at a time when man is and can be nothing to you, when the world can give you no help; then, better than at any other time, can he be to you all and in all.—WIRTH: For us too, and for our hours of lack of faith and despair, God has prepared bread and water which will nourish and quicken the soul. This bread, this water is His word, the everlasting word of God, which is the life of God and strength of God (Matt. iv. 4). Eat of this bread, drink of this water, when you are in danger of going astray in your life-work, not only once or twice, nay, again and again eat and drink.—Ver. 7. We all have a long journey before us, and do not know how long a time we will be obliged to spend on the way, through what deserts He is still to lead us, during how many dark nights we are to grope about, and what burdens and hardships, without and within, we have still to bear. Let us then hearken to the voice of Him who is much more to us than an angel from heaven, when he cries to us: Awake, thou that sleepest (Eph. v. 14)! Arise and eat! For the long journey he provides the bread of life, and water that springs

up unto everlasting life: he that cometh unto Him will never hunger or thirst (John vi. 35); through his strength, which is mighty in weakness, we shall reach the goal and arrive there, where we shall see Him as He is.—Ver. 8. **Menken**: The way of the prophet into the wilderness seemed to him as he entered upon it a road to death and hell, but it proved to him the way of life and heaven, a means of most valuable experiences. The world often thinks that it has given to a man of God a cup to drink which will prove most bitter to him; it plans to give him as much distress as possible. The Lord permits it, and plans how to make it a source of good to him, and. . . . permits him to enjoy such pleasures and refreshings, to have such experiences, to attain such knowledge and strength, as had never been his portion, and such as he never would have attained to in any other way. . . . We too would gladly enjoy something of the experience, the knowledge and comfort of the saints; but without the sufferings of the saints, without their want and their sacrifices, and just because we will that in the very midst of the world it could be our share, with all the peace and joy of the world beside, it never will be our lot. Our weak and delicate spirit shrinks from venturing even a day's journey into the wilderness; and yet in all times every one who has been led far into its depths have been thankful for all their life long.

Vers. 8–18. **Bender**: Elijah on Mount Horeb. (*a*) The wonderful consolation which he enjoyed on his journey thither; (*b*) the exalted revelation which he there received; (*c*) the new duties and encouragements which were his lot even there.—Vers. 9–13. **Wirth**: Elijah at Mount Horeb. (*a*) The night-quarters in the cave; (*b*) the appearance of the Lord.—Vers. 9–11. **Krummacher**: The arrival at Horeb. (*a*) The night spent in the cave; (*b*) the speaking Word; (*c*) the divine reproof; (*d*) the prophet's complaint; (*e*) the summons (?) before the Lord.—Ver. 9. The divine inquiry: What doest thou here? (*a*) To Elijah (purpose and intent of the question; *vide* explanations under ver. 9. God desires to have us disclose our hearts to Him; He summons us to do so in conformity with His love and friendship for us, Lament. ii. 19; Ps. lxii. 9; for he would heal those who are of a broken heart, Ps. cxlvii. 3.—**Menken**: A question may be like a cutting and wounding knife in the pain it gives a human heart; but it may also be as beneficent as healing balm. He who is indifferent to the questions he asks, and does not weigh their import, is still inconsiderate, and is greatly lacking in wisdom and love. Many thousand wicked and unnecessary questions are asked, which are causeless and without aim; questions of scorn, of derision, of anger, of uncharitableness, and of heart and time-destroying curiosity. On the other hand, there are few questions of wisdom and love. He who asks in order to be able to assist, to instruct, is inspired with the spirit of love, and in addition to love, he has great wisdom if he understands how to ask, so as to attain his end by means of his questions). (*b*) Made to us all by Jehovah. (What doest thou here in this world and at this time? Art thou here only for the purpose of eating and drinking, to pass thy life in enjoyment and folly, and wear away the time? How many live without considering that it is appointed for men once to die, and then cometh the judgment. Heb. ix. 27. Let not a day pass without answering the question which God puts to thee: What doest thou here? The question may also imply: What doest thou here, in this place in which thou happenest to be, in the situation and circumstances into which thou hast transferred thyself? What is it that has led thee hither? Canst thou here talk and act in the sight of Him of whom it is said: there is not a word in my tongue, but lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether: whether I walk or lie, thou art about me and art acquainted with all my ways? Ps. cxxxix. 3, 4. Wherever thou mayest go, or wherever thou tarriest, let this question of God come into thy mind: What doest thou here? it is a question of divine love, but yet a question of divine solemnity.)—Ver. 10. Elijah's zeal for the Lord. (*a*) A pure and sincere zeal (it was solely for the Lord, not for himself, for his opinion, honor, glory, or advantage, just as with the Apostle who counted all things but loss that he might win Christ, Phil. iii. 8. How often folly, dogmatism, passion, and injustice is mingled with zeal for the Lord and for His kingdom. Would that all who would be, or who pretend to be zealous for the cause of God, could stand before the Searcher of hearts and say in sincerity: I have been zealous for the Lord). (*b*) A persevering and regardless zeal. (Like Paul, he shrunk from no distress or labor, from no strife or affliction, nor hunger nor nakedness, neither scoffing nor disgrace, Phil. iv. 12, 13; 2 Cor. vi. 4–10. He had no respect of persons, did not ask whether he was a king, serving Baal, or a beggar, whether he was lord or servant, whether his opponents were few or many; it could be said of him: The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up, Ps. lxix. 10. How few of those have any knowledge of such a zeal, who follow their calling mechanically, and never become warm in its behalf, whose zeal is like a smothered fire, and grows less and inefficient, and cools, both when temptation arises and when they are in prosperity.)—The complaint of the prophet against Israel is a threefold one. (*a*) They have forsaken thy covenant, although it is their only source of safety (this was the first stage of their apostasy. They lightly estimated the word of the Lord and did not trouble themselves about it. The same thing appears in Christianity still. The covenant which was sealed by the blood of the Son of God, and the covenant meal are forsaken and considered of no value; how many there are who forsake the church and the communion table, and, losing the knowledge of a covenant with God through Christ, live henceforth like the heathen without God in the world). (*b*) They have thrown down thine altars. (This was the second stage of their apostasy; desertion from grew into enmity to; the places of prayer were destroyed; they were unwilling to have among them longer anything that reminded them of their Lord and God. So too, now-a-days, want of esteem and indifference rises gradually to enmity. They who to-day are singing:

Reisst die Kreuze aus der Erden,
Alle sollen Schwerter werden!

would, if they had the power, tear down the altars and overthrow churches. For a time they are satisfied with working away at the foundations of the church of God by means of false wisdom and knowledge, or by means of scorn and insult.) (*c*) They have slain thy prophets with the sword. (This was the lowest stage of their apostasy; hos-

tility grew into blind fury; not contented with throwing down the altars, they persecuted and put to death those who warned them to return. So too in Christianity, there has never been lacking a persecution of those who have preached repentance and faith with zeal and earnestness. Matt. x. 22; John xv. 18. When a man will not listen to the truth, he seeks first of all to remove its witnesses, either by power or by cunning. But so long as a single witness of the truth survives, it will never remain unattested.)

Ver. 11. KRUMMACHER: Go forth, and stand upon the mount before the Lord! This call is issued to all those who, like Elijah, lodge in caves and dens. The caves, however, are of various kinds. Our heart is a cave, a dark tomb. . . The soul attacked and tormented by doubts is in a cave. . . . Bodily distress and external affliction may be called a cave. . . . O go forth and go upon the mount and look aloft to Him who hangs upon the tree. . . . go forth! Spread the wings of hope, soar, and place thyself upon the heights of the everlasting promises of God, which are Yea and Amen, and from thence cast a look of confidence into the heart of Him whose counsel is truly wonderful, but who nevertheless doeth all things gloriously.—WIRTH: There comes sometimes an hour when the call of the Lord echoes in every corner and cavern of life: Go forth and stand upon the mount before the Lord! Pray, do not think that you will be allowed to do what you please undisturbed in your dens of sin. You must one day come forth and stand before the Lord, before His judgment-seat, where each man shall receive according to what he hath done in the life of the body, whether it be good or evil. . . . One day the blessed hour will come when he himself will lead you forth forever out from your chambers of sorrow, and up to his everlasting hills before his face.—Vers. 11-18. The revelation of God upon Horeb. (*a*) By means of a manifestation of nature, which displayed his chastising justice toward the recreant and the godless, but also his saving, revivifying grace as his true character. All nature and creation are a revelation of God (Ps. xix. 1-7; Job xii. 7-9); by the word of the Lord it was created, and through it he speaks to us. It is the great language of God which we should learn to interpret, a book in which we should read; its only end is not to support us and furnish enjoyment for the mind, but that from it and in it we may learn to recognize and worship the majesty of God (Rom. i. 19, 20). He who sees in nature nothing more than a lifeless mass is as one who having eyes sees not. (*b*) By the voice which announced the decision of God. What was still dark to the prophet in the manifestation of nature, the divine word plainly and decisively interprets for him. The book of nature is made perfectly intelligible only by the word of God in the book of Scripture. For this reason the Scriptures place the revelations side by side (Ps. xix. 1-7 and 8-12; Ps. cxlvii. 7-18, 19, 20). The heathen were able to perceive the character of God in the works of creation, but they nevertheless fell into idolatry and error (Rom. i. 21 *sq.*), because they lacked the word of God. Israel possessed this word, therefore it ranked above all nations. We have still more than Israel, therefore let this word, which has been committed to us, be always a light to our feet and a lamp to our path. Where it is wanting there is, in spite of all professed wisdom (Rom. i. 22), foolishness and darkness, moral and spiritual decay.—Ver. 11. Behold, the Lord passes by! To Moses and Elijah, the representatives of the old covenant, the Lord passed by only in visible perceptible veil or covering, but among us *He dwelt*, who is love, and we saw his glory (John i. 14, 16, 17). For in this was manifested the love of God, &c. (1 John iv. 9; Col. ii. 9). What sentence of condemnation will be declared against those who despise such a revelation and turn away from it (John iii. 36; Heb. x. 28, 29). Just as God made known His true, real character, not in the storm, the earthquake, or the fire, but in the still small voice, so ought our life, if it is from God, to manifest itself, after the pattern of Christ (Matt. xii. 19, 20), by an inner, quiet, gentle disposition of love (1 John iv. 16).—MENKEN: The Lord is not dreadful and terrible except to the perverse and malignant. Where he cannot penetrate with the word of his grace, with the glance of his love, with the gentle admonition of his spirit of peace, there he speaks to hearts and ears, that are like rocks, in the destroying whirlwind, and annihilates that which rises up against him, like a devouring earthquake, and makes room and space for himself and for that which he desires to create, like a consuming fire. But those who surrender themselves to his grace and love experience nothing dreadful and terrible from him, for he is to them a delight, like a rain after the drought and like a breeze after scorching heat. Having renounced all his glory and majesty, he came with gentle and friendly aspect, a Saviour and Helper; but when now he shall appear, his coming will be to his foes like whirlwind, earthquake, and fire, sweeping them away, consuming and removing them. But to his own, who have remained protected and unharmed amid all this, it will be like the still, small whispering of the breeze after the storm has gone by.—Ver. 13. Only with veiled face, *i. e.*, with renunciation of his own wisdom and righteousness, is man able to glance into the decrees of the grace and saving love of God. He who has once experienced the working of this grace in himself, in his inner man, covers his face in humility and holy awe, and stands adoring before the mystery of eternal love, listening for the words which proceed from its mouth.—TERSTEEGEN: I adore the power of love, &c.).

Vers. 15-18. The answer of the Lord to Elijah's repeated complaint; it includes (*a*) a direction: Go, return, &c., which is the answer to: Thus far have I been zealous in vain. Carry forward the work already begun, doubting not the result, let thy hands fall not, fear not, I am with thee. So the Lord always calls to all workers in his vineyard. The work is never intended nor permitted to cease, although it was sometimes in vain and remained without fruit. (*b*) A commission: Anoint Hazael, &c., that is the answer to: They have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars. Through Hazael will I chastise rebellious Israel, through Jehu destroy the house of Ahab, through Elisha preserve the order of the prophets.—MENKEN: Let us here observe how the royal government of the Lord influences so deeply and so powerfully, and yet so quietly and noiselessly, all human undertakings, contrivances, and conditions, all worldly events, and how so much happens under his direction which seems to happen without him, as if by accident (*cf.* Dan. ii. 31). (*c*) A promise: Yet have I left, &c. This is the answer to: I only am left,

and they seek my life. The Lord will never forsake his people and wholly reject them (Rom. xi. 3–5). The race of believers will never perish; no storm, no earthquake, no fire will destroy them. However great and extended the revolt may be, there will always be a remnant who do not bow their knees before Baal, who may indeed be oppressed and persecuted, but can never be exterminated, for they rest in the hand of the Almighty; they are the salt of the earth, which preserves the world from corruption and ruin.—Ver. 18. The election of grace. *i. e.*, the chosen, the remnant (Rom. xi. 5, 7). (*a*) Who are they? They are those who have not bowed, &c., who refuse to float with the current of the times, who have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb (Rev. vii. 13), those who allow not themselves to be seduced from the narrow way to life by no cross or suffering, and endure in the faith unto the end. Dost thou belong to these? (*b*) Who knoweth them? The Lord knoweth them that are his (2 Tim. ii. 19). Even Elijah at that time knew them not, and yet there were seven thousand of them. Their cry is not heard in all the streets, their life is a hidden one. They are scattered in all lands, in all conditions, among high and low, rich and poor; they do not themselves know one another, but the Lord knoweth them. How often we consider a person as a lost child of the world, who in the eyes of the Searcher of hearts is a child of God. How often we think that a nation, a city, a community is utterly corrupt, and yet even there too the Lord has a hidden seed, and elections of grace. (*c*) Of what are they assured? They are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation (1 Pet. i. 5). The Lamb will lead them, &c. (Rev. vii. 17). That faith which holds fast to God and Jesus overcomes and is crowned, &c. (Rev. ii. 10; Col. iii. 3, 4; Luke xii. 32). Therefore let us look up, &c. (Heb. xii. 2)—MENKEN: We must not look upon ourselves as the only ones, but remember that there are thousands besides with us, going one way to the same goal, with one faith, one hope, with one love inwardly united to us through one spirit, and that even these sufferings which meet us also befall these our brethren in the world; we must make ourselves one in spirit with them all, and the remembrance of them be encouraged by and rejoice in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ, who will unite us with them all.—KRUMMACHER: The invisible church. (*a*) The hidden seed; (*b*) the disclosure of it; (*c*) the promise that is given it.

Vers. 19–21. KRUMMACHER: Elisha's call. (*a*) Elijah calls Elisha; (*b*) Elisha follows. Compare the Historical and Ethical, 8, 9.—Ver. 19. MENKEN: Thus we find it throughout sacred history. The greatest, most distinguished men, who have become God's most important instruments for the execution of his counsel and immortal benefactors of the human race, were always humble, modest men, who . . . . were not moved by their own souls to bring themselves forward in their impure pride as lights of the world, as reformers of the human race, but remained in their place and calling, looking quietly up to God . . . . But the impure, arrogant, egotistical pride, when one without looking up to God, without loving the truth, without having a duty and a call, allows himself to be impelled by his own soul to wish to enlighten the world, while he himself is in darkness, to reform Church and State without having regulated his own house, much less his heart,—this makes tools of the devil, incendiaries who call themselves enlighteners. . . . . Every withdrawal, through our own choice and passion, from a calling and station where by God's will we are and should be, whether from a lower to a higher station or *vice versâ*, is dangerous, and sinful, and without blessing, and has for its consequence misery and tribulation, even if matters go on well now, if God does not completely turn away his mercy.—KRUMMACHER: Another in his place would long before have come to the conclusion, that he was too good for the plough, he was born for a higher sphere than that of a simple peasant; he was not at liberty to withhold his talents from mankind, he must study, and then enter upon the theatre of public action to help enlighten and govern the world. . . . Consider: the lights have the fairest and clearest lustre which know not that they shine, and those flowers of God scatter the sweetest perfume around them, which, well contented with the little spot the Lord has appointed them, bloom hidden in silent dales. It does not follow from the calling of Elisha away from the plough, to become a prophet, that every one without gifts and without much knowledge can leave the plough or any other ordinary occupation and take up the prophet's calling. Men often think the Lord calls them to another, higher position while it is only their vanity and the over-estimation of their gifts and powers which impels them. If God has called thee to anything, he will also open the way for thee and furnish the means that are requisite thereto.—Ver. 20. Elisha's request and Elijah's granting of it. (*a*) The request was no loitering or evasion, it came from a heart on which the command of God had been imprinted: Honor thy father and thy mother, that thy, &c. (Ex. xx. 12), and which knew: the glory of a man is from the honor of his father; and a mother in dishonor is a reproach to the children (Sir. iii. 11); because above all he feared God, he also honored his father and mother; with God's blessing on his new calling, he wished also for the blessing of his parents (Col. iii. 20). (*b*) The granting was not unconditional: Go and return again. Elijah honors and respects his filial love and gratitude. There is no calling or position, however great and high and weighty it may be, which invalidates the command: Honor, &c. (Matt. vii. 10, *sq.*). But just as little are we permitted to hold back from following the call of the Lord. He that loveth father or mother, &c. (Matt. x. 37; Deut. xxxiii. 9.)—Elisha's parting from his family, (*a*) a joyful one (although he was now going to meet so many deprivations, so many toils, so great a conflict, yet the day on which he entered upon his holy calling was a day of joy and honor, on which all should rejoice with him, therefore he prepared a feast); (*b*) one of love (he invited all who were previously living and working with him to the feast; he would not eat and rejoice alone; no one was too insignificant for him, no one too low.—CALW. BIB: We see from this how exemplary a relation subsisted between him and his servants).—Elisha in comparison with the three followers of Christ, Luke ix. 57–62. (*a*) Although the son of rich parents and heir to a great possession, yet he forsakes and renounces all, for he considers it a greater gain to follow and serve the (poor) prophet. (*b*) He takes leave indeed of his parents, but he does not put off the succession to a later time, until

after their death; he does not disavow filial affection, but it does not keep him from entering upon his succession immediately. (*c*) He looks not backward after his call, but forward, and has no longing after that which he gives up; he follows on and serves with undivided heart in complete and joyful consecration. How deeply this Elisha shames many amongst us, to whom however not an Elijah, not a prophet, but the Lord of glory, calls: Follow me!—MENKEN: Many a one hears the words of good tidings with joy . . . . and beholds the treasure therein presented; there are moments and hours when he vividly feels that it profits a man nothing if he gains the whole world and loses himself, but that in Jesus Christ is life and full sufficiency. . . . Then, instead of making a good, prompt, firm resolve to surrender himself on the spot without consideration, and without condition, to the gracious offer of the Lord, he goes on again amid cares and affections of this world, turns his gaze again away from the invisible and eternal; the willing heart becomes again unwilling and seeks only a pretext how it can justify this or that obstacle, or retain and accept with honor this or that thing which cannot go through the narrow gate of the heavenly kingdom; and so he never attains to complete fidelity and self-sacrifice (*cf.* John xii. 26).

SECOND SECTION.

THE DEEDS OF AHAB.

1 KINGS XX., XXI., XXII.

A.—*The Victories of Ahab over the Syrians.*

CHAP. XX.[1] 1–43.

1 AND Ben-hadad[2] the king of Syria gathered all his host together: and *there*
were thirty and two kings with him, and horses, and chariots: and he went up
2 and besieged Samaria, and warred against it. And he sent messengers to Ahab
3 king of Israel into the city,[3] and said unto him, Thus saith Ben-hadad, Thy
silver and thy gold *is* mine; thy wives also and thy children, *even* the goodliest,[4]
4 *are* mine. And the king of Israel answered and said, My lord, O king, accord-
5 ing to thy saying, I *am* thine, and all that I have. And the messengers came
again, and said, Thus speaketh Ben-hadad, saying, Although[5] I have sent unto
thee, saying, Thou shalt deliver me thy silver, and thy gold, and thy wives, and
6 thy children; yet I will send my servants unto thee to-morrow about this
time, and they shall search thine house, and the houses of thy servants; and it
shall be, *that* whatsoever is pleasant in thine eyes,[6] they shall put *it* in their hand,
7 and take *it* away. Then the king of Israel called all the elders of the land, and
said, Mark, I pray you, and see how this *man* seeketh mischief: for he sent unto
me for my wives, and for my children,[7] and for my silver, and for my gold; and
8 I denied him not. And all the elders and all the people said unto him, Hearken
9 not *unto him*, nor[8] consent. Wherefore he said unto the messengers of Ben-
hadad, Tell my[9] lord the king, All that thou didst send for to thy servant at the
first, I will do: but this thing I may not do. And the messengers departed, and
10 brought him word again. And Ben-hadad sent unto him, and said, The gods[10]
do so unto me, and more also, if the dust of Samaria shall suffice for handfuls[11]
11 for all the people that follow me. And the king of Israel answered and said,
Tell *him*, Let not him that girdeth on *his harness* boast himself as he that put-
12 teth it off. And it came to pass, when *Ben-hadad* heard this message as he *was*
drinking, he and the kings in the pavilions, that he said unto his servants, Set
yourselves in array. And they set *themselves in array* against the city.
13 And behold, there came a prophet unto Ahab king of Israel, saying, Thus
saith the Lord [Jehovah], Hast thou seen all this great multitude? behold, I
14 will deliver it into thine hand this day; and thou shalt know that I *am* the Lord
[Jehovah]. And Ahab said, By whom? And he said, Thus saith the Lord [Jehovah], *Even* by the young men of the princes of the provinces. Then he said,

15 Who shall order [begin [12]] the battle? And he answered, Thou. Then he num-
bered the young men of the princes of the provinces, and they were two [13] hun-
dred and thirty-two: and after them he numbered all the people, *even* all the
16 children of Israel, *being* seven thousand. And they went out at noon. But Ben-
hadad *was* drinking himself drunk in the pavilions, he and the kings, the thirty
17 and two kings that helped him. And the young men of the princes of the pro-
18 vinces went out first; and Ben-hadad sent out, and they told him, saying, There
are men come out of Samaria. And he said, Whether they be come out for peace,
19 take them alive; or whether they be come out for war, take them alive. [14] So
these young men of the princes of the provinces came out of the city, and the
20 army which followed them. And they slew every one his man [15]: and the Syri-
21 ans fled; and Israel pursued them: and Ben-hadad the king of Syria escaped on
an horse with the horsemen. And the king of Israel went out, and smote the
horses and chariots, and slew the Syrians with a great slaughter.

22 And the prophet came to the king of Israel, and said unto him, Go, strength-
en thyself, and mark, and see what thou doest: for at the return of the year
23 the king of Syria will come up against thee. And the servants of the king of Syria
said unto him, Their gods *are* gods of the hills; therefore they[16] were stronger
than we; but let us fight against them in the plain, and surely we shall be
24 stronger than they. And do this thing, Take the kings away, every man out of
25 his place, and put captains in their rooms: and number thee an army, like the
army that thou hast lost, horse for horse, and chariot for chariot: and we will
fight against them in the plain, *and* surely we shall be stronger than they. And
26 he hearkened unto their voice, and did so. And it came to pass at the return of
the year, that Ben-hadad numbered the Syrians, and went up to Aphek, to fight
27 against Israel. And the children of Israel were numbered, and were all present
[were provided for[17]], and went against them: and the children of Israel pitched
before them like two little flocks of kids; but the Syrians filled the country.
28 And there came a man of God, and spake unto the king of Israel, and said,
Thus saith the Lord [Jehovah], Because the Syrians have said, The Lord [Jeho-
vah] *is* God of the hills, but he *is* not God of the valleys, therefore will I deliver
29 all this great multitude into thine hand, and ye[18] shall know that I *am* the Lord
[Jehovah]. And they pitched one over against the other seven days. And *so*
it was, that in the seventh day the battle was joined: and the children of Israel
30 slew of the Syrians an hundred thousand footmen in one day. But the rest
fled to Aphek, into the city; and *there* a [the[19]] wall fell upon twenty and seven
thousand of the men *that were* left. And Ben-hadad fled, and came into the city,
into an inner chamber.

31 And his servants said unto him,[20] Behold now, we have heard that the kings
of the house of Israel *are* merciful kings: let us, I pray thee, put sackcloth on
our loins, and ropes upon our heads, and go out to the king of Israel: perad-
32 venture he will save thy life. So they girded sackcloth on their loins, and *put*
ropes on their heads, and came to the king of Israel, and said, Thy servant Ben-
hadad saith, I pray thee, let me live. And he said, *Is* he yet alive? he *is* my
33 brother. Now the men did diligently observe whether *any thing would come*
from him [and the men interpreted this favorably[21]], and did hastily catch *it*:[22]
and they said, Thy brother Ben-hadad. Then he said, Go ye, bring him. Then
Ben-hadad came forth to him; and he caused him to come up into the chariot.
34 And *Ben-hadad* said unto him, The cities which my father took from thy father,
I will restore; and thou shalt make streets for thee in Damascus, as my father
made in Samaria. Then *said Ahab*,[23] I will send thee away with this covenant.
So he made a covenant with him, and sent him away.

35 And a certain man of the sons of the prophets said unto his neighbor in the
word of the Lord [Jehovah], Smite me, I pray thee. And the man refused to
36 smite him. Then said he unto him, Because thou hast not obeyed the voice of
the Lord [Jehovah], behold, as soon as thou art departed from me, a lion shall
37 slay thee. And as soon as he was departed from him, a lion found him, and slew
him. Then he found another man, and said, Smite me, I pray thee. And the man

38 smote him, so that in smiting he wounded *him*. So the prophet departed, and
waited for the king by the way, and disguised himself with ashes upon his face
39 [with a band over his eyes[24]]. And as the king passed by, he cried unto the
king: and he said, Thy servant went out into the midst of the battle; and behold,
a man turned aside, and brought a man unto me, and said, Keep this man: if by
any means he be missing, then shall thy life be for his life, or else thou shalt pay
40 a talent of silver. And as thy servant was busy here and there, he was gone.
41 And the king of Israel said unto him, So *shall* thy judgment *be;* thyself hast
decided *it*. And he hasted, and took the ashes away from his face [band away
42 from his eyes]; and the king of Israel discerned him that he *was* of the prophets.
And he said unto him, Thus saith the Lord [Jehovah], Because thou hast let go
out of *thy* hand a man whom I appointed to utter destruction, therefore thy life
43 shall go for his life, and thy people for his people. And the king of Israel
went to his house heavy and displeased, and came to Samaria.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

[1] [The Vat. Sept. transposes chapters xx. and xxi., thus making the affair of Naboth precede the deliverance and victories of Ahab, but making the narrative of the wars of Israel under Ahab with the Syrians continuous.

[2] Ver. 1.—[Many MSS., followed by the Sept., have this name uniformly with the final letter r instead of d.

[3] Ver. 2.—[Ver. 3 begins at this point in the arrangement of our Heb. Bibles, of Luther, and of our author; the Sept. divides as in the A. V.

[4] Ver. 3.—[The Vat. Sept. omits this qualification of Ben-hadad's demand.

[5] Ver. 5.—[On this form of oath, כִּי אִם cf. xvii. 1.

[6] Ver. 6.—The Sept., Vulg., and Syr., by taking the pronoun in the plural, make this refer to the officers of Ben-hadad—whatsoever they should fancy.

[7] Ver. 7.—[The Sept. more particularly, "my sons and my daughters."

[8] Ver. 8.—[The negative is here printed לוֹא, which form occurs but twice elsewhere, but many MSS. give the more usual form לֹא.

[9] Ver. 9.—[The Sept. changes the pronoun, and reads, "tell your lord." The other VV. all follow the Heb., but below the Alex. Sept. omits the words "at the first."

[10] Ver. 10.—[אֱלֹהִים is here, as in xix. 2, connected with verbs in the plural, and is rightly translated as referring to the false gods of Ben-hadad. The Vat. Sept., however, has ὁ Θεός in the singular, and the Chald. דַּחֲלָתָא = the terrors.

[11] Ver. 10.—[On the meaning of שֹׁעַל see the Exeg. Com.

[12] Ver. 14.—[מִי־יֶאְסֹר הַמִּלְחָמָה = who shall join the battle, *i. e.*, begin the fight?

[13] Ver. 15.—[The Alex. Sept. alters this number to 332, an evident error.

[14] Ver. 19.—The Sept., by introducing the negative μὴ and changing the form of the verb to ἐξελθάτωσαν makes ver. 19 a part of Ben-hadad's order: "Let not the princes .... go out," &c.

[15] Ver. 20.—[The Sept. very unnecessarily reduplicates: καὶ ἐδευτέρωσεν ἕκαστος τὸν παρ' αὐτοῦ.

[16] Ver. 23.—[The Sept., by putting the verb in the singular, refers the superiority more immediately to the God of Israel.

[17] Ver. 27.—[The translation of the A. V. is certainly wrong, resting upon a false derivation of כָּלְכְּלוּ from כָּל. The word is POLP.: from כּוּל, and means "were supplied with provisions." Vulg. *acceptis cibariis*. Our author renders [*mit Lebensmitteln*] *versorgt;* Keil, too fully, "were supplied with ammunition and provisions." The Vat. Sept. neglects the word altogether, but the Alex. renders διοικήθησαν.

[18] Ver. 28.—[The Sept. puts this in the sing., "thou shalt know."

[19] Ver. 30.—[הַחוֹמָה — *the* wall &c. of the city. "The fleeing Syrians probably, in order to make a stand in Aphek against the pursuing Israelites, had partly climbed and occupied the city walls, and partly sought behind them a shelter for their protection," Keil. Many MSS. read without the ו, and Kennicott, adopting this reading, would understand the word of the Simoom, or pestilential wind, by which so many of the Syrians were destroyed. There seems little support for this.

[20] Ver. 31.—[The Vat. Sept. makes this the address of Ben-hadad to his servants. At the close of the verse both recensions have the plural pronoun of the first person—save our lives.

[21] Ver. 33.—[וְהָאֲנָשִׁים יְנַחֲשׁוּ. The verb נָחַשׁ seems to be always used of augury, foreboding, presentiment, &c. (*cf.* Gen. xliv. 5, 15; Lev. xix. 26; 2 Kings xvii. 17, &c.), and is always translated in this general sense in the A. V. except in this passage and in Gen. xxx. 27, where it should be. All the versions here concur in this sense, *e. g.* the Vulg. *Quod acceperunt viri pro omine*. Our author translates as in the brackets—*Und die Männer deuteten es günstig*. So also Keil: "These took the words of Ahab as a good omen."

[22] Ver. 33.—[וַיַּחְלְטוּ הֲמִמֶּנּוּ. These words are of much more difficult interpretation, especially because of the ἅπαξ λεγ. word חָלַט. For a discussion of its meaning see the Exeg. Com.

[23] Ver. 34.—[All the VV. concur in making this clause a continuation of the words of Ben-hadad. Keil agrees with our author and with the AV. in changing the speaker to Ahab.

[24] Ver. 38.—אֲפֵר is rendered in the A. V. as in the Vulg. and some of the other VV. as if it had been pointed אֵפֶר. The Chald. and Sept. (τελαμών) have undoubtedly hit the true sense, which in the Chald. is expressed by the very similar word מַעֲפַרְת. This is agreeable to the following words עַל־עֵינָיו, and also to the readiness with which it was removed, ver. 41.—F. G.]

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

Vers. 1-9. **And Ben-hadad.** &c. The entire account of chap. xx. was derived, as we have already remarked, from a different source than chaps. xvii., xviii., and xix. There can be no other reason for our author's having introduced it here than this, that the victory of Ahab over the Syrians occurred previous in time to the execution of Naboth (chap. xxi.), which gave occasion for the reappearance of Elijah.—Concerning *Ben-hadad*, see chap. xv. 18. *The thirty-two kings* were not rulers over entire territories, but were lords of single cities and their districts (*cf.* Jos. xii. 7), vassals (Grotius: *reguli in clientela ipsius*), who paid tribute to Ben-hadad, and in the event of war, were obliged to furnish auxiliaries. The cause and aim of the expedition was, according to ver. 3, to plunder Ahab, and make him a vassal. הַטּוֹבִים can hardly refer, as Thenius and Keil would have it, to wives *and* sons, but only to the latter; by them are meant not Ahab's own sons, but the best, that is, the most eminent young men of the city or the country, whom Ben-hadad demanded as hostages. The import of his message was, "surrender to me all these, and I will withdraw." When Ahab, without hesitation, consented so submissively and timorously, Ben-hadad grew only the more audacious and insolent in his demands; he was sorry for having demanded so little, and he now threatens to give over the king's palace and the dwellings of the king's servants to be plundered (the pillaging of the entire city can hardly be meant, as Keil and Kimchi think).—**Whatsoever is pleasant in thine eyes,** *i. e.*, not merely silver and gold, but everything costly and valuable. According to Maurer, Gesenius, Keil, and others, כִּי, of ver. 5, serves, like ὅτι, only to introduce the *oratio directa;* and כִּי before אִם, ver. 6, is a repetition for the sake of emphasis merely; אִם, however, meaning in that place "when;" better Thenius: "כִּי, ver. 5, serves to strengthen the assertion; כִּי אִם, ver. 6, to strengthen it still more, so that the latter is, according to the sense, to be rendered: but since Ben-hadad increases his demand." *The elders of the land* (ver. 7), in distinction from the elders of the city (chap. xxi. 8), being the highest officials, perhaps, had their court at their residences, or, upon the approach of Ben-hadad, had betaken themselves thither with their treasures. Ahab calls them together to say to them: Ben-hadad is not satisfied with my treasures, he wants yours also. רָעָה does not here mean "mischief" (Luther: how malevolent his purpose is), but "disaster," "destruction:" he intends to ruin us completely.

Vers. 10-12. **And Ben-hadad sent unto him,** &c., ver. 10. He seeks, by boasting in the genuine oriental style, to overawe Ahab (*cf.* 2 Sam. xvii. 13); the import of his words is, My army is so large that if, in the impending desolation of Samaria, every one of my people desired to take away with him only a handful of rubbish, many would have to go back empty-handed. The explanation of the Rabbins and the Chaldean: *Si suffecerit pulvis Somron, ut feratur soleis plantarum pedum populi qui mecum est,* is incorrect, since שֹׁעַל in Isai. xl. 12; Ezek. xiii. 19, the only other places where the word occurs, means not *vola pedis*, but the hollow of the hand. Just as incorrect is the interpretation of Josephus: "He could, with his army, cast up a dike higher than his walls were, if every one of his people contributed only a handful of earth." Ahab's somewhat defiant response, expressed in words of a proverb, ver. 11, proceeded, perhaps, from the elders, who were much more determined and courageous, and were willing to await the utmost. The import of the proverb is the Latin: *ne triumphum canas ante victoriam;* the German: *Verkaufe das Fell des Bären nicht, bevor du ihn hast.* Let not him who is arming for the fight, boast as though he had already laid aside his weapons, *i. e.*, had gained the victory. The סֻכּוֹת, ver. 12, in which the drinking-bout occurred, were not tents of sailcloth, but huts made of branches of trees, like those put up to-day for the Turkish pashas and Agas on their expeditions (Keil, Rosenmüller *A. u. N. Morgenland* III. *s.* 198). The translation of שִׂימוּ, "bring up! (the siege instruments) as a command to prepare for immediately storming the place" (so Thenius, following the Sept. οἰκοδομήσατε χάρακα), does not accord with the use of the word elsewhere: in 1 Sam. xi. 11; Job. i. 17, the word seems to refer simply to setting the army in array.

Ver. 13. **There came a prophet unto Ahab.** The conjecture of the Rabbins that this prophet may have been Micaiah (chap. xxii. 8) has no historical basis. The entrance of a prophet here and in vers. 28, 35 Thenius thinks inconsistent with the statements, chap. xviii. 4, 22; xix. 10, 14. But the statement is nowhere made that in the persecution of the prophets all had been put to death; Obadiah, in fact, had concealed a hundred of them who did not perish, and Elijah mentioned himself as the only remaining one, because at that time he was the only one who openly appeared as a prophet. The persecution appears to have taken place principally at the time of the famine, and to have ceased after the flight of Elijah. On the approach of Ben-hadad there were other things to be thought of beside the extermination of the prophets, and in the time of their distress a prophet who foretold victory was even welcome. From what quarter this prophet came to Samaria, whether he lived there, or whether he had been sent there from one of the schools of the prophets, must remain undecided. In no case, however, could the compiler of our books have been so thoughtless as to have inserted in chap. 20 anything which stands in contradiction to the immediately preceding chapters. Where Elijah sojourned at the time of the war we do not learn. That it was not he but some other prophet who announced the promise of victory to Ahab cannot be wondered at under the existing circumstances. Elijah was the least suited of all for such a message.

Vers. 14-16. **By the servants of the princes,** ver. 14. Gerlach: "The administrators appointed over separate districts of the country appear at that time to have assembled with the army in Samaria, and each one among them had a sort of body-guard, or such servants about him as generally executed his orders" (2 Sam. xviii. 15). The נְעָרִים are therefore not "pages unaccustomed to fight" (Thenius), or "young lads of very tender age" (Ewald); much rather are we to suppose that they were a very

select body of strong young men. Ahab would not have consented to appoint weak, inexperienced boys for the advance guard, without at least having expressed some scruples. The extraordinary divine aid consisted not in this, that the victory should be gained by boys, but by such a small number (for that very reason the number is so explicitly specified). Ahab's question, *Who shall open the battle?* represents him as by no means a "courageous and resolute man" (Thenius), for such a man, in a struggle where it was a question of life or death, would not first ask a prophet who was to make the attack. The *thou* in the reply, moreover, does not mean that Ahab was to lead the two hundred and thirty-two, but that the attack was to be made by Israel. According to ver. 21, Ahab did not march out until the Syrians had betaken themselves to flight. The very small army of only *seven thousand* is a token of a not very glorious condition of the might of the kingdom under Ahab. The position of Jarchi is that of a true Rabbi, viz., that the seven thousand were those who had not bowed the knee to Baal (chap. xix. 18); the number, without doubt, is here an historical one. *At noon* they marched out, that is, at the time when Ben-hadad, haughty and confident, had given himself up with his vassals to the table, news of which had probably been received in the city.

Vers. 17–21. **And Ben-hadad sent out,** &c., ver. 17. When he was made aware that something was going on, and the messengers who had been sent out brought him news that a troop was drawing near, in his haughtiness he gave the command to take them all prisoners, even in case they had come to treat or capitulate. Starke, indeed, fills out the idea of *alive* with "that they may be cut down before mine eyes," which thought, however, is not necessarily contained in the word. According to ver. 20 they fought man to man, each one coping with the enemy immediately opposed to him; the addition of the Sept.: καὶ ἐδευτέρωσεν ἕκαστος τὸν παρ' αὐτοῦ is gloss, and does not justify an alteration of the text. עַל־סוּס וּפָרָשִׁים does not mean *equis mutatis alternis* (Schulz), nor according to the Sept. ἐφ' ἵππων ἱππέων, but upon a horse (according to Thenius: on a hastily seized chariot-horse) *with his rider*, *i. e.*, in company with the horsemen. Not till now did the king march out of the city with the remainder of the garrison. In place of וַיַּךְ the Sept. has καὶ ἔλαβε, therefore Thenius would read וַיִּקַּח, which is unnecessary, as the idea of "taking possession of" is contained in the word "slew," according to Vatablus: he smote those who were endeavoring to escape upon horses and chariots. In any case the idea of butchering of the horses and the demolishing of the chariots is not intended.

Vers. 22–25. **And the prophet came,** &c. ver. 22. The same prophet as that mentioned in ver. 13, as we see by the article. The translation of הִתְחַזֵּק "be of good cheer!" or "be brave!" is not suitable, inasmuch as Ahab had just now gained the victory; therefore: fortify yourself, make yourself strong—namely, by collecting your forces of war. *At the return of the year*, *i. e.*, with the beginning of the next year, "when, after the close of the winter rains, campaigns were customarily commenced, 2 Sam. xi. 1" (Keil). Vers. 23–25 do not belong to the speech of the prophet, who only announced the coming war; the man of God (ver. 28) is the first to tell the king what was to happen in that conflict; vers. 23–25 are thus an insertion of the narrator's. The sense of ver. 23 is this: in the mountainous region of Samaria we were defeated by the Israelites, because we were there obliged to contend against their gods who are gods of the mountains; in the plains, on the other hand, where those gods do not reside, we will most certainly be victorious. The *dii montium*, who are enthroned on mountains and direct and watch over everything that takes place within their region, and accordingly prosper and defend the inhabitants of the mountains, are mentioned in other places in heathen antiquities (Deyling, *Observatt.* III. 12; Winer, *Real-Wört.-Buch* I. p. 154). The advice to remove the kings was caused, perhaps, by the fact that they as vassals marched with him only through compulsion, and therefore were not in earnest, or not entirely to be depended upon in a fight, while the leaders appointed by Ben-hadad himself would be bound to obey him absolutely, and thus there would be greater harmony in inaugurating the war (*cf.* chap. xxii. 31). The removal of the princes was accompanied with the loss of the auxiliaries furnished by them, therefore Benhadad was obliged to form an army from his own people that would equal the former one, including the auxiliary troops.

Vers. 26–30. **And it came to pass at the return of the year,** &c., ver. 26. Ben-hadad's wish being to fight in the plain, this Aphek spoken of can be neither that one at the foot of Lebanon, in the tribe of Asher (Josh. xiii. 4; xix. 30), nor the highly elevated one of the east of the sea of Galilee; it is rather Aphek in the plain of Jezreel, in the tribe of Issachar, "the largest plain of Palestine, where from the times of Joshua to Napoleon so many great battles have been fought" (Keil). *cf.* 1 Sam. xxix. 1; xxviii. 4; Robinson's *Palestine* III. p. 477.—חֲשִׂפֵי ver. 27 means properly something separated (from חָשַׂף in its original meaning—to separate), literally, then, like two flocks of kids, *i. e.*, "like two little flocks of kids separated from the main herd" (Keil). These flocks pasture mostly on the cliffs, and are smaller than the flocks of sheep. "The figure was used, without question, to present in a vivid manner the insignificance of the Israelitish army, separated into two bands, as contrasted with that of the Syrians which covered the entire plain" (Thenius). *The seventh day* (ver. 29) was probably chosen for the attack as being a day of good omen (Josh. vi. 15). There is a difficulty in the number *one hundred thousand;* to slaughter so many men in *one* day seems scarcely possible. Either נכה here has, like our word "beat," the meaning of "defeat," so that by 100,000 the size of the entire army is designated, or the number is a mistake, to be classed with those mistakes in numbers which arise from confounding figures of similar appearance. The falling of *the wall* (ver. 30), according to the old interpreters, resulted from a miracle; according to others, from an earthquake; according to Gerlach and Keil, through a special interposition of God. Thenius supposes a plan for undermining carried on by night on the part of the Israelites; they then enticed a part of the besieged away to the place, and at the capture which occurred thereupon the rest were put to death. Ewald says: the rubbish

of the quickly devastated city buried the remaining 27,000. The Sept. translates חֶדֶר בְּחָדֶר, *εἰς τὸν οἶκον τοῦ κοιτῶνος εἰς τὸ ταμεῖον*; the Vulgate: *in cubiculum, quod erat intra cubiculum;* it is, however, not necessary to refer it to a bed-chamber. Josephus has *εἰς ὑπογαῖον οἶκον ἐκρύβη.* Thenius interprets arbitrarily: Ben-hadad fled into the fortress of the city, and there from one chamber into another (*cf.* chap. xxii. 25; 2 Chron. xviii. 24).

Vers. 31–34. **And his servants said, &c.**, ver. 31. Sackcloth was a sign of penitence, the ropes about the neck signs of most complete subjection. The latter custom still exists in the East. "The peasants in the region of Ningpo (China) are obliged to bring the contributions levied upon them to the city with ropes about their necks, as a sign of their subjection." (*Allg. Zeitung*, 1862, Suppl. s. 2,931). In place of *thy life* the Sept. and Vulg. have, our lives; evidently incorrect. יְנַחֲשׁוּ (ver. 33) Vulg. *Quod acceperunt viri pro omine;* they took the expression of Ahab's to be a good omen. The words וַיְחַלְּטוּ הֲמִמֶּנּוּ are variously understood. The Talmud interprets the verb חָלַט, occurring only in this place, by declare, and this Maurer and Keil follow: *declarare eum fecerunt, an ex ipso pronunciatum esset, num ex animi sententia hoc dixisset.* Others consider חָלַט equivalent to חָלַץ, to snatch, and according to the Syriac, Chald., and some manuscripts unite the ה standing before מִמֶּנּוּ with the verb as a suffix: *arripuerunt id ex eo* (*ex ejus ore, ne istud revocare posset*): so likewise the Vulg.: *rapuerunt verbum ex ore ejus;* the Sept. has *καὶ ἀνελέξαντο τὸν λόγον αὐτοῦ ἐκ τοῦ στόματος αὐτοῦ*; following this Ewald would read: הַדָּבָר מִמֶּנּוּ in place of הממנו, *i.e.*, they hastily quoted his own word, and adopted it as theirs. Thenius: they took him immediately at his own word. The words "*my brother*" contained more than they demanded; namely, not only that he would grant Ben-hadad his life, but that he would treat him not even as captive, rather as a king of equal rank, in fine, as though nothing had happened between them.

Ver. 34. **The cities which my father, &c.** The cities mentioned in chap. xv. 20 cannot be referred to here, since these were taken in the time of Baasha, and Baasha was not the father of Ahab, and the city of Samaria, besides, was not yet built; we are therefore compelled to assume that Ben-hadad's father, as formerly with Baasha, so afterwards with Omri, Ahab's father, had a war, and that, too, after the building of Samaria, which war was concluded by the surrender of certain cities, and can easily be included in what is spoken of in chap. xvi. 27. The חוּצוֹת are neither fortified places, nor places for paying customs, nor pasture grounds, but *streets*, in which the Syrians were accustomed to live and do business; thoroughfares for licensed merchants (Böttcher), bazars (Thenius). The words וַאֲנִי בַּבְּרִית אֲשַׁלְּחֶךָּ, can only be translated: but I will permit you to go hence free, in accordance with the covenant, *i.e.*, the concluded treaty; thus translated they could only have been the words of Ahab, and we are compelled to supply at the beginning—"Ahab replied." This is much more admissible than, following the grammatically incorrect translation of the Vulgate (*et ego* [Benadad] *fœderatus recedam a te*), to alter the text as Thenius does, and read, אֲשֻׁלַּח־נָא, *i.e.*, "and I, on the other, wish to be sent away in accordance with an agreement concluded and sworn to." Opposed to this is the emphatic וַאֲנִי, which throughout is not suited to Ben-hadad; moreover, the two following verbs, of which Ahab is the subject, compel us to refer the אני to him

Ver. 35. **And a certain man of the sons of the prophets, &c.** The expression בְּנֵי הַנְּבִיאִים appears here for the first time; we are not to consider the "sons of the prophets" young men necessarily, but rather members of the society of prophets, or, if we will, of the order of prophets; according to 2 Kings iv. 1, there were married men among them. They were called sons in distinction from the heads and leaders of the separate communities of prophets (*cf.* Winer, *Real-Wört.-Buch* II. p. 282). The רֵעַ is a fellow-prophet. Concerning בִּדְבַר see under chap. xiii. 1. The passage vers. 35–43 is not a part which is arbitrarily appended to the preceding narrative, while not originally belonging to it (Thenius), but is an essential constituent part of it—its fitting conclusion, for it furnishes the solemn announcement of the divine punishment for Ahab's perverse procedure with Ben-hadad (Vers. 32–34). All that the prophet says and does, is summed up in the declaration of v. 42, which must not be lost sight of, as the principal thing. Just as the victory was foretold to the king by a prophet, as an act of God, so also the punishment for his conduct, after the victory had been granted him, was made known to him by a prophet (whether by the same one or some other is unknown), as a judgment of God upon him. This happened in a peculiar, but in every respect in a genuinely prophetic and solemn manner, namely, by means of symbolic action followed by explicit declaration (see above, p. 119). The symbolic action, however, was of such a kind as not only to present to the eyes of the king the blamableness of his conduct, but also to lead him, without his knowing it or wishing it, to pass sentence upon himself, and by that means declare that the prophesied punishment was justly deserved.

Ver. 35. **Smite me, I pray thee, &c.**, that is, wound me (*cf.* ver. 37). The prophet was shortly about to represent himself as a warrior returning from a severe fight (*cf.* ver. 39: into the midst of the battle); the wounding of the prophet renders all the remaining symbolic action conditional, and just for that reason it is made so markedly prominent. The demand: Smite me! was accompanied without doubt with a statement of the reason and with an appeal to the "word of Jehovah," and for that very reason the refusal to fulfil the demand, on the part of a fellow-prophet especially, was not at all justifiable. But because the prophet without being wounded could not carry out the action which he had been charged with, nor make a prophetic announcement of the coming punishment, he turned and made his request of another, who consented. What is related besides in ver. 36 of the fellow-prophet who refused, does not really belong to the main action, but is a side feature of

the narrative, and shows itself to be such from the brevity and fragmentary character of the statements. It is nevertheless important, because by it the main action is made only the more conspicuous, and is at the same time referred to the necessity of unconditional obedience to the "word of God" within the society of prophets. To oppose this word is a thing not consistent with the nature of the prophet's position, whose calling consists wholly in being the instrument of "Jehovah's word" (*cf.* chap. xiii. 21, p. 144). Ver. 37: הַכֵּה וּפָצֹעַ, smiting and wounding, *i. e.*, he smote him in such a manner as to wound him. אֲפֵר, ver. 38, is not equivalent to אֵפֶר ashes, as the Vulg., Luther, and others translate, but means (from אָפַר to enwrap, to surround) head-bandage, Sept. τελαμών, bandage (not turban, as Maurer and others would have it). The bandages betokened one severely wounded, and served at the same time to conceal his features, so that Ahab, who was to be made to pass sentence upon himself, could not recognize him (ver. 41). *By the way* he stationed himself, because the proceeding was to take place previous to the king's return home, in the open street, and before the eyes of his entire retinue, as an open testimony against himself.

Vers. 39-41. **Thy servant went out,** &c. ver. 39. De Wette translates אִישׁ־סָר, a man approached, but סָר does not mean "to approach," but "turn aside," turn away from the road (Ex. iii. 3; Judges xiv. 8); here, then, one who has left the field of battle. Ewald, whom Thenius follows, would read סַר which is used for שַׂר, and then translates "captain," *i. e.*, "one whom he (the wounded man) as king, a common soldier must obey," an officer. The parable would, under these circumstances, certainly be more complete, since this officer would represent Jehovah, who had given Ben-hadad into the power of Ahab; but another lection is not required. If the wounded man should suffer the prisoner committed to him to escape, he would have to forfeit his life or a talent of silver, *i. e.*, 2,600 thalers. "The prisoner is thus represented to be a very important personage" (Thenius).—In place of עֹשֶׂה (ver. 40), Houbigant reads שֹׁעֶה, Thenius פֹּנֶה (turning his eyes this way and that); wherefore the translations read: Sept., περιεβλέπετο; Vulg. *dum ego turbatus huc illucque me verterem.* This alteration of the text is absolutely unnecessary.—Concerning the signification of the parable, so much is indisputable, that the young man who had gone out into the battle is representative of Ahab, and the man intrusted to his keeping, but allowed to escape through carelessness, is the representative of King Ben-hadad. The signification of the wounding is not so apparent, inasmuch, indeed, as Ahab was not wounded. The hostile treatment which Ahab suffered soon after at the hands of the released Ben-hadad (chap. 22), cannot possibly be signified, since the wounding happened before the man's escape, and besides it was not the work of the captive; still less possible is the idea of older interpreters, that it was a symbol of the wound which Ahab had inflicted on himself and the people by his idolatry and the release of Ben-hadad. Neither is Ewald's explanation acceptable, that the prophet allowed himself to be wounded by another, "and as though he had a right, on account of the bloody injury which he had received, to call aloud on the king for help," put himself in Ahab's way. It is not acceptable, because the wounded man did not cry to the king for help, but demanded of him, as the chief judge, a decision as to whether he was punishable or not; moreover, the king answered him, "thyself hast decided it" (מִשְׁפָּטֶךָ ver. 40). We would do better to recognize in the wounded man a picture not only of Ahab, but at the same time of the people of Israel, inasmuch as the king is the people—individualized, is the deputy and representative of his people. The sentence of punishment (ver. 42) especially shows this: Thy life shall go for his life, and thy people for his people. Israel had just endured a hard, bloody fight, and had carried off the promised victory; but now, in the person of its king, it had let the arch-enemy, whom the Lord had given into their hands, go free and unpunished. They sinned therefore against Jehovah, whose will it was that this enemy, who had sworn to destroy Israel, should not be suffered to escape out of their hands, but should suffer merited punishment; their suffering him to escape was a practical denial of the might, the goodness, and the justice of Jehovah. After the king had pronounced his own sentence, the aim of the disguise by means of bandages, indeed the aim of the entire symbolic proceeding was attained, and hence the prophet threw aside the bands, and allowed himself to be recognized as a prophet, as one who declares the word of Jehovah; following the symbolic-prophetic action comes (ver. 42) the solemn, prophetic declaration, as in chap. xi. 31.

Vers. 42-43. **Thus saith the Lord, Because,** &c., ver. 42. Ben-hadad is called אִישׁ־חֶרְמִי, *i. e.*, man of my curse, the man whom I appointed to destruction. *Cf.* Isai. xxxiv. 5: My sword shall come down upon Idumea, וְעַל־עַם חֶרְמִי לְמִשְׁפָּט (Mal. iii. 24). The punishment which Ben-hadad and his people had deserved, but which thou, disobeying the Lord, hast remitted completely, and on thine own authority, shall fall upon thee and thy nation. King and people seem here inseparable from one another, as head and members. Ahab probably had a great desire to seize the prophet for this independent outspoken reproof and curse, but he had the less courage to do it since he had given the sentence of judgment himself; still he was deeply moved to resistance in his heart, and angrily withdrew (סַר, from סָרַר, to be stubborn, refractory, Deut. xxi. 18; Isai. xxx. 1, meaning more than disheartened or low-spirited).

HISTORICAL AND ETHICAL.

1. *The two victories over the Syrians* were designed, according to the declaration of both the prophets who foretold them, to effect "*that thou,* (king) *and ye* (the entire nation) *may know that I am Jehovah,*" that is to say, that Jehovah is the only true God, the God of Israel. In this declaration we have specified the purpose of the entire narrative, and at the same time the stand-point from which it is to be comprehended. That day on Mount Carmel, if it did not put an end to idolatry at once, had at least

broken its power, as was already evident from the mere fact that the prophets were no longer persecuted and put to death, but could again go about openly and continue the work begun by Elijah; they even had access to Ahab again. Still the conversion was by no means complete, but rather, being weak, it needed support and strength from above if a complete relapse was to be prevented from setting in. This assistance came from the display of the power of Jehovah, a power which rescued in a time of great need and distress. The attack of the Syrian king, who had grown so mighty, threatened Ahab and his kingdom with destruction; at this crisis God, who never forsakes his people, who is "merciful and gracious, long-suffering and abundant in goodness and truth" (Ex. xxxiv. 6), repeatedly grants them the victory, which was so extraordinary and wonderful, that it could not possibly be ascribed to human power and strength, but only to God, to His might, His grace and truth. It was designed to make king and people unmistakably certain that it is not Baal or any other god but the God Jehovah who "doeth wonders, and declareth His strength among His people, and redeemeth His people with a strong arm" (Ps. lxxvii. 15). And in order that every one may know whence and from whom such a victory came, he caused it to be foretold by his servants the prophets. If ever anything could be, this double victory was designed to open the eyes of king and people, and bring them to a recognition of the "thus saith the Lord, 'I am Jehovah.'" We have thus in this account, not merely an ordinary history of wars, but a part of the divine history of salvation before us, which in an individual instance is what the entire history of Israel is in its completeness, namely, a display of the special dealings with a guidance of His people on God's part. Although the first victory is a marked evidence of the saving might and grace of Jehovah, the second, by which the entire Syrian power was destroyed, was for Israel as well as for the Syrians themselves a still more remarkable proof of the fact, that Jehovah was no mere mountain, and local, or national divinity, but that the whole earth was His, and He was God of all nations (Ex. xix. 5; Ps. xxiv. 1). He who reduces the God of Israel to a mere local or national deity, as is so often done even nowadays, stands on the same footing with the "servants of the king of Syria" (vers. 23, 28).

2. *King Ahab* appears by no means in the present part of the historical narrative "in a more favorable light than in those [previously alluded to, traditional] passages" (Thenius); on the contrary he is just as weak, faithless, and devoid of character. There is not the slightest evidence of a single religious emotion, in a time of need and distress; he neither calls upon the Lord for help and assistance, nor renders thanks to him after his rescue from danger. The name of Jehovah does not pass his lips. He does not oppose himself to the haughty, boastful enemy "as a resolutely determined man," but is faint-hearted and timorous, calls himself his "servant," submits to his demands, and is ready to surrender to him not only his gold and silver, but also his wives and sons. It is only when the whole nation cries out to him, "You have no right to do that!" that he plucks up courage and assumes quite a different tone: to-day despairing and way down, to-morrow defiant and lofty; still for some time he inquired of the very prophet who foretold to him his victory, whether indeed he should make the attack and place himself at the head of his people. When the danger was past it did not occur to him to prepare for a similar peril; a prophet must first suggest it to him and give him instructions to that end. After the second victory, which brings into his power the bold, dangerous enemy who was constantly threatening Israel, and who, as circumstances afterwards gave evidence, was a false and treacherous foe, he acknowledges him as a brother, treats him with royal honor, and allows him to depart on the easiest possible conditions. This last-mentioned act later interpreters and historians have set down as greatly to his credit; it was "an act which did honor to his heart" (Bauer), a token of a "naturally very noble mind" (J. D. Michaelis), or of "natural kindness of heart and confiding disposition" (Thenius), he had "magnanimously granted life and liberty to a wounded and captive enemy" (Duncker). Not much can be said, however, concerning kindness of heart in connection with that man who at one time permitted the slaughter of defenceless prophets because they opposed the wild, lascivious Baal and Astarte worship, and subsequently permitted the innocent Naboth to be executed through deceit and treachery, merely because he wanted his vineyard; and when he called that barbarous Syrian Ben-hadad, who had set out on an expedition merely to plunder and devastate, and, persevering, sought to destroy Israel at once, his "brother," and at the same time honored him as a king—whereas he had found fault with such a man as Elijah, charging him with being a disturber of Israel (chap. xviii. 17). We see no evidence in such action of generosity and magnanimity, but simply that foolishness which is usually allied with weakness and lack of character. He is flattered that the highest servants and generals of Benhadad should come to him in sackcloth and with ropes around their necks, and recite to him all manner of things about the well-known mercy and high-mindedness of the kings of the house of Israel, but about which in reality nothing had been known since the time of Jeroboam. That he should allow himself to be immediately influenced and entrapped by their flattery, is only a proof of his fickle character and his want of serious moral conduct. The sequel (chap. xxii. 31 *sq.*) shows how wretchedly he had allowed himself to be deceived.

3. *The solemn prophetic denunciation* which Ahab drew down upon himself was in every sense justly deserved. Concerning the fitness of it and the method of its accomplishment Hess says (*loc. cit.* O. p. 146): "A very striking scene, if we take the affair out from its old surroundings, and transfer it to the present time. Considered from the point of view of the theocracy, as the old narrator looked at it, it has by no means any of the impropriety which the sense of the present day ascribes to it, but it is a noticeable evidence of the delicate insight into human nature, and the noble independence with which the prophets understood how to resent the encroachments of the kings on the rights of the theocracy." If ever a man ought to have been made harmless once for all, it was this Benhadad, who had twice wantonly commenced war for the mere sake of robbing and exercising power, who had set a small value on the lives of thousands of his subjects, and who proposed to change Sama-

ria into a heap of ruins and utterly exterminate Israel. This is no question of relations between private individuals; just as Ahab was not so much victor as Jehovah, so Ben-hadad was not Ahab's but Jehovah's prisoner. Ahab had then no right to let him go free and unpunished, for by so doing he arbitrarily interfered with the righteous decision of God, and instead of being an instrument of divine justice he became the toy of his own foolishness and imbecility. The nature and method of the prophetic denunciation was similar to that of Nathan, who caused David to utter sentence against himself concerning his deed (2 Sam. xii. 1 *sq.*). What took place there by means of a spoken parable took place here through an acted one, whose peculiarity is by no means any more striking than the one which we find *pro ex.* in Jer. xiii. 1 *sq.*; xxvii. 2 *sq.*; Ezek. v. 1 *sq.*; xxiv. 3 *sq.* At the same time, however, it gives us an opportunity, as Von Gerlach observes, "to gain an insight into the awful solemnity of the prophetic office at this period of the revolt." What an obedience to the word of Jehovah, what independence and courage were required to do what this son of the prophets did! When Duncker says (*loc. cit.* p. 412): "The prophets of Jehovah were very much dissatisfied with this merciful forbearance; as Samuel had once blamed Saul, so now they blamed Ahab passionately and bitterly," his remarks spring from the same spirit of animosity, in accordance with which they discover something noble and good in the actions of Ahab and men like him, but place the doings of the prophets in the worst possible light. Clericus has indeed remarked with justice: *Factum Ahabi, quamvis clementiæ speciem præ se ferat, non erat veræ clementiæ, quæ non est erga latrones exercenda; qui si dimittantur, multo magis nocebunt, quam antea, quemadmodum re vera fecit Benhadad.*

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

Vers. 1–43. The twice repeated victory of Ahab over the Syrians proclaimed aloud and distinctly (*a*) the power and strength of the Lord (Ben-hadad came with thirty-two kings, horses and chariots, and a great army, vers. 1 and 10, the first time, with more than a hundred thousand men the second time, ver. 29. Ahab had only seven thousand; two hundred and thirty-two decided the battle, ver. 15, the first time, and the second time his army was like two flocks of kids, ver. 27; nevertheless, he conquered. If ever, it could be said in this case: the horse is prepared against the day of battle, but safety is of the Lord, Prov. xxi. 31; 1 Mac. iii. 18, 19. Every king who goes to battle should consider what is written in Ps. xxxiii. 16 *sq.*, and his army should sing: By our own strength nothing is done, &c., through God we shall do valiantly, Ps. lx. 14; lxxxiv. 6). (*b*) The grace and mercy of the Lord. (Ahab had deserved nothing as little as he had this repeated victory, for he had introduced the worship of idols, abandoned the confederacy, &c., divine judgments had been fruitless. However, God granted him the victory, not from any merit of his, but out of pure grace and compassion. He endured with much long-suffering, &c., Rom. ix. 22. He is long-suffering, not willing that any, &c., 2 Pet. iii. 9; Ezek. xviii. 23. But the great triumph cried out to Ahab and Israel: Despisest thou the riches, &c., Rom. ii. 4–6. Great victories ought not to make a king and his people haughty, but humble, and bring them to the knowledge that He, the Lord, is God alone.) Vers. 1–21. The war between Ben-hadad and Ahab; (*a*) Ben-hadad's invasion and demands; (*b*) Ahab's danger and distress; (*c*) Israel's victory. Vers. 1–11. The messages of Ben-hadad to Ahab, and his responses. (*a*) The first one, ver. 1–4; (*b*) the second, vers. 5–9; (*c*) the third, vers. 10, 11.—Vers. 1–4. WÜRT SUMM.: In these two kings we see what a thing the human heart is, how insolent and timorous by turns (Jer. xvii. 9). It is insolent when man, grown prosperous, powerful, and rich, places his confidence in his success, and haughtily despises his neighbor. But it is timid when man falls into difficulty, and neither sees nor knows any help, just as was the despairing, womanly heart of king Ahab, who took it for granted that everything was lost when he saw the hosts of his enemies.—Vers. 1–3. Ben-hadad thought that because he had the power to rob and appropriate, he also had the right to do so. But God gives power and might to kings, not to distort the right, but to protect it. The power of that one who, confiding in his own strength, treads the right under his feet, will sooner or later miserably decline.—Ver. 4. Those who no longer have a Lord in heaven whom they fear, and before whom they bow, cringe and fawn before all men who can harm or serve them. If Ahab had said to the King of kings what he sent as a response to the royal robber and boaster: "I am thine and all that I have;" he would then have had the trust and assurance: He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty, &c. (Ps. xci. 1–3). He who bows before God is sure to be humble before men; but he does not cringe to them nor throw himself away. To submit to the superior power and force that demands gold and silver is no disgrace; but to surrender wife and child is contrary to honor, duty, and conscience.—Vers. 5, 6. Haughty and insolent men grow all the more overbearing and ungovernable, and the more one submits to them and crawls before them and gratifies their desires, the more exorbitant they become in their demands. It is the curse that rests upon avarice, that the more the appetite after money and property is gratified, the more it grows, not diminishes (Prov. xvi. 8).—Vers. 7–9. Ahab and his people. (*a*) Ahab feels himself helpless and perplexed. Adversity teaches us how to pray, but Ahab had turned from the living God, who is a helper in every time of trouble, to a dumb idol that cannot help; he had forgotten how to pray, forgotten the word of the Psalm l. 15: Call on me in a day of trouble, &c.; he had sought to help himself by cowardly submission, and now he seeks help of men. In every distress we should turn first to the Lord, Ps. cxviii. 8, 9; cviii. 13; Hymn: *Wenn wir in höchsten Nöthen sein, und wissen nicht wo aus und ein, &c.* ("God is the refuge of his saints, when storms of deep distress invade"), vers. 1 and 2. (*b*) The elders and the people reproach him. Instead of his giving instructions to them with the words of Joel iii. 15, like a king, they give commands to him: Hearken not unto him. He is no real king, realizing the position which has been given to him by God, whom the people control instead of allowing themselves to be controlled by him. Tyrants are of this class: at first they do not consult the people, and do not scruple to appro-

priate their most sacred possessions, take away their faith, and burden their consciences. Ahab did not consult his people about the introduction of the worship of Baal and the persecution of the prophets; but now when he does not know how to counsel or help himself, he applies to the wish of the nation, the aid of the people is now very acceptable.—Ver. 10. Boasting and *braggadocio* are never a sign of true strength and ability, much rather of moral weakness. Ben-hadad, who speaks of the dust of Samaria, shows himself by that very act to be of dust, Ps. lxxv. 5, 6; Jer. xvii. 5 (Matt. xxvi. 33, 69).—Ver. 11. CRAMER: It is presumption for a man to celebrate a triumph before he has gained the victory; so that those who propose doing anything should say: If the Lord will, &c. (Jas. iv. 15). STARKE: We have no need to stand in fear of men who put their confidence in themselves.—Ver. 12. No success or blessing can rest upon orders which issue from drunken revelries. —Ver. 13. Formerly Ahab wished no instruction from the prophets; now in his danger and distress he admits them and listens to them. In days of prosperity the world does not care for any advice from the faithful servants of the divine word; it looks down upon them and despises them; but in the hour of sorrow and mourning it grants them access, and is glad to avail itself of their consolation. Temptation teaches us to observe God's word. They who do accept it and obey it will have as little cause as Ahab to repent of it. Before a great troop which has been abandoned of God, you have no cause to fear if God has said to you: I will help thee (Isai. xli. 13). You are to acknowledge: I am the Lord. This is the end and aim of all God's guidings and providences; if they do not attain this end in your case, your life and existence are vain and of no value, to no purpose.—Vers. 14, 15. *Cf.* 1 Sam. xiv. 6; 2 Chron. xiv. 11. A little band of brave men accomplishes more than a great troop of such as fight in a bad cause and with a wicked conscience.—Ver. 16. Ben-hadad must have sorely repented his drunkenness, as it resulted in the loss of his army, his horses and chariots. How often still is drunkenness the original cause of great sorrow and distress (Ephes. v. 18; Isai. v. 22; Prov. xxiii. 29, 30).—Ver. 18. Great men often think, when they have been disturbed in their carnal rest and security, that they only need to speak the word of command in order to be relieved from everything disagreeable and wearisome, but they must learn that they cannot rid themselves by a command of what God has sent for their humiliation.—Vers. 19–21. The way of the godless shall perish (Ps. i. 6). Their way is covetousness and pillage (vers. 3, 6), haughtiness, insolence, and assurance (vers. 10, 18), service of their belly, wantonness (ver. 16). This way shall perish; they are as chaff which the wind driveth away, "utterly consumed with terrors" (vers. 20, 21; Ps. lxxiii. 19).

Vers. 22–34. The second expedition of the Syrians against Israel. (*a*) The motive; (*b*) the issue.—Ver. 22. The advice of the prophet; Go, strengthen thyself, and mark, &c. is applicable in another, higher sense to us all. Our enemies are not idle, they are constantly returning to the attack. Even if we have by the help of the Lord conquered a victory over sin, the world, and the devil, that is not all there is to be done; we must even after the victory be on our guard and arm ourselves, so that the enemy may not fall upon us unawares (1 Cor xvi. 13; Ephes vi. 10 *sq.*; 1 Pet v. 8; Hymn: *Rüstet euch, ihr Christenleute, die Feinde suchen euch zur Beute*, &c., "My soul be on thy guard, Ten thousand foes arise," &c.).—Vers. 23–25. The evil counsellors of Ahab. (*a*) They urge him on to war and battle instead of counselling peace, because their pride was wounded and their hope of booty had been frustrated. Place no confidence in the man who incites you to begin a quarrel. The saying of Scripture (Heb. xii. 14) is applicable to all, in private as well as public life, for individuals and entire nations, for masters and servants. (*b*) They plead religious reasons, and make use of the superstition of their unwitting lord. It is possible for a bad, unholy thing to become confirmed through superstition; the man who plants himself on truth, however, will not permit himself to be deceived on such a foundation. (*c*) They shove the blame of the ignominious defeat on to the thirty-two kings, instead of seeking for it in themselves. A man always prefers to find the cause of his own misfortune and distress in another's rather than in his own sin and guilt.—Ver. 26. Ben-hadad followed their foolish and perverse advice because it was entirely in accordance with his own wish. So strong and overpowering is sinful desire in the human heart, that even the bitterest dispensation and chastisement of God suppresses it only for a time, and, as soon as the external impression ceases, it breaks forth afresh.—Ver. 28. He who calls the God of Israel, who made heaven and earth and filled them both (Jer. xxiii. 23, 24), a god of the hills or a national divinity, blasphemes His name; the Lord, however, will not let him go unpunished, who takes His name in vain.—Ver. 29 *sq.* God is a judge who putteth down one and setteth up another (Ps. lxxv. 8). Hymn: *Es sind ja Gott geringe Sachen, und seiner Allmacht gilt es gleich, den Reichen arm und klein zu machen*, &c. Today a king and lord over hundreds and thousands, to-morrow a man who is obliged to sneak about and beg for mercy; to-day haughty and insolent, to-morrow a slave in sackcloth, and with a rope about the neck (Jer. xvi. 6, 7).—WÜRT. SUMM.: Nothing among mortal affairs is so inconstant as temporal prosperity. There is a time for everything. For that reason let no man place his dependence on his good fortune and exalt himself on its account, for he does not know whether he shall possess in the evening what was his in the morning (Sir. xviii. 26).—Vers. 31–42. LISKO: Ahab's wicked conduct after the victory. (*a*) In what it consisted. (*b*) How he was punished for it. —CRAMER: When authority is compassionate out of proper season and neglects its office of correction, it draws upon itself the guilt of the other. God wants no mercy to be shown where he has ordered punishment. Vers. 31–33. Praise, flattery, and subserviency are only too often the snare with which kings and great men are caught, so that under the appearance of generosity and magnanimity they may be led astray and act contrary to the will of God. They ought, indeed, to be merciful and gracious, but not forget that to do justice is their first duty, and that they do not carry the sword in vain.—Ahab persecutes an Elijah in every kingdom (chap. xviii. 10), and threatens him with death, but he permits a robber and a plunderer to sit beside him in his chariot and makes a covenant

with him. What to the eyes of the world looks like generosity, in the eyes of God, who trieth the heart and reins, is only weakness and folly. Great injury can be done by seeming ill-timed generosity. —Ver. 33. CRAMER: After a word has been once spoken, we cannot recall it. Therefore learn to guard thy mouth: he who does will not offend by his words (Sir. xxiii. 7).—Vers. 35–43. The proclamation of the divine punishment for Ahab's conduct. (*a*) How it occurred; (*b*) how it was received by him (*vide* Historical and Ethical).—Vers. 35–37. He who has his calling and service from the word of God ought to allow no danger to detain him from making an announcement of the fact (2 Tim. iv. 2), and must obediently submit himself to his commands even when the fulfilment of them is joined with pain and sacrifice.—Vers. 38–40. A genuine preacher of repentance must first of all convict the sinner of his guilt and bring him to the point where he condemns himself, just as Nathan did with David.—Vers. 42, 43. Ahab listened well pleased to the falsehood from the lips of the Syrian nobles, for it gave nourishment to his folly; the truth from the mouth of the prophet made him restless and angry, because it punished his folly. There is no help for the man who allows himself to be irritated by the truth instead of receiving it with meekness (Jas. i. 21). There is nothing that so rouses and provokes an unconverted and unbelieving man as to have his sinful character so unveiled and set before his eyes that he can no longer justify or excuse himself.

B.—*The proceedings of Ahab against Naboth.*

CHAP. XXI. 1–29.

1 AND it came to pass after these things,[1] *that* Naboth the Jezreelite had a vine-
yard, which *was* in Jezreel, hard by the palace of Ahab king of Samaria. And
2 Ahab spake unto Naboth, saying, Give me thy vineyard, that I may have it for a
garden of herbs, because it *is* near unto my house:[2] and I will give thee for it a
better vineyard than it; *or*,[3] if it seem good to thee, I will give thee the worth of
3 it in money. And Naboth said to Ahab, The Lord [Jehovah] forbid it me, that
4 I should give the inheritance of my fathers unto thee. And Ahab came into his
house heavy and displeased, because of the word which Naboth the Jezreelite had
spoken to him: for he had said, I will not give thee the inheritance of my fathers.
And he laid him down upon his bed, and turned away his face, and would eat no
5 bread.[4] But Jezebel his wife came to him, and said unto him, Why is thy spirit so
6 sad, that thou eatest no bread? And he said unto her, Because I spake unto
Naboth the Jezreelite, and said unto him, Give me thy vineyard for money; or
else, if it please thee, I will give thee *another* vineyard for it: and he answered,
7 I will not give thee my vineyard.[5] And Jezebel his wife said unto him, Dost
thou now govern the kingdom of Israel? arise, *and* eat bread, and let thine
8 heart be merry: I will give thee the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite. So she
wrote letters in Ahab's name, and sealed *them* with his seal, and sent the let-
ters[6] unto the elders and to the nobles that *were* in his[7] city, dwelling with
9 Naboth. And she wrote in the letters, saying, Proclaim a fast, and set Naboth
10 on high among the people: and set two men, sons of Belial, before him, to
bear witness against him, saying, Thou didst blaspheme God and the king.
11 And *then* carry him out, and stone him, that he may die. And the men of his
city, *even* the elders and the nobles who were the inhabitants in his city, did as
Jezebel had sent unto them, *and* as it *was* written in the letters which she had
12 sent unto them. They proclaimed a fast, and set Naboth on high among the
13 people. And there came in two men, children of Belial, and sat before him:
and the men of Belial witnessed against him, *even* against Naboth, in the pre-
sence of the people, saying, Naboth did blaspheme God and the king. Then
they carried him forth out of the city, and stoned him with stones, that
14 he died. Then they sent to Jezebel, saying, Naboth is stoned, and is dead.
15 And it came to pass, when Jezebel heard that Naboth was stoned, and was
dead, that Jezebel said to Ahab, Arise, take possession of the vineyard of Na-
both the Jezreelite, which he refused to give thee for money: for Naboth is not
16 alive, but dead. And it came to pass, when Ahab heard that Naboth was
dead,[8] that Ahab rose up to go down to the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite,
to take possession of it.

17 And the word of the Lord [Jehovah] came to Elijah the Tishbite, say
18 ing, Arise, go down to meet Ahab king of Israel, which *is* [dwelleth [9]] in Sama-
ria: behold, *he is* in the vineyard of Naboth, whither he is gone down to possess
19 it. And thou shalt speak unto him, saying, Thus saith the Lord [Jehovah],
Hast thou killed, and also taken possession? And thou shalt speak unto him,
saying, Thus saith the Lord [Jehovah], In the place [10] where dogs licked the
20 blood of Naboth shall dogs lick thy blood, even thine.[11] And Ahab said to
Elijah, Hast thou found me, O mine enemy? And he answered, I have found
thee: because thou hast sold thyself to work evil in the sight of the Lord
21 [Jehovah]. Behold, I will bring [12] evil upon thee, and will take away thy pos-
terity, and will cut off from Ahab him that pisseth against the wall, and him
22 that is shut up and left in Israel, and will make thine house like the house of
Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and like the house of Baasha the son of Ahijah, for
the provocation wherewith thou hast provoked *me* to anger, and made Israel to
23 sin. And of Jezebel also spake the Lord [Jehovah], saying, The dogs shall eat
24 Jezebel by the wall of Jezreel. Him that dieth of Ahab in the city the dogs
shall eat; and him that dieth in the field shall the fowls of the air eat.
25 But there was none like unto Ahab, which did sell himself to work wicked-
26 ness in the sight of the Lord [Jehovah], whom Jezebel his wife stirred up. And
he did very abominably in following idols, according to all *things* as did the
27 Amorites, whom the Lord [Jehovah] cast out before the children of Israel. And
it came to pass, when Ahab heard those words, that he rent his clothes, and
put sackcloth upon his flesh, and fasted, and lay in sackcloth, and went softly.
28 And the word of the Lord [Jehovah] came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying, Seest
29 thou how Ahab humbleth himself before me? because he humbleth himself
before me, I will not bring the evil in his days: *but* in his son's days will I
bring the evil upon his house.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

1 Ver. 1.—[The Vat. Sept., which, as before noted, transposes chaps. xx. and xxi., omits in consequence the mark of time at the beginning of ver. 1. The Alex. Sept., which follows the Heb. in that matter, designates Naboth as an *Israelite* instead of a Jezreelite, throughout the chapter.

2 Ver. 2.—[The Sept. omits the reason for Ahab's coveting the vineyard.

3 Ver. 2.—[Several MSS., followed by most of the VV., supply the word *or* and read ואם.

4 Ver. 4.—[The Vat. Sept. gives a mere epitome of this ver.; the Alex. follows the Heb.

5 Ver. 6.—[The Sept. instead of *vineyard* here introduce from ver. 4 "the inheritance of my fathers." As this phrase explains Naboth's reason (see Exeg. Com.) for refusing Ahab, the addition is not likely to be right.

6 Ver. 8.—The k'tib הַסְּפָרִים is to be unhesitatingly preferred to the k'ri ספרים. [The k'ri is the reading of many MSS., but the k'tib reappears in the next ver. and ver. 11 unquestioned.

7 Ver. 8.—[The Chald. and Syr. omit this pronoun, which certainly does not seem necessary in itself; but, from its repetition in ver. 11, doubtless belongs here also.

8 Ver. 16.—[The Sept. here curiously interpolates the statement, "he rent his clothes and put on sackcloth. And it came to pass after this that Ahab," &c. Ahab seems to have felt no need of such decent hypocrisy.

9 Ver. 18.—[Our author in his translation supplies the ellipsis by the verb *dwelleth* rather than *is*, since the reference must be to his dwelling-place, and at this moment he was in Jezreel.

10 Ver. 19.—[The Sept. considerably modifies this prophetic denunciation: "In every place where the sows and the dogs licked the blood of Naboth, there shall the dogs lick thy blood, and harlots wash in thy blood."

11 Ver. 19.—[גַּם־אָתָּה an emphatic repetition of the *pron. suff.* literally and well expressed in the A.V.

12 Ver. 21.—[The k'ri gives the full form מֵבִיא here, and אָבִיא ver. 29, of this verb, in which there appears to be a peculiar tendency of the א to fall away.—F. G.]

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

Ver. 1. **And it came to pass after these things,** &c. The Sept. places this whole chapter before the twentieth, and Thenius holds this to be its original place. Ewald says, rightly: "The transposition resulted simply to unite more closely the similar narrations in chaps. xx. and xxii. and inversely chaps. xvii.–xix., xxi. The expression in chap. xxi. 4, as a climax to chap. xx. 43, refers back rather palpably to the latter passage." Naboth's affair must have happened then *after* the two victories over the Syrians, because Elijah's severe sentence proclaiming the fall of the house of Ahab, which was occasioned by them, could not have immediately preceded those victories. The connecting thought with chap. xx. is this: As Ahab, in consequence of victory twice won, found tranquillity and peace externally, he was contemplating the extension and the beautifying of the garden of his summer palace at Jezreel (*vide* on chap. xviii. 46). Sanctius: *post victos hostes ad delicias comparandas animum adjecit.*

Vers. 2–6. **And Ahab spake unto Naboth,** &c. Ver. 3, literally: Far is it for me from Jehovah that I, &c. This expression presupposes two things, viz.: that Naboth was a worshipper of Jehovah and did not bow his knee to Baal, and that he belonged to those who had remained faithful (Ahab does not mention the name "Jehovah") and that also he held the alienation of his vineyard to be a sin against Jehovah, a transgression

of a command of Jehovah. This command must have been that respecting the inalienability of the inheritance which was apportioned to each tribe and to each family, and could not, even by marriage, go into other hands, and which, even if it were sold on account of impoverishment or otherwise on account of distress, would revert to it again, without price, in the year of Jubilee (Numb. xxxvi. 1–13; Lev. xxv. 10–28). According to Ezek. xlvi. 18, the prince himself could not force any one out of his property. This Mosaic law is connected most intimately with the stability of the Theocracy; it secured its material foundation (*cf. Symb. des Mosais. Kult.*, II. *s.* 604); and if it were not always strictly observed and enforced, the main thought pervading it nevertheless struck out strong roots in the consciousness of the people, and the preservation of the נַחֲלָה was for every covenant-keeping Israelite a matter not merely of piety towards his family and his tribe, not merely a prudential, worldly affair, but a religious, sacred duty. No consideration would induce Naboth to violate this, neither greater gain (for Ahab offered him a better vineyard or wished to pay him well), nor the royal authority and the fear of the royal displeasure, especially when, as here, not need, but a royal whim only, was concerned. Hence it is almost laughable when with J. D. Michaelis Naboth's answer is explained as "uncivil in the extreme," or when others say that it was a piece of "obstinacy;" for in that case Joseph's reply to Potiphar's wife (Gen. xxxix. 9) was uncivil and obstinate. For סַר (ver. 4), see on chap. xx. 43: *He turned away his face*, the Vulg. adds *ad parietem*, which 2 Kings xx. 2, has: Seb. Schmidt: *more tristium, qui conversationem, colloquium et conspectum hominum fugiunt et declinant.*

Vers. 7–8. **And Jezebel his wife said,** &c. The words אַתָּה—יִשְׂרָאֵל are usually translated imperatively: "Thou! exert now the royal authority over Israel" (de Wette), *i. e.*, act as king, use the power which belongs to thee as king of Israel, or, "Thou exercisest authority now over Israel" (Philippson), *i. e.*, now must thou show thyself to be king over Israel. On the other hand, as Thenius properly remarks, the collocation of the words is to be observed (*Thou* comes first), and also the connection (Jezebel says: *I* will give thee). This antithesis compels us to understand the words as ironical, and with the Sept., the Vulg., and the Syriac, to regard them as a question: Dost thou now exercise authority over Israel? Dost thou as king permit thyself to ask such a thing of one of thy subjects? I will give thee the vineyard, since thou trustest not thyself to act as man and king.—*The letters* (ver. 8) Jezebel furnished with the royal seal, *i. e.*, she affixed the seal to (not sealed up). "Probably the seal had on it the name of the king, which, instead of the signature, was by the seal stamped upon the document, as is the case now in Egypt and Persia, amongst Turks and Arabs; *cf.* Paulsen, *die Regier. der Morgenland. s.* 295" (Keil); Esth. viii. 12. Jezebel certainly received the seal (seal-ring, Dan. vi. 18) from Ahab himself, who allowed her the free use of it. From ver. 8, it is manifest that Ahab and Jezebel were then in Samaria, their residence, properly speaking. *The elders and nobles* constituted without doubt the city tribunal (Deut. xvi. 18), "which must have had then, according to our chapter, in cases easily to be decided the *jus vitæ*" (Thenius); *cf.* on Matt. v. 21. The addition: *dwelling with Naboth*, shows that they were his fellow-townsmen.

Ver. 9. **Proclaim a fast,** as was customary in the event of national calamities (Joel i. 14), after grievous defeats (Judg. xx. 26; 1 Sam. xxxi. 13), after great sins (1 Sam. vii. 6; Joel ii. 12), or for the turning away of apprehended misfortune (2 Chron. xx. 2, 4); it is always the sign of penitence. Obviously it stands here in a definite relation to the offence charged, and it was not merely to furnish occasion for the procedure against Naboth (Thenius), but rather "to publish the fact that a grievous fault was resting upon the city, which must be expiated." The stamp of truth would thus thereby be impressed, in the eyes of the entire city, upon the crime with which Naboth was charged (Keil). Naboth was to be set *on high* in the assemblage, "so that the public indignation might be the more vividly expressed, if one who was worthy of such distinction, on account of his God-fearing sentiment, should be convicted of being such a grievous sinner" (Thenius). This is certainly better than the view advanced by Grotius: *ne odio damnasse crederentur, quem ipsi honoraverant*, or the explanation of Seb. Schmidt: *producite eum ante universum populum in judicium ad causam dicendam.*

Vers. 10–14. **Two men . . before him,** &c. According to Deut. xvii. 6 and xix. 15, every crime punishable by death must be testified to by at least two witnesses, who also must at the stoning make the beginning. נֶגֶד not *contra* (Vulg.), but *coram, in conspectu.*—**Thou didst blaspheme** בֵּרַךְ means properly to bless; then, because at a departure one utters a benediction, generally to say farewell, is to leave, so Job i. 5; ii. 5: to bless God, to give God a departure, to turn one's self from Him. If now Naboth, by this expression, was guilty of a capital crime, it must of necessity be that which the law ordained in the death-punishment (*cf.* Lev. xxiv. 14 *sq.*). Blasphemy against the king is placed beside blasphemy against God, because the king represents God and rules in His name; crime against majesty involves death (2 Sam. xvi. 9). Jezebel does not use the name יהוה but the more general indefinite אֱלֹהִים.

Vers. 15–16. **Take possession of the vineyard,** &c. The immediate seizure of the property appears here as something which, in consequence of the execution of Naboth, is understood to be according to usage and right. The Rabbins remark, that which indeed the Mosaic law does not expressly ordain, the property of an offender against majesty falls to the king, who was, in so far, its inheritor (יָרַשׁ means also to inherit, Gen. xxi. 10; Jer. xlix. 1). According to 2 Kings ix. 26, Naboth's sons also were put to death, the heirs proper, besides, were no longer living.

Vers. 17–19. **And the word of the Lord came to Elijah,** &c. From רֵד in ver. 18 we are to conclude that Elijah was, at that time, in a mountain-district. Ahab's crime is set before him in the form of a question, which was more fitted to awaken his conscience than a bare affirmation. When the guilt of the crime is charged upon Ahab, and not upon Jezebel who was the agent in

the matter, it is like Gen. iii. 9, where God brings Adam and not Eve to account.—According to chap. xxii. 38, the dogs licked the blood of Ahab, not at Jezreel, the place where Naboth was put to death, but at Samaria. In order to reconcile both passages, either בִּמְקוֹם אֲשֶׁר have been translated by *pro eo quod* (Grotius, Maurer, De Wette: "for that"), or it has been supposed that the prophecy, inasmuch as Ahab repented (ver. 27), was fulfilled but partially in him, and fully in his son (2 Kings ix. 25) (Calmet, Keil, Gerlach and others). Thenius believes that there is a contradiction here which does not admit of any reconciliation, no matter what the explanation be. But how thoughtless the author of our books must have been, if in two chapters alongside of each other, on the same leaf as it were, he had admitted "direct" contradictions inadvertently. The place where Naboth's and Ahab's blood were licked up by dogs was "before or outside the city," *i. e.*, the place where supposed or real criminals were executed (*cf.* ver. 13; Lev. xxiv. 14; Acts vii. 56; Hebrews xiii. 12 *sq.*). The prophetic word means: As thou hast unrighteously put Naboth to death, as a criminal, without the city, so shalt thou, righteously, in the same place, outside thy city (residence), be put to death, *i. e.*, as a criminal. In this the prophecy found its fulfilment, in the similarity of the disgraceful death, not in the similarity of the special locality. Consequently here the entirely general מָקוֹם stands, and not, as in 2 Kings xi. 25 *sq.* the special חֶלְקַת שְׂדֵה נָבוֹת.

Ver. 20. **Hast thou found me,** &c. Luther follows the inaccurate translation of the Vulg.: *num invenisti me inimicum tibi?* Thenius: "מצא is here in its most proper signification: to overtake (seizing me), (1 Sam. xxxi. 3; Job xi. 7; Jer. x. 8), used especially of the punishing hand (1 Sam. xxiii. 17; Isai. x. 10; Ps. xxi. 9), consequently: Hast thou overtaken me, mine enemy? As a defiant question, and entirely suited to, mine enemy: thinkest thou that thou hast now got me down? To this the reply is wholy suited: Yes, I have got thee!" Von Gerlach justly remarks: "Struck at by the address of Elijah, Ahab seeks to justify himself by attributing personal enmity upon the prophet's part towards himself." Michaelis wholly wrong: Hast thou found me in an act which I cannot excuse? or Vatablus: Hast thou found something against me which thou canst censure, thou who art always against me?—הִתְמַכֶּר must be taken here in a wholly general sense, as in ver. 25 (*cf.* 2 Kings xvii. 17; Rom. vii. 14): to abandon one's self without will to evil; to make one's self a slave of sin; "the feebleness is therein expressed also, by virtue of which he was the tool of others" (Gerlach). The Sept. add arbitrarily, μάτην, which Thenius holds to be original, and then translates: on account of thy pretended selling of thyself to do, &c. *i.e.*, thou shalt become conscious that thou hast fully received the price of sin; very forced. The τοῦ παροργίσαι αὐτὸν of the Sept. after יהוה is also an arbitrary addition.

Vers. 21–24. **Behold, I will bring evil,** &c. Upon vers. 21–24, see above on chap. xiv. 10 *sq.* and also xvi. 3 *sq.* It is the standing avenging sentence for the dynasties of apostate kings, repeated also in chap. xxii. 38 and 2 Kings ix. 8 *sq.* 36. The divine punishment falls upon Ahab and his house not alone on account of the crime committed against Naboth, but also, and chiefly, on account of the idolatry existing and promoted during his reign, with which, indeed, that crime was closely connected. The בְּחֵל in ver. 23 is translated in the Septuag, rightly here as in 2 Sam. xx. 15, by ἐν τῷ προτειχίσματι, by which a space immediately close to the walls, and belonging to the city-terrain, is to be understood. Jezebel also was to be devoured by dogs before, *i. e.* outside the city. When for בְּחֵלֶק יִזְרְעֶאל, בְּחֵל יִזְרְעֶאל occurs in 2 Kings ix. 10, 36, 37, not another but the same place is designated, *viz.* in the space, *i. e.*, in the city-terrain of Jezreel. Thenius very unnecessarily would have the reading in our passage בחולק. Jezebel, according to 2 Kings ix. 33, was thrown out of a window and trodden by horses, but was not devoured by dogs in "the court of the palace." This happened rather before the city-walls.

Vers. 25–26. **There was none like unto,** &c. The 25th and 26th verses are a parenthesis by which the relator desires once more to bring out the reason for the miserable destruction of the house of Ahab, and why every effort to wash Ahab clean, and to make of him "a good man of the best disposition" (Michaelis) seemed useless. רַק does not mean here: yea, assuredly (De Wette); "it has here its usual meaning, but it does not stand, as is often the case, immediately before the word to which it is related; translate: besides how Ahab (Ahab excepted), there was none (as he), &c." (Thenius).—*The Amorites* are mentioned instead of the Canaanites generally, as in Gen. xv. 16; Jos. xxiv. 15; Amos ii. 9, because they were the most powerful tribe of Canaan. Ahab had abandoned himself entirely to the idolatry on account of which Jehovah had driven the Canaanites from their land, and had given it to the Israelites (chap. xvi. 33).

Vers. 27–29. **When Ahab heard those words,** &c. The rending of the clothes, putting on sackcloth and fasting, are the usual signs of mourning and penitence (Winer, *R.-W.-B.*, II. s. 631. Ahab slept in his sackcloth. אַט does not mean barefoot (Jarchi and others), not *demisso capite*, or slowly (Keil), but quietly, softly (Isa. viii. 6).—The complete ruin was not to overtake Ahab during his lifetime, but "he was referred back to the threatening of the law, according to which, the misdeeds of the fathers were not to be borne in the children, who did not cease from them longer than to the third or fourth generation" (Menken).

HISTORICAL AND ETHICAL.

1. *The procedure against Naboth* constitutes a turning-point in the history of Ahab, in so far as it called forth the prediction of the destruction of himself and of his house. Although it concerned but our contemporaneous people, it has nevertheless a general theocratico-historical significance in this, that a moral corruption was therein brought to light, which had seized the head and the members of the kingdom, and was the consequence of the apostasy from the God of Israel and from His law. It was a crying proof that all the evidence of divine power and grace and fidelity and long-suffering had produced no fruit. That too was the point of time when it was necessary for *the* prophet to appear again, of whom Sirach says (chap.

xlviii. 10), "who wast ordained for reproofs in their times to pacify the wrath of the Lord's judgment before it break forth into fury. . . . and to restore the tribes of Jacob." It devolved upon him whose destination and calling it was essentially to exercise the prophetic avenging office, to bear witness against apostasy, and to proclaim the judgments of God—upon him it devolved, before all things, by virtue of his position in the history of the kingdom of God (see above), to announce to the king who, with his wife, had formally introduced the apostasy, and in his procedure against Naboth had shown himself incorrigible, the final sentence of God against him and his whole house. The word of Jehovah came hence also to him, and he issued forth again from his retirement "as a fire, and his word burned like a torch" (Ecclesiasticus xlviii. 1). He first places before the king his crime against Naboth, and proceeds then to the announcement of his punishment for his conduct generally. The whole narration culminates in this announcement. The new criticism does not question the historical reality of the affair with Naboth; "the dressing up," however, belongs to the author of the history of Elijah (Thenius, Ewald). Under this clothing (drapery) nothing else can be meant than the paragraph from ver. 17 to 24, which is, however, the main thing. If this be explained as unhistorical, for which no reason is at hand, the point of the whole narrative is taken away, and the high meaning disappears from the event which it has for the history of Ahab, and indirectly for the history of the kingdom of Israel generally. It becomes an isolated, ordinary, Oriental murder-tale, and ceases to be a turning-point in the history of the theocracy.

2. *We are able to understand for the first time*, rightly and completely, the royal couple from the present narrative. If Ahab has shown himself, thus far, to be a weak man, destitute of any religious and moral firmness, and subject to every evil influence, here this is the case so conspicuously that from feebleness and want of character he becomes a common criminal. He did not know how to devote the time of peace, after the severe pressure caused by the Syrians, to anything except to be thinking of the enlargement and beautifying of his pleasure-garden—a sign that all the great experiences of his life, even the last sharp threatening at the releasing of Ben-hadad, had made no permanent impression upon him. The refusal of Naboth to cede to him his vineyard makes him angry, and excites him; but he has not force enough to make use of his mettle, and so he betakes himself to his bed, will not eat, nor see any person, and behaves like a spoiled, ill-mannered child, which has been refused a toy. It was necessary for his wife to supply him with spirit, and to remind him that he must be a man and king. He does not interfere himself, but allows *her* to arrange the matter, and gives her the insignia of his royal authority, unconcerned how she may use it, or, as it almost seems, he enters into her criminal designs. When the infamous transaction was done, and she told him of it, he was not shocked; he was rather visibly pleased and satisfied (Josephus has it: "he sprang up from his bed with delight"), and he made haste to take possession of the property stolen and stained with blood. This blood-guiltiness rested upon him, so that the prophet could, with all propriety, call him both a murderer and a thief. In respect of Queen Jezebel, who has hitherto been portrayed only on the side of her wild fanaticism for the unchaste Baal and Astarte worship, she shows herself here in her complete moral depravity. We discover in her no trace of the feebleness and want of energy which characterized her husband. Josephus well calls her a *γύναιον δραστήριόν τε καὶ τολμηρόν*. Her deepest traits were pride and a desire for dominion, to gratify which she shrank back from no instrumentality. Under the show and pretext of serving her husband and fulfilling his wishes, she knew how to govern him and to appropriate to herself the royal authority. She did not look at the monarchy according to the Israelitish sense, as the institution which was designed to carry out the law and will of Jehovah, but as the absolute authority over the property and lives (*Gut und Blut*) of the subjects. Every refusal to fulfil a royal wish, though it had been grounded in the divine law, was, in her eyes, lese-majesty, yes, as blasphemy against God, because she wished the king to be considered not as the servant, but as the representative of Deity. Right and justice, for the administering of which the monarchy exists, are to her mere forms, and she misapplies the legal organs of justice to carry out injustice. A religious solemnity must be the cloak of her lust of robbery and murder, and the people be deceived by perjured witnesses. Jezebel does all this in cold blood and with calm deliberation; yes, she congratulates herself upon it, and informs her husband of the fact with self-satisfaction, as if she had done something deserving praise and thanks. This was the royal couple at that time at the head of the people and of the kingdom. If ever at any time, certainly here, the Turkish proverb finds its application: "The fish stinks first at the head."

3. *The elders and nobles* constituting the city tribunal at Jezreel are a worthy *pendent* to the royal couple. Without hesitation they carry out quickly and punctiliously the received order, and they hasten to give the queen the news of it, in order to show themselves loyal and obedient subjects. The fear and the pleasure of men are the motives for their way of acting; there is no trace of the fear of God and of conscientiousness amongst them. They knew the tyranny and the severity of the queen, and they did not dare to thwart her; they were afraid that by resistance they might lose the residence and suffer loss, or be punished in limb and body. It seems that they, as the presiding officers of the residence, gladly embraced the opportunity to please the powerful, dreaded queen, and to show their unconditional submission, in the hope of being praised and rewarded for it. Perhaps, owing to the sojourn of the court there, they had become habituated to unrighteous expectations of the sort, and that fawning and servility were no longer new to them. Certainly their whole course presupposes thorough corruption in public affairs, a natural consequence of the religious confusion which must have entered in during a reign when "the covenant of Jehovah" was forsaken, his law trodden under foot, and the infamous Baal and Astarte worship was introduced and patronized. For there is no more authentic sign of the decay of a kingdom than when law is deliberately debased, and murder, under the show of right, and with deference to the usual forms of law, is done by those to whom the duty of

public justice is intrusted. Deliberate judicial murder is the most infamous of all, and can only take place where absolute ungodliness has broken all moral bonds, and a putrefaction has begun. Jezebel would never have dared to order such a process had she not known the people, and regarded them as capable of everything. The circumstances here were such as Micah, in chap. vii. 2 *et sq.*, has portrayed. When we consider that the elders who composed the local tribunal were not royal officials, but inhabitants of the place, chosen by their fellow-townsmen, and that they, one and all, as one man, perpetrated the crime, we learn how deeply the people, who had freely placed such men at their head, were sunken, and had become devoid of all fear of God. The blindness with which the false verdict was accepted, and the brutality with which it was carried out, doubtless in a tumultuous fashion, is an additional proof of what we have stated.

4. *The meeting of Elijah and of Ahab* in Naboth's vineyard is very characteristic of the personal qualities of each. Both reappear here, such as we find them in the earlier interview in chap. xviii. 7 *et sq.* As there, so here, Elijah comes forth suddenly from his retirement. Like the lightning which descends from on high and strikes, he met the king, walking and enjoying himself in the stolen vineyard. Nothing was further from his thoughts than an encounter with the earnest, severe preacher of repentance, and of hearing from him the thunder-words of the Divine judgment. As there, Ahab at first blustered, and saluted the prophet with the words: "Art thou here, troubler of Israel?" so here he addresses him angrily: "Hast thou found me, mine enemy?—thou who art always in my way." But as then, so also now, the prophet did not allow himself to be imposed upon and frightened in the least. With firm words he announces the destruction of him and of his house; then the high-going man breaks down and becomes so dejected that he is bowed down and creeps along, and even sleeps in sackcloth. But the meeting is also significant in respect of the relation between the prophetic and the monarchical element. This relation is now represented in a manifold way, as that of two "self-appointed powers" who were in perpetual struggle with each other to gain the upper hand in the kingdom. But Elijah especially, the head and representative of the prophetic order, from whom proceeded the strife against the covenant-breaking monarchy, the most energetic and powerful of all the prophets, resolutely and sharply as he met the king, who called him his enemy, was in the greatest degree possible free from all hierarchical efforts. No one in all Israel cared less than he about having anything to do with outward power and authority. He did not, like Jeroboam, in the time of Solomon and of Rehoboam, place himself at the head of the discontented; he did not intrigue against the secular power, and mingle in political affairs; he did not live at the residence or at court; but in retirement, from which he issued only from time to time, when it was needful to resist the base misuse of the royal authority, which did not fear to revolutionize even the foundations of the people of Israel. He was not "an enemy" of the monarchy, but an enemy of the idolatry which was destroying both the monarchy and the national being.

5. *Ahab's penitence* was regarded by the older theologians as hypocritical, so that even yet all false penitence is called, proverbially, "Ahab's penitence." But, according to ver. 29, it was not a sham, but an actual humiliation, which was graciously recognized by God as such. Vatablus justly says: "*Hæc pœnitentia fuit vera, sed temporaria.*" Owing to the feebleness of his character, which made him readily susceptible to every influence, and the rapid change of his purposes, it was very comprehensible that the word of the prophet, piercing bone and marrow, threatening him and his house with destruction, which had never yet deceived him, made an affecting impression upon him. Such a wholesome terror had never hitherto overtaken him, and might well have been able to lead him to a thorough change from his past ways. But he had no abiding conversion of heart to the living God, as the course of the history shows. As the threatened punishment did not follow immediately, he thought he had been able to ward it off by his penitential discipline, and, according to his constantly attested fickleness, he fell back again into his earlier way of life. The first thing which he should have done, had his repentance been true, to repair somehow a wrong done, he did not do, but, on the contrary, began war anew.

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

Vers. 1–29. The proceeding against Naboth: (*a*) How it was done (vers. 1–16); (*b*) its consequences (vers. 17–29)—Ver. 1–16).—Wirth: The unrighteous acquisition of Naboth's vineyard. (*a*) King Ahab; (*b*) Queen Jezebel; (*c*) the elders of Jezreel; (*d*) Naboth.—Würt. Summ.: Here we see how the children of this world use their rank; how they ruin others for the sake of their possessions, and seize upon them; they try to make them sell against their will, and wrest their property from them; if this fail, they use every false device, accuse him as an evil-doer before the authorities, and, by means of false witnesses, lead him on to misfortune, until he is compelled to sacrifice his little property to save himself, or becomes so ill that he dies of grief, and thus they obtain his property. But the Spirit denounces woe to such men (Isa. v. 8). Every man should guard against such sin, but especially those in power. Let them never seize upon the property of their subjects. V. 1.—Starke: It is not well to have godless neighbors, especially if they are powerful, for, loving injustice, they think nothing of over-reaching their neighbors. One should pray for industrious, pious and honest neighbors.—Vers. 2–4. Naboth's vineyard. (*a*) The greed of Ahab (ver. 2); (*b*) the denial of Naboth (ver. 3); (*c*) the consequence of the denial upon Ahab (ver. 4).—Ver. 2. Great lords often have fancies, which cost them more time and money than do their chief and holiest duties. Thus Ahab thought more of the enlargement and adornment of his garden, than of the good of his subjects. The desire for things which serve for pleasure is often a temptation to grievous sin. Therefore says the Scripture: Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's goods, nor anything that is his. Let the needy be thy first care, not thine own pleasures. It is a great gain to be godly and contented. Watch over thine heart, for desires apparently lawful, if not resisted and denied, may

lead to ruin.—Ver. 3. The men are rare who, for God and conscience sake, will not yield to entreaties and offers, the granting of which would be advantageous to them, whilst the refusal would be accompanied with injury, and perhaps peril to themselves. Where fear of God and true devoutness exist, there also you will ever find that piety which holds in love and veneration everything which serves as a remembrance of parents and all other benefactors.—Ver. 4. RICHTER: Godless people regard the care taken by the pious to observe reverently the divine law, as so much useless scrupulousness.—CALW. BIB: Even so, in our day, does the worldling look with an evil eye upon the Christian who, for the sake of the divine word, refuses to yield to his wishes; for either he recognizes no divine authority, or exalts his own above it. The children of this world, whose aims and designs are wholly material, will often fret and grieve for days when they are compelled to give up a temporal gain, or a promised enjoyment, whilst the condition of their souls never causes them the slightest grief.—WIRTH: The high and mighty ones of this world often think that all other people are placed here, simply to yield obedience to their whims. They cannot comprehend that all men are not to be bought with gold, and woe to that inferior whose refusal destroys their darling plans. Every man not rooted and grounded in God, becomes ever more and more grasping; in his vain purse-pride he thinks all the world must yield to his will, and hates bitterly him who independently and resolutely upholds his rights against him.

Vers. 5–16. The condemnation of Naboth. (*a*) Ordered by Jezebel; (*b*) carried out by the city ordinance; (*c*) joyfully received by Ahab.—The apparently fortunate but really unfortunate and accursed marriage of Ahab and Jezebel. (*a*) She seeks the sorrowful man, shares his grief, and seeks to comfort him, as is the province of a wife; but instead of pointing him to the true Comforter, and leading his heart to higher and better things, she strengthens him in his grasping desire after others' property, and leads him on still further. (*b*) She reminds him that he is the lord and master, and recognizes him as such, as a wife should; but, at the same moment, she assumes the dominion, and the weak man lets her manage and rule, as if she were the man and he the woman. (*c*) She rejoices to accomplish an ardent wish of her husband's, and to make him a worthy present, as every faithful spouse should strive to do; but it is a blood-stained and stolen gift, obtained with deceit and falsehood, and Ahab delights in it. Thus both husband and wife, who together should be blest after God's ordinance, together walk on to ruin and destruction.—JO. LANGE: As a righteous spouse in the court of a great lord is as a sun, giving light throughout the land and doing much good work by her example, in the same proportion is an unholy woman mischievous. The example of Naboth shows what is the event where such an one rules, and its evil influence in a country.—The quality (=being) of tyranny. (*a*) It regards sovereignty simply as unlimited might and power over the property and life of subjects; then the name of king means the power to do whatsoever a man wills, without regard to God or man; they reverse the divinely ordained "subjection" (Rom. xiii. 1), and live in rebellion against God. (*b*) They upset justice, and convert the servants of the law, whose place it is to punish evil, into instruments of unrighteousness; they love darkness and hate the light, for they work the works of darkness (Ps. lxiv 7). It dissembles and plays its own game with religious solemnity, and converts an oath itself into a means for its worst designs. The proceeding against Naboth is a combination of the heaviest crimes, for by it are trodden under foot the three divine commands: Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor. How thankful should we be that we dwell in a land where mercy and truth are met together, righteousness and peace have kissed each other, where righteousness looks down from heaven (Ps. lxxxv. 10–12).—Vers. 11–14. The elders and nobles of Jezreel. (*a*) Their conduct (they obey blindly, but God must be obeyed rather than man; power is not of man, but the minister of God, Rom. xiii. 4, and before the commandment: "Honor the king," stands that other, Fear God, 1 Pet. ii. 17). (*b*) Their motives (fear of and subserviency to man, time-serving and sycophancy, fruit of their desertion of the living God and of his holy word.—Evil masters can ever find evil servants, who do their will from ambition or covetousness.—CALW. BIB: Woe, where such things befall! and shame! that in the fairest lands, as in the plains of Jezreel, are often the worst men to be found.—Godlessness and corruption in courts is a poison, which extends throughout the whole body politic, even to the lowest rank; no example is so powerful upon all classes of society. How many gross, how many refined sins are committed out of sheer complaisance to high personages, whose favor men wish to seek or preserve. Woe to those lords who find such ready tools in their servants, who will be accomplices in their misdoings, and palliate, or even laud and praise all their perverse dealings; they undermine the throne more than open enemies. The judgment and condemnation of Naboth, compared with that of our Lord. There, as in this instance, offended pride, followed by hatred, accusation of blasphemy and riot; false witnesses and vile judges; and a blind, infuriated populace crying out: Crucify, crucify!

Vers. 17–29. KRUMMACHER: The mission of Elijah. (*a*) Its intention; (*b*) its aim; (*c*) its immediate results.—BENDER: Elijah and Ahab in the vineyard of Naboth. (*a*) The sin of the king; (*b*) the judgment of God.—WIRTH: Ahab in the vineyard of Naboth. (*a*) The approach of Elijah; (*b*) the announcement of the sentence; (*c*) the repentance of Ahab.—Ver. 17. Deceive not yourself, God is not mocked. What a man sows, that shall he reap (Gal. vi. 7). MENKEN: But though much unrighteousness and wickedness goes apparently without further evil results, and without the chastisements of the just Judge in heaven, yet still all will be demanded; and at the Divine judgment-seat everything will be discovered, and everything to the uttermost farthing accounted for.—The blood of Naboth, which Ahab thought had been swallowed up by the earth, cried to heaven, and found there judgment and vengeance. Like a lightning-flash comes the word from heaven into the dark soul of Ahab, and made him feel that no net of human evil can be woven thickly enough to conceal the crime which it veils from the All-seeing Eye.—Vers. 18, 19. It is no easy matter to say to the face of a royal robber, "Thou hast stolen," and to a royal

adulterer, "It is not right that thou shouldst have thy brother's wife." Where to-day are the prophets who thus use the sword of the Spirit? *Thou* hast slain.—MENKEN: Observe, that evil which thou couldst hinder, and didst not, and from which thou shouldst have shrunk, and for which thou didst neither exhibit horror, nor didst punish—all shall, in future, be laid to thy account, as if thou hadst committed it in thine own person. Therefore warns the apostle: Neither be partaker of other men's sins (2 Tim. v. 22).—V. 20. Hast thou found me, O mine enemy? CALW. B: One can readily imagine that the hard impenitent, meeting the pious preacher and soul-director, regards the high-principled, soul-saving address of the prophet as evidence of personal enmity, and replies with personal enmity. He is not thine enemy who finds thee out, charging thee with thine unrecognized sins, with thy God-forgetting life, until thou dost think and tremble—not thine enemy, the disturber of thy peace and rest, but thy true friend, who leads thee through the narrow gates of repentance, to the way where alone true joy is to be found.—I have found thee. This word of sentence must be heard by all, even by those who have come before no human tribunal—often in this world, certainly at the last day, "for the Lord will bring to light," &c. (1 Cor. iv. 5), and cause every man to find according to his ways (Job xxxiv. 11). But there is also a sentence of mercy, which pursues the sinner and seeks him until it finds him (Luke xv.). Well for all who have thus been caught and found and can say: "*Unter allen frohen Stunden, die im Leben ich empfunden*," &c. He who will not be sought out by mercy, will be found by justice.

Vers. 20–29.—KRUMMACHER: The penitence of Ahab. (*a*) What called it forth; (*b*) what was its nature; (*c*) what were its consequences.—Vers. 21–26. The predicted judgments of God upon Ahab and his house. (*a*) Its cause; (*b*) its accomplishment (chap. xxii. 38; 2 Kings ix. and x.). "Buying for money" amongst sins. What is to be understood by this? How one can be made bought and made free (John viii. 33 *sq.*; 1 Cor. vi. 20; vii. 23; Rom. vii. 14). It is a great misfortune when one man can be bought by another as a chattel or merchandise, but a still greater one if he allows himself to be bought with a price to sin against the Lord. One may be, like Ahab, lord and king, and yet a purchased slave.—Ver. 25. His wife stirred him up. MENKEN: Woe to the man who, through the power which love gives him over the heart of another, by means of which he might become a ministering angel, is to him as a misleading fiend. How many fires of ruinous passion, of anger, of discord, of unrighteousness and of hatred, might and should be quenched and extinguished by the power of love—the power of one heart over another—and especially by the mildness and gentleness peculiar to woman: and yet so often, by this means, they are kindled and fanned. This belongs to the catalogue of unconfessed sins of many men, and especially of many women.—What gave Ahab's repentance its worth, and wherein it was defective. (*a*) It was not merely ostensible, feigned; it was a wholesome dread and fear of the judgment of God which came upon him, causing him to fear and tremble; he bowed beneath the mighty hand of God, and was not ashamed to confess this outwardly, but laid aside crown and purple, and put on sackcloth, unheeding if he thus exposed himself to the scorn of the courtiers and idol worshippers. Therefore the Lord looked in mercy upon his repentance. Would that, in our day, many would go even as far as Ahab did in this case. (*b*) It bore no further fruits. He retained the stolen vineyard, he desisted not from idol worship, he allowed full sway to Jezebel. Everything in his house, at his court, and in his kingdom, remained as of old. He did not hunger and thirst after righteousness. Fleeting impressions and emotions are not true repentance. The tree which brings forth no fruits, is and remains a corrupt tree (Matt. iii. 8). How wholly different the repentance of David (Ps. li.).—How many go to confession before the communion, bow the knee, and confess their sins before God and man, without being inwardly bowed down and humiliated, to bring forth fruits meet for repentance (Joel ii. 13; Is. lviii. 5). —RICHTER: Since God looks with pardoning mercy upon an outward humble abasement, how much more upon a righteous repentance. Therefore pray: Lord, grant true penitence and grief.—KRUMMACHER: Ahab was, and is, an example to warn us how it is possible that notwithstanding the most remarkable visitations of God, the strongest incentives, the liveliest emotions, and in spite of a certain sort of repentance and wonderful granting of prayer, a man may still, at the very last, be lost.

C.—*Ahab's expedition against the Syrians, undertaken with Jehoshaphat, and his death.*

CHAP. XXII. 1–40 (2 CHRON. XVIII. 1–34).

1 AND they continued three years without war between Syria and Israel.
2 And it came to pass in the third year, that Jehoshaphat the king of Judah came
3 down to the king of Israel. And the king of Israel said unto his servants, Know
ye that Ramoth in Gilead *is* ours, and we *be* still, *and* take it not out of
4 the hand of the king of Syria? And he said unto Jehoshaphat, Wilt
thou go with me to battle to Ramoth-gilead? And Jehoshaphat said to the
king of Israel, I *am* as thou *art*, my people as thy people, my horses as thy
horses.
5 And Jehoshaphat said unto the king of Israel, Inquire, I pray thee, at the

6 word of the Lord [Jehovah] to-day. Then the king of Israel gathered the pro-
phets together, about four hundred[1] men, and said unto them, Shall I go against
Ramoth-gilead to battle, or shall I forbear? And they said, Go up; for the Lord
7 shall deliver[2] *it* into the hand of the king. And Jehoshaphat said, *Is there* not
here a prophet of the Lord [Jehovah] besides,[3] that we might inquire of him?
8 And the king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat, *There is* yet one man, Micaiah
the son of Imlah, by whom we may inquire of the Lord [Jehovah]: but I hate
him; for he doth not prophesy good concerning me, but evil. And Jehoshaphat
9 said, Let not the king say so. Then the king of Israel called an officer,[4] and
10 said, Hasten *hither* Micaiah the son of Imlah. And the king of Israel and Jeho-
shaphat the king of Judah sat each on his throne, having put on their robes, in
a void place in the entrance of the gate of Samaria; and all the prophets pro-
11 phesied before them. And Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah made him horns of
iron: and he said, Thus saith the Lord [Jehovah], With these shalt thou push the
12 Syrians, until thou have consumed them. And all the prophets prophesied so,
saying, Go up to Ramoth-gilead, and prosper: for the Lord [Jehovah] shall
deliver[5] *it* into the king's hand.
13 And the messenger that was gone to call Micaiah spake unto him, saying,
Behold now, the words of the prophets *declare* good unto the king with one
mouth: let thy word,[6] I pray thee, be like the word of one of them, and speak
14 *that which is* good. And Micaiah said, *As* the Lord [Jehovah] liveth, what the
15 Lord [Jehovah] saith unto me, that will I speak. So he came to the king. And
the king said unto him, Micaiah, shall we go against Ramoth-gilead to battle, or
shall we forbear? And he answered him, Go, and prosper: for the Lord [Jeho-
16 vah] shall deliver *it* into the hand of the king. And the king said unto him,
How many times shall I adjure thee that thou tell me nothing but *that which*
17 *is* true in the name of the Lord [Jehovah]? And he said, I saw all Israel scat-
tered upon the hills, as sheep that have not a shepherd: and the Lord [Jehovah]
said, These have no master; let them return every man to his house in peace.
18 And the king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat, Did I not tell thee that he would
19 prophesy no good concerning me, but evil? And he said, Hear thou therefore[7]
the word of the Lord [Jehovah]: I saw the Lord [Jehovah][8] sitting on his
throne, and all the host of heaven standing by him[9] on his right hand and on his
20 left. And the Lord [Jehovah] said, Who shall persuade Ahab, that he may go
up and fall at Ramoth-gilead? And one said on this manner, and another said
21 on that manner. And there came forth a spirit, and stood before the Lord
22 [Jehovah], and said, I will persuade him. And the Lord [Jehovah] said unto
him, Wherewith? And he said, I will go forth, and I will be a lying spirit in
the mouth of all his prophets. And he said, Thou shalt persuade *him*, and pre-
23 vail also: go forth, and do so. Now therefore, behold, the Lord [Jehovah] hath
put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these thy prophets, and the Lord [Jeho-
24 vah] hath spoken evil concerning thee. But Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah went
near, and smote Micaiah on the cheek, and said, Which way went the Spirit of
25 the Lord [Jehovah] from me to speak unto thee? And Micaiah said, Behold,
thou shalt see in that day, when thou shalt go into an inner chamber to hide
26 thyself. And the king of Israel said, Take Micaiah, and carry him back unto
27 Amon the governor[10] of the city, and to Joash the king's son; and say, Thus
saith the king, Put this *fellow* in the prison, and feed him with bread of affliction
28 and with water of affliction, until I come in peace. And Micaiah said, If thou
return at all in peace, the Lord [Jehovah] hath not spoken by me. [11]And he said,
Hearken, O people, every one of you.
29 So the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat the king of Judah went up to Ramoth-
30 gilead. And the king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat, I will disguise myself, and
enter into the battle; but put thou on thy robes. And the king of Israel disguised
31 himself, and went into the battle. But the king of Syria commanded his thirty
and two captains that had rule over his chariots, saying, Fight neither with
32 small nor great, save only with the king of Israel. And it came to pass, when
the captains of the chariots saw Jehoshaphat, that they said, Surely it *is* the king

33 of Israel. And they turned aside to fight against him: and Jehoshaphat cried
out. And it came to pass, when the captains of the chariots perceived that it
34 *was* not the king of Israel, that they turned back from pursuing him. And a *cer-
tain* man drew a bow at a venture, and smote the king of Israel between the
joints of the harness: wherefore he said unto the driver of his chariot, Turn thine
35 hand,[12] and carry me out of the host; for I am wounded. And the battle in-
creased[13] that day: and the king was stayed up in his chariot against the Syri-
ans, and died at even: and the blood ran out of the wound into the midst of the
36 chariot. And there went a proclamation throughout the host about the going
down of the sun, saying, Every man to his city, and every man to his own country.
37 So the king died, and was brought to Samaria; and they buried the king in
38 Samaria. And *one* washed the chariot in the pool of Samaria; and the dogs
licked up his blood; and they washed his armor [and the harlots washed[14]]; ac-
39 cording unto the word of the Lord [Jehovah] which he spake. Now the rest
of the acts of Ahab, and all that he did, and the ivory house which he made,
and all the cities that he built, *are* they not written in the book of the Chronicles
40 of the kings of Israel? So Ahab slept with his fathers; and Ahaziah his son
reigned in his stead.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

[1] Ver. 6.—[The Alex. Sept. reduces the number to three hundred.

[2] Ver. 6.—[The Sept. emphasizes the assurance of the prophets: *καὶ διδοὺς δώσει κύριος* — the Lord will surely deliver, &c. It is noticeable that the prophets do not say יְהוָֹה, but אֲדֹנָי.

[3] Ver. 7.—[The Sept., by neglecting the word עוֹד (besides, yet) here and in ver. 8, makes it evident that they understood by the other prophets men who were not really prophets of the Lord. In ver. 8, however, the Alex. Sept. has ἔτι. The Vulg. also: *non est hic propheta Domini quispiam.* The other VV. follow the Heb. very exactly.

[4] Ver. 9.—[The Sept. has *εὐνοῦχον ἕνα*, but whether because it was known in the time of the translators that such persons were officers under Ahab, or whether simply because they were usual in the courts of their own time, does not appear.

[5] Ver. 12.—[The Sept. changes the last clause of ver. 12 into "Shall deliver into thy hands even the king of Syria" (Alex. omits the word Syria), as if Zedekiah would promise Ahab a repetition of his formerly neglected opportunity.

[6] Ver. 13.—The singular, which Chronicles, the k'ri, and many MSS. have, is to be preferred to the k'tib. [All the VV., except the Sept., which has another construction, follow the k'ri.

[7] Ver. 19.—[The author (Exeg. Com.) considers the *οὐχ οὕτως* of the Sept. here as a mistranslation of the Heb. לָכֵן taken for לֹא כֵן. The same expression, however, is introduced by it into ver. 17, *καὶ εἶπεν οὐχ οὕτως· ἑώρακα κ. τ. λ.*, and the full reading here is *καὶ εἶπε Μιχαίας οὐχ οὕτως, οὐκ ἐγώ· ἄκουε ῥῆμα κ. τ. λ.*

[8] Ver. 19.—[Sept. — the God (Alex. the Lord God) of Israel.

[9] Ver. 19.—[עָלָיו the primary idea of עַל *above*, seems to be here purposely preserved; "the ministers standing behind or even beside their sitting Lord are raised above him, and thus appear to the beholder as standing over him. Isai. vi. 2; Gen. xviii. 8," Keil.

[10] Ver. 26.—[For "Amon the governor" the Vat. Sept. has "Semer the king."

[11] Ver. 28.—[The Vat. Sept. omits the latter part of ver. 28.

[12] Ver. 34.—[The A. V., like the Vulg., follows the singular of the k'ri in preference to the plural of the k'tib, which is adhered to by the Vat. Sept.

[13] Ver. 35.—[וַתַּעַל הַמִּלְחָמָה, lit. "the battle rose," perhaps, as Keil suggests, a figure from the rising of a river, growing more rapid as it swells. The expression of increase by words of the general sense of *rising* is, however, very common in many languages.

[14] Ver. 38.—[וְהַזֹּנוֹת רָחָצוּ. The A. V. is here certainly wrong, although following the Chald. and Syr. Not less erroneous is the Vulg. *habenas laverunt.* הַזֹּנוֹת must be the subject of the verb, and can only mean harlots. The Sept. has here translated rightly, but has unwarrantably inserted the same words also in the prediction (xx. 42) of which this is the fulfilment. Here, as there, they associate *αἱ ὕες* with *οἱ κύνες*. What these harlots washed—whether themselves, or the chariot, or clothes—has been much questioned, nor is its determination at all necessary to the translation. רחץ like the English *wash*, may be either transitive or intransitive.—F. G.]

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

Ver. 1. **And they continued**, &c., *i. e.* Syria and Israel. The three years are those which had elapsed since the war mentioned in chap. xx., that is, since the release of Ben-hadad. In this interval fell the murder of Naboth. The XXIId chap. is a continuation of the XXth, and is derived from the same original document. Chap. xxi. is from some other authority, but appears here in its proper chronological position. The ground of Jehoshaphat's visit to Ahab, according to the parallel account in Chronicles, was the marriage relationship which had been formed between them, viz., Ahab's daughter, Athaliah, had become the wife of Jehoshaphat's son, Jehoram. Chronicles also states that Ahab slaughtered a large number of sheep and oxen for Jehoshaphat and his numerous escort, *i. e.*, he entertained them generously. Ahab profited by this opportunity, so soon as he had made sure of the support of his generals who had come to the entertainment, to persuade Jehoshaphat into making an expedition against the Syrians in alliance with him.—On *Ramoth* (ver. 3)

see notes on chap. iv. 13. Ben-hadad, contrary to his promise (xx. 34), had not given up this stronghold, from which, as a base, he could easily make incursions into Israel, and Ahab became more and more uneasy as years passed by, and the promised surrender was not consummated. His words (ver. 3) mean: This important city belongs to Israel as of right, and besides that Ben-hadad has solemnly promised to give it up; yet he has not done this, but, on the contrary, menaces us on that side, while "we rest satisfied with this state of things, instead of taking what is ours by a double right" (Thenius).

Ver. 4. **And he said unto Jehoshaphat.** Instead of וַיֹּאמֶר we find in Chronicles וַיְסִיתֵהוּ, the same expression which is used in chap. xxi. 25 in regard to Jezebel and her influence on Ahab; *he seduced* him (*cf.* Jer. xxxviii. 22; Deut. xiii. 7). This shows that Jehoshaphat ought not to have agreed to the proposition. However, he did not enter into the plan "after dinner," thoughtlessly (Richter), but because he wished to confirm the good understanding which had just been established between Judah and Israel, and because he also saw danger to himself in Ramoth, so long as it was in the hands of the Syrians. The **horses** are especially mentioned, because they formed the essential part of the military power (Ps. xxxiii. 16, 17; Prov. xxi. 31).

Ver. 5. **And Jehoshaphat said unto the king of Israel,** &c. Jehoshaphat had some scruples. He wished first to be certain that the undertaking was conformed to the will of Jehovah, a thing in regard to which no anxiety had entered Ahab's mind. He ought to have considered this before giving his consent (ver. 4). The **prophets** whom Ahab summoned were not, as some of the old expositors inferred from the number four hundred, the Astarte-prophets who had not been upon Carmel (chap. xviii. 19, 22), for their chief, Zedekiah, affirmed that he had the spirit of Jehovah (ver. 24), and all the others unite in this assertion (ver. 12). Nevertheless, they were not "certainly genuine Jehovah-prophets" (Clericus), nor "pretended" Jehovah-prophets (Schulz), nor prophet-disciples (Thenius), for the definite article does not refer to such as these, but to a definite class, different from these, the prophets of Ahab. Hence Junius and Tremellius translate correctly according to the sense: *Ahab congregavit prophetas suos.* So Micaiah designates them in vers. 22 and 23, when he calls them "thy" or "his" prophets. Moreover, how could Ahab ever have brought himself to tolerate four hundred prophets, adherents of Elijah, in his immediate circle, when he had not been converted to Jehovah? No one will assert that they belonged to the number of those who wore the well-known penitential robe of the prophets, and went about in goat-skins or in hair-cloth (Zach. xiii. 4; Hebr. xi. 37). It remains that we can think of them only as adherents of Jeroboam's Jehovah-worship, that is, of the calf-worship. Hence Jehoshaphat did not recognize them as genuine Jehovah prophets. Although they all agree, yet he asks for another, a true worshipper of Jehovah; and Ahab calls for such a one, though with inward dissatisfaction. Since in chap. xviii. 19, 22, 25, 40, the priests of Baal and Astarte are always called נְבִיאִים, the conjecture is suggested that these persons were priests of the calf-worship, who at the same time filled, like the Baal and Astarte priests, the functions of prophets. (See notes on xviii. 19.)

Ver. 8. **And the king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat,** &c. Micaiah is called once only, in the parallel passage (2 Chron. xviii. 14), Micha, and is certainly not, as Josephus and the rabbis assert, the man who is mentioned in chap. xx. 35 as a prophet-disciple. Ahab could not at the moment give the name of any other whom he could summon at short notice. It was very natural that he should not mention Elijah, even aside from the fact that he did not know where he was. Micaiah was in Samaria, and even, as it appears, on account of some previous prophecy which was unfavorable and displeasing to Ahab, in confinement; hence he could be at once brought forward.—To the words, **but evil,** the chronicler adds: "all his days," *i. e.*, so long as he has filled the office of a prophet. Von Gerlach aptly remarks: We find in Ahab the same heathen conception of the relation between the prophet and Jehovah, as we find in the case of Balak (Numb. xxiii. 11). He ascribes to the seer some power over his God, and therefore makes him responsible for his unfavorable oracles. Agamemnon says to Calchas (Iliad i. 106), "Seer of evil! how hast thou never foretold to me good! Thou prophesiest to me with pleasure only evil in thy trance, and hast never declared to me a favorable oracle." Jehoshaphat's answer: **"Let not the king say so!** refers to Ahab's words: **I hate him;** I will not now listen to him. Jehoshaphat's words, therefore, have not this sense: *vaticinabitur prospere* (Vatablus, Keil), but they are a reply to his remark, and contain such an encouragement as this: Let him come, though;—and this Ahab then does.

Ver. 10. **Sat each on his throne,** &c. Vers. 10–12 carry out into detail that which had been hinted at briefly in ver. 6. We must, therefore, think here of the same assemblage as there. It is now only described more fully in what a solemn manner this assemblage was held (see Bertheau on 2 Chron. xviii. 9). That מְלֻבָּשִׁים בְּגָדִים means "in their official (royal) robes" is clear from Levit. xxi. 10, where it is said of the high-priest: לִבְשׁ אֶת-הַבְּגָדִים, *i. e.*, "clad in the official (priestly) garments." יֹשְׁבִים is repeated before בְּגֹרֶן in the parallel passage 2 Chron. xviii. 9. It can, therefore, only mean: *in area.* גֹּרֶן means a "smooth open place" (Gesenius); hence a threshing-floor, which is such a smooth open place. However, "threshing-floor" is not the sole meaning, as Thenius asserts. He reads בְּרֻדִּים for בְּגֹרֶן (since the word for threshing-floor makes no sense) and joins it with בגדים, "*particolored*, that is, probably, *vestes distinctæ, acu pictæ;*" but this conjecture is as unnecessary as it is violent. Ewald also joins the word with בגדים, and says that it can from the connection (?), have here only the meaning, *armor*, war-dress, but there is no evidence to support this, for the ἐνοπλοι of the Sept. is not a translation of בגרן but of the words discussed above מל׳ בג׳.

Ver. 11. **And Zedekiah, the son,** &c. Zedekiah, following the method of the true prophets,

performs a symbolical action before the declaration of his oracle (see on chap. xi. 29). He intended thereby to show himself a prophet of the northern kingdom. He put on horns of iron, which would not break, for Deut. xxxiii. 17 says of Ephraim: "His glory is like the firstling of his bullock, and his horns are like the horns of unicorns; with them he shall push the people together to the ends of the earth." By a physical reference to this prophecy he intended to represent his present declaration as certain. However, he forgot that "the entire fulfilment of Moses' blessing depended on the fidelity with which Israel adhered to the commandments, and to the Lord. But Ahab, least of all, had been careful to be thus faithful" (Keil). Of the two imperatives עֲלֵה וְהַצְלַח, the first is a command and the second an encouragement, as in Gen. xlii. 18; Prov. xx. 13; Ps. xxxvii. 27; Job xxii. 21; Isai. xxxvi. 16 (Gesen. *Grammar* § 127).

Ver. 15. **So he came to the king.** "Ahab meant by his question to Micaiah to represent himself to Jehoshaphat as never having attempted to exert any influence upon the declarations of the prophet" (Thenius). He took up the attitude to Micaiah "of holding himself ready for any answer, and of demanding only to know the divine will, although he had really made up his mind, and would be pleased only with one answer" (Jo. Lange). Hence we may understand the prophet's answer, which is not irony (Keil), nor "spoken with ironical gestures and a sarcastic tone" (Richter), but certainly a reproof for the hypocritical question. The sense is: How camest thou to the idea of consulting me, whom thou dost not trust? Thy prophets have answered thee as thou desirest. Do, then, what they have approved. Try it. March out. Their oracles have far more weight with thee than mine. "Since Micaiah, who, in ver. 14, had distinctly declared that he would not speak simply according to the king's pleasure, nevertheless repeats almost exactly the words of the king's prophets, he must have spoken in a tone which made it clear to Ahab that what he said was not in earnest" (Bertheau). Therefore Ahab adjured him to speak only the word of Jehovah, but did not promise to follow the counsel which he should give him in the name of Jehovah. He was not in earnest to learn the truth, but only to convince Jehoshaphat that what he had said (ver. 8) about this prophet was true and just, and that no authority ought to be ascribed to him. Micaiah now refuses no longer, but makes known the vision which he has had (ver. 17). The meaning of this vision was clear. Ahab understood it. The king would fall, and Israel would be scattered without being pursued. Each one would take his own way home, and so the war would end. Perhaps Numbers xxvii. 17 floated before the prophet's mind, as Deut. xxxiii. 17 was in the mind of Zedekiah in ver. 11. Luther erroneously took the words of Jehovah לֹא־אֲדֹנִים לָאֵלֶּה as a question. The sense is: Since these have no longer any master, let each return. Ahab now assures Jehoshaphat (ver. 18; *cf.* chap. xxi. 20), in order that he may not be influenced by this oracle, that it springs from the malice which he had before declared this prophet to entertain. Then, in order to refute this imputation, Micaiah (ver. 19) states, by describing another vision, the reason why the four hundred prophets had prophesied falsely and deceitfully.

Ver. 19. **Hear thou therefore the word of the Lord.** לָכֵן has here its regular signification: *for this reason.* (Keil: "Because thou thinkest [my declaration the result of mere malice], therefore.") It is not, "according to the Sept., οὐχ οὕτως, equivalent to לֹא כֵן: *veruntamen*" (Thenius). The speech in vers. 19–23 is indeed addressed to the king in the first instance, but evidently all around heard it and were intended to hear it. In Chronicles we find for שְׁמַע, שִׁמְעוּ, as in ver. 28.—**I saw the Lord sitting on His throne.** What Micaiah describes in vers. 19–22 is not a mere parable invented by him, but a prophetic vision which he saw, and which, as the *Berleburger Bibel* says, represents God and His government and providence in an appropriate symbolical manner. Peter Martyr says: *Omnia hæc dicuntur* ἀνθρωποπαθῶς. The separate expressions are not, therefore, to be strained or interpreted in a "gross and materialistic manner" (Richter).—**And all the host of heaven,** &c. The old expositors, Peter Martyr, Jo. Lange, Starke and others suppose that the prophet described God seated on the throne of heaven and surrounded by the heavenly hosts, in contrast with the two kings sitting on their thrones surrounded by the band of false prophets. It appears, however, that this cannot be correct, for if it were correct, then Micaiah must have had his vision after he came to stand before the kings and to see how they were arrayed, but the revelation, doubtless, came to him some time before this. He rather saw God as the ruler of all in heaven or earth, and as the judge in the full glory of His majesty, entirely independently of the two kings. The **host of heaven** are not, of course, here the stars, as in Deut iv. 19, but all the higher heavenly powers who serve as His organs in the administration of the universe (Heb. i. 14; 2 Sam. xxiv. 16; 2 Kings xix. 35). Some of the older expositors incorrectly say that those on the right were the good, and those on the left the bad. The latter are nowhere included in the "host of heaven." All surround Him and wait for His commands.—The question in ver. 20: **Who shall persuade [delude] Ahab?** shows that the fall of Ahab, who had heaped sin upon sin, was determined in the counsels of God (*cf.* Isai. vi. 8). The only question which still remained open was as to the way in which his fall should be brought about. "Who is able to delude Ahab, so that he may march against Ramoth to his own destruction?" (Bertheau). **And one said on this manner and another said on that manner.** Peter Martyr says on these words: *Innuit varios providentiæ Dei modos, quibus decreta sua ad exitum perducit.* The dramatic-figurative form of representation corresponds fully to the character of the vision, in which inner and spiritual processes are regarded as real phenomena, nay even as persons.

Ver. 21. **And there came forth a spirit.**—הָרוּחַ, *i. e.*, not *a* spirit (Luther, and E. V., following the Sept.), but *the* spirit, a definite one, and it can be, according to the entire connection, none other than the spirit of prophecy (Thenius; Keil), the power which, going forth from God, and tak-

ing possession of a man, makes him a prophet (1 Sam. x. 6, 10; xix. 20, 23). The נָבִיא is the אִישׁ הָרוּחַ (Hos. ix. 7). This spirit offered itself to fulfil the divine decree. It is a feature in the dramatic-figurative form of representation, that as all the powers of God are represented as persons, so also this power is personified. It steps forth from the ranks of the divine powers and declares its readiness to fulfil the divine will: "I (אֲנִי with emphasis) will persuade him." The question in ver. 22, **Wherewith?** adds to the liveliness of the delineation. The meaning of the answer: "I will go forth and I will be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets" is this: The prophets of Ahab shall prophesy to him what he desires to hear, and thus delude him until he shall bring about his own ruin through his own plans. As this view was already decided on in the divine counsels, the Lord answers to the spirit: **Thou shalt persuade him, and prevail also. Go forth and do so.** Because Ahab, who had abandoned God and hardened his heart, desired to use prophecy for his own purposes, it is determined that he shall be led to his ruin by prophecy. As God often used the heathen nations as the rod of his wrath for the chastisement of Israel (Isai. x. 5), so now he uses Ahab's false prophets to bring upon Ahab the judgment which Elijah had foretold against him. We have to compare the passage Isai. vi. 8, 9, where the prophet, who has just been cleansed from sin and consecrated to the prophetic office, answers to the Lord's question: "Who shall I send,"—"Send me," and then the command is given to him: "Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert and be healed." From this we see that the רוּחַ שֶׁקֶר (ver. 22) is not, as most of the old expositors declared, Satan, who does not belong to the "heavenly host" (ver. 19), and is, moreover, nowhere called simply הָרוּחַ (ver. 21). Keil indeed admits that "neither Satan nor any other evil spirit is meant," but he adds that the spirit of prophecy, in so far as it is, by God's will, a רוח השקר "stands under the influence of Satan." But the vision has nothing at all to do with Satan. The circumstances are entirely different from those in Job i. 6, which are often compared. It expresses an act in God's government and judicial administration, in which Satan is neither directly nor indirectly involved. In ver. 23 Micaiah states the result of what precedes: Now see; the prophets have prophesied to thee pleasant things, but they are deluded and they delude thee. If therefore I have prophesied otherwise, it is not, as thou hast said (ver. 18), out of hate towards thee, but the Lord has thus spoken to me, and has thus determined in regard to thee.

Ver. 24. **Zedekiah . . . . went near.** This leader of the other party felt himself especially insulted, as he had confirmed his prophecy by a symbolical act (ver. 11). The blow on the cheek was intended as an insult (Job xvi. 10; Lament. iii. 30). We may see from this how Zedekiah stood in Ahab's favor, and how unesteemed Micaiah was. Chronicles supplies הַדֶּרֶךְ which is wanting with אֵי־זֶה (chap. xiii. 12; 2 Kings iii. 8; Job xxxviii. 24). The sense is: How dost thou dare to say that the spirit of prophecy has turned aside from me and gone only to thee? Zedekiah had not, therefore, knowingly prophesied falsely, but his insolence was far from being a proof that he had the spirit of the Lord. On חֶדֶר בְּחֶדֶר see notes on chap. xx. 30. The story of Zedekiah's end is wanting both in Kings and Chronicles, but this does not prove that the original document contained much more than now appears in our books (Thenius, Ewald). As Ahab fell, and Zedekiah's definite prediction was startlingly falsified, we may be sure that he did not fail to be persecuted.

Ver. 26. **And the king of Israel said: Take Micaiah, &c.** Josephus narrates that Ahab was disturbed by Micaiah's speech, but when he saw that Zedekiah's hand did not wither as Jeroboam's did (chap. xiii. 4), and that Micaiah inflicted no punishment, that he took courage and went on to the war. This is an empty rabbinical tradition. Zedekiah's insolence was influential in encouraging Ahab in the determination which he had formed. The latter caused Micaiah to be taken back to Amon the governor of the city, not to his own house (Thenius). He had probably been previously in arrest under this man's charge, but now he was to be put in prison on the bread and water "of affliction." **Joash, son of the king,** was not, probably, a son of Ahab, but a prince of the blood, who, together with the commandant of the city, had charge of the prisoners. If he had been, as Thenius supposes, a young prince who had been intrusted to Amon for his military education (2 Kings x. 1), one does not see why he should be mentioned here. In the last words of ver. 28 Micaiah calls "all people" to be witnesses of his declaration, *i. e.*, not "all the world," or "people generally" (Keil), but all the people who, besides the two kings and the four hundred prophets, were collected on this solemn occasion. The prophet Micah begins his prophecy (chap. i. 2) with the words שִׁמְעוּ עַמִּים כֻּלָּם, but we may not infer from this, as Bleek does, that the author confused Micaiah with the much younger prophet Micah, nor, as Hitzig does, that the words in this passage are borrowed from that place. It would be more natural to suppose that Micah borrowed the words from the original document of this author. However, the exclamation is so general that it might occur in the independent works of different prophets. It is remarkable that the pious king Jehoshaphat does not interfere to prevent the maltreatment of Micaiah; and that, in spite of the opposition of that prophet, he goes on the expedition. Peter Martyr says: *Affinitas cum impiis contracta sanctitatem plurimum imminuit.* It appears that he was not willing to take back the promise which he had given (ver. 4) on account of a prophet whom Ahab declared to be his personal opponent.

Ver. 30. **And the king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat.** The Vulgate and Luther mistakenly take the infinitives הִתְחַפֵּשׂ וָבֹא (disguise and come) as imperatives addressed to Jehoshaphat.

וְאַתָּה, which immediately follows by way of contrast, shows that this is wrong. The infinitive absolute is the plainest and simplest form of the voluntative for exclamations, and is used when the speaker is excited and filled with the idea (Ewald. § 328). It is to be remembered, in connection with Ahab's attempt to disguise himself, that the ordinary custom was for the king to lead the army into battle in full royal costume (2 Sam. i. 10). Hence he was conspicuous not only to his own army, but also to that of the enemy, who then directed their attack upon him. The words of Micaiah, especially these: "These have no master," had caused Ahab great secret anxiety. Moreover, he might well suppose that the Syrians would be more eager to attack him than Jehoshaphat. Though he knew nothing of Ben-hadad's command (ver. 21), yet he desired to frustrate the prophet's prediction. The sense of his words to Jehoshaphat is, therefore, this: I have every reason to make myself unrecognizable in this war, but thou, against whom the Syrians have no especial hate, mayst go forward in thy royal apparel.—When thus taken, Ahab's words contain a sort of justification and excuse of his purpose. Jehoshaphat, therefore, agreed to it without objection. There is no ground for the idea that Ahab had planned cunningly that Jehoshaphat might be killed, in order that he might inherit Judah (Schulz, Maurer, and others). Ahab was anxious to save his own life, not to secure Jehoshaphat's death.

Ver. 31. **But the king of Syria**, &c. Perhaps he had learned that the expedition had originated with Ahab, who had proposed it to his generals, persuaded Jehoshaphat, and pushed forward the plan perseveringly. He hoped that Ahab's end would be the end of the war. Hence the command which he gave to the thirty-two chariot-captains, who are also mentioned in xx. 24. They were the leaders, they made known the command to their men. **Neither with small nor great**, *i. e.*, do not spend time in conflict with any one else, but all press forward against the king of Israel. אַךְ in ver. 32 does not mean *certainly* (De Wette, Bunsen), but *only*. They need not be in doubt, since he alone wore royal dress. Instead of וַיָּסֻרוּ the chronicler has וַיָּסֹבּוּ, and the Sept. has, in both places, ἐκύκλωσαν. Bertheau and Thenius regard the latter as the correct reading. But the Syrians certainly had not yet surrounded him; they were pressing forward towards him, but turned aside when they saw that they were mistaken in the person (ver. 33). The Vulg. has: *impetu facto pugnabant contra eum.* סוּר means, to turn from the way and go towards something. When they saw the king, they turned towards him. **Jehoshaphat cried out**, and, as they recognized him, it seems that he must have called out his own name, not, however, in order to make himself known to them, but in order to call his own people to his aid. It may be, also, that his people called to him and uttered his name. In Chronicles it is added: "And the Lord helped him; and God moved them to depart from him." This can hardly have been borrowed from the original document. The cry was understood [by later readers] as a cry to God (Vulg., *clamavit ad Dominum*), and the rescue as a divine interposition. If this pair of sentences had been in the original, it is inexplicable how they should have been omitted in the text before us.

Ver. 34. **And a certain man drew a bow**, &c. לְתֻמּוֹ does not mean "at a venture" (Luther, E. V.), nor *in incertum* (Vulg.), but, as 2 Sam. xv. 11 shows, "without knowing why he aimed particularly at that individual whom he had in his eye" (Thenius). According to Josephus this man's name was Aman; according to Jarchi it was Naaman. In the text, however, emphasis is laid on the fact that it was an unknown man. Gesenius and De Wette translate הַדְּבָקִים by *joints* or *grooves*, but what joints can be referred to? The stem דָּבַק means only to *hang on* or *depend from*. דֶּבֶק, therefore, means *that which depends* or *hangs down*, but not a joint, nor yet *the soft parts* or *flanks* (Ewald). Luther, correctly: *Zwischen den Panzer und Hengel* [between the corselet and the tunic]. The corselet covered the body down as far as below the ribs. The lower part of the body was protected by a hanging skirt of parallel plates (hence the plural דְּבָקִים). The arrow penetrated between this skirt and the corselet, where the connection was not close or perfect, and penetrated the "lower abdomen" (Thenius). This wound was, of course, a very severe one, if not a fatal one. We may perceive how far such weapons penetrated, by the instance, for example, of the arrow with which Jehu shot king Jehoram, which entered his body between the arms from behind, and came out obliquely through the heart in front (2 Kings ix. 24; Lament. iii. 13; Job xvi. 13). Hereupon Ahab commanded his charioteer to turn and drive out of the midst of the contending armies, **for I am wounded**, *i. e.*, I am no longer fit to fight, and must retire from the conflict. Evidently הָחֳלֵיתִי means, in this connection, *I am wounded* (*cf.* 1 Sam. xxxi. 3); Sept., τετραυμάτισμαι; Vulg., *graviter vulneratus sum*). Thenius translates, "I am not well," and observes: "He desired to be quickly rid of the arrow, and not to let any one know that he was wounded." Similarly Bertheau: "For I am unwell. The charioteer cannot have observed that Ahab had been wounded by an arrow." But a fatal wound in the abdomen, from which blood flowed into the chariot, cannot have passed unobserved, and it is impossible that Ahab should have removed the arrow himself; at least such action is not mentioned in the text. It is certain that he felt *so* unwell that he asked to be removed from the conflict, and it is difficult to understand how Thenius can say, on the words **Against the Syrians** (ver. 35), that "he kept his face towards them and did not retire from the place of battle." Ewald's assertion that he "had to be carried from the field," contradicts the words of the text; also there is nothing in the text of Ewald's further statement, that "when his wound had been bound up Ahab returned into the battle, and fell bravely fighting to the last." Only so much is certain, that he was removed from the battle in his chariot, but not that he returned to it, as has been erroneously inferred from ver. 35.

Ver. 35. **And the battle increased**, *i. e.*, the battle became more violent. The figure is taken from a swelling river (Isai. viii. 7). Thenius explains the following words, הָיָה מָעֳמָד: "He was

standing upright, *i. e.*, through his own strength. He forced himself in order that he might support the courage of his followers." But he had given orders (ver. 34) that his charioteer should remove him as incapacitated for further fighting, and it does not show in the text that he caused his wound to be bound up and then returned into the fight; this must be invented and added arbitrarily. The sentence: **the battle increased**, is a subordinate clause to explain how it came about that Ahab remained standing in the chariot and died at evening. The *Calwer Bibel* states the connection of thought very correctly as follows: "Ahab's charioteer could not escape from the crush of the battle because the fight became more and more violent, and Ahab was obliged to remain standing on the chariot on which he was until towards evening. His wound could not, therefore, be bound up, and he bled to death. When finally, at sunset, the Israelites turned away from the field of battle, it was too late to save the king." נֹכַח אֲרָם does not mean "presenting front to the Syrians" (Thenius), but *in the face of the Syrians* (*coram*, Judges xviii. 6; Jer. xvii. 16; Ezek. xiv. 3, 7; Prov. v. 21). The Syrians, however, did not recognize him, because he was disguised. It is once more stated that **the blood ran out of the wound into the midst of the chariot**, on account of the incident to be narrated in ver. 38. In Chronicles these words are wanting, as also the following verses 36–38. The story ends there with the words: "and about the time of the sun going down he died," because it is not the history of Ahab which is there the prominent interest, but that of Jehoshaphat.

Ver. 38. **And one washed the chariot in the pool of Samaria.** As in the case of other cities (2 Sam. ii. 13; iv. 12; Song Sol. vii. 4), so also at Samaria, there was a pool near the city which served for purposes of washing and bathing. The dogs licked up the water which was mixed with the blood washed from the chariot. The words וְהַזֹּנוֹת רָחָצוּ cannot be translated as in the Syriac and Chaldaic versions, *arma laverunt*, or, as in the Vulg., *habenas laverunt*, in the first place because it is contrary to the usage of the language to make זֹנוֹת the object, and in the second place, because this word occurs in the Old Testament only in the signification *harlots*. Maurer and Von Gerlach supply, as object of רָחָצוּ, *the chariot*, but then this clause would only repeat the previous one: "they washed the chariot." Bunsen supplies arbitrarily: *the corpse*. רָחַץ means here, as in Ex. ii. 5; Ruth iii. 31, *to bathe*. Harlots are also elsewhere mentioned together with dogs, though, it is true, in the figurative use (Deut. xxiii. 19; Rev. xxii. 15), because both were regarded as impure and contemptible. Theodoret remarks that the harlots bathed in the evening, according to custom. They did not intend to wash in the blood, but the water was mixed with it. Probably the women were the temple-prostitutes, so that the blood of Ahab was not only licked up by dogs, but also came in contact with persons who were impure, and prostituted in the service of Baal and Astarte; a double mark of the shameful ruin which had been foretold for him. Peter Martyr: *Sordes suas miscebant cum sanguine Ahabi, quæ fuit maxima ignominia.* Thenius' proceeding is very arbitrary when he declares that ver. 38 is an addition of the redactor, who desired to bring the event into full accord with the prophecy in chap. xxi. 19. We have no further information in regard to Ahab's buildings mentioned in ver. 39. The **ivory house** was a house which was richly decorated within with ivory. *Cf.* Amos iii. 15; Ps. xlv. 8; Song of Sol. vii. 5; Homer's Odys. iv. 72.

HISTORICAL AND ETHICAL.

1. *Jehoshaphat's journey to Samaria* is an important incident in the development of the history of the two kingdoms, for this reason: Ever since the division of the kingdom (seventy years) the two parts had been hostile to each other, but Jehoshaphat's visit was meant to confirm a peace between them, which had already been brought about by the intermarriage of the prince of Judah and the princess of Israel. A period of peace now began. This new state of things was brought about by Jehoshaphat and not by Ahab, as we see clearly from the account in Chronicles, where also we may learn what considerations induced the pious king of Judah to seek friendship and alliance with Ahab. He had raised the comparatively weak kingdom of Judah to a pitch of prosperity, both internal and external, such as it had not enjoyed since the time of Solomon. Especially against the neighboring nations he had been so successful that all brought him tribute, and no one any longer dared to oppose him (2 Chron. xvii. 10). Since now he had attained to great wealth and renown (2 Chron. xviii. 1), the wish must naturally arise in his heart, to put an end to the long hostility of the two brother-kingdoms, of which, probably, each was weary. This could not be accomplished by force, for experience had proved that neither kingdom could subjugate the other. Jehoshaphat therefore attempted the peaceful means of a family alliance, and Ahab met him willingly, since he could expect from such an alliance nothing but advantage. It appears, however, that Jehoshaphat aimed at something more than a mere friendly relation between the two kingdoms. When we reflect that he, the faithful adherent of Jehovah, made an alliance between his son and heir and the daughter of the fanatical idolater, Jezebel; that he then went himself in great state to Samaria; that he entered into a military expedition with Ahab in spite of the warning of a prophet of Jehovah; that he afterwards entered into an alliance with Ahab's successor in spite of the warning of the prophet Jehu not to enter into fellowship with apostates (2 Chron. xix. 1); then we cannot understand all this save on the supposition that he aimed to unite once more the two kingdoms under Judah's supremacy. However glorious the aim was, it could never be attained in the way upon which he had entered. The real cause of the division of the kingdom was Israel's revolt from the chief command of the covenant with Jehovah. This cause could not be removed by external means such as Jehoshaphat sought to use. The friendship which he sought to establish by intermarriage and by political measures, ignoring the true ground of division, and even setting it aside by denying some features of the theocratic constitution, was a friendship which had no root, and enjoyed no

divine blessing. out of which rather mischief arose for Judah. For, far from tending to root up Jeroboam's cultus in Israel, this intermarriage helped to transplant it to Judah, and brought that kingdom to the brink of ruin. After seventy or eighty years, in the time of Amaziah, the hostility between the two kingdoms broke out afresh, and was never entirely allayed again until the Assyrians took Israel into captivity.

2. *King Ahab* appears here in the last act of his career, just as we have seen him always hitherto, devoid of religious or moral character. His penitence, which seemed so earnest, and which certainly falls in the period immediately preceding the renewed war with the Syrians (chap. xxi. 27), had, as we see from the story before us, borne no fruit. His attitude toward Jehovah and His covenant remained the same. There is not a sign of any change of heart. He is now enraged against Ben-hadad, whom, after the battle of Aphek, he called his "brother," and suffered to depart out of weakness and vanity. He summons his chief soldiers to a war against Ben-hadad, and calls for Jehoshaphat's aid also, in order to make sure of destroying him. He had either forgotten the words of the prophet (chap. xx. 42), or else he cared nothing about them. To "be still" (ver. 3) did not suit him. As Jehoshaphat desired, before engaging on the expedition, to hear an oracle of Jehovah in regard to it, Ahab summoned only those in regard to whose declarations he could be sure that they would accord with his own wishes, and when Micaiah, being called at the express wish of Jehoshaphat, gives another prophetic declaration, Ahab explains this as the expression of personal malice, as he had once done in regard to Elijah's declarations (chap xxi. 20). He allows Zedekiah to insult and abuse Micaiah, and even orders the latter into close confinement. But then again he becomes alarmed at the prophet's words, though before he was passionate and excited. He cannot overcome the impression he has received, and so, contrary to military custom and order, he does not go into the battle like Jehoshaphat, clad in royal robes, but disguised. This precaution, which testified to anything but heroism (Eisenlohr says justly: "He hoped in this way to escape danger"), did not, however, avail. He was shot without being recognized. His command to be removed from the strife, that his wound might be cared for, could not be executed. He bled to death on his chariot. Some moderns have represented his end as heroic, starting from the erroneous exegesis that he caused his wounds to be bound up and returned to the fight (see *Exeg.* on vers. 34 and 35). "He had his wound bound up, returned to the battle, and held himself erect in his chariot, though his blood flowed down on its floor until the evening" (Duncker, *Gesch. des Alterthums* I. *s.* 212:—following Ewald). Thenius even says: "If Ahab held himself erect through the whole day with the purpose already mentioned (to encourage his men), then he possessed, aside from the qualities manifested in chap. xx. 7, 14, 32, 34, a character whose general features were grand." This view is certainly mistaken, since we may be sure that the author did not intend to glorify Ahab in this account of his death. It is so far from his intention to say anything in his honor, that he even expressly narrates how Ahab after his death met with involuntary disgrace (ver. 38). In mentioning the end of Asa, Baasha, and Omri their "heroism" (גְּבוּרָה) is mentioned, but when Ahab's death and burial are mentioned, there is no reference to his valor. Moreover, it is impossible to speak of this king as having "a character whose general features were grand," seeing that he was ruled by his wicked wife, that he went to bed and would see no one, and neither eat nor drink, because he could not at once obtain a garden which he wanted, and that he did not recover his spirits until he had obtained the garden by a judicial murder.

3. *The congregation of not less than four hundred prophets*, who claimed to be prophets of Jehovah, but were not such, is a phenomenon which has no parallel either in the earlier or later history of Israel, and which, for various reasons, deserves attention. In the first place, it appears from this that, although the Baal-cultus had been formally introduced, it had not entirely superseded the Jehovah-cultus; on the contrary, that it existed by the side of that (perhaps as a consequence of Elijah's work), and that, as we may infer from the number of the prophets who were assembled, a great portion of the people must still have been well disposed towards the national cultus. Secondly, it appears that there was in Israel, besides the class of prophets of whom Elijah and Elisha and their pupils were the leaders (2 Kings ii. 3, 5, 7, 16; vi. 1), also another class of prophets, who did not oppose the cultus of Jeroboam or the idolatrous dynasty, but rather joined hands with these, and sought a compromise with them. This latter class was no doubt, for the most part, identical with the priests of Jeroboam's cultus, and formed the official privileged class of prophets. The union of the priestly and the prophetic offices occurred in the Baal-religion (chap. xviii.). No ancient people considered any cultus complete without a class of men through whom the god might be questioned. This class was naturally identified, in the first place, with the priesthood, through whom *all* dealings with the gods must be brought about. The calf-worship of Jeroboam must, therefore, have prophets in order to be a complete religious system, and its priests became its born prophets. Since, however, this cultus, with its priesthood, was not a legitimate outgrowth of the national constitution and the divine covenant, but a creation of political policy (chap. xii. 31, 32; xiii. 33), the prophecy also, which was connected with it, did not stand upon the covenant with Jehovah, and the spirit which animated this prophecy could not be the "spirit of Jehovah." It was a lying spirit, since the whole existence of this class of persons was rooted in apostasy and in revolt from the theocratic constitution. These "prophets of Samaria" (Jer. xxiii. 13; Ezek. xiii. 1) were false prophets. They were not "servants of Jehovah" or "men of God," but creatures of Jeroboam's royal power, court prophets, who stood ready for the service of the king. This is the character in which they here appear. Ahab knew that they would prophesy "good" concerning him; hence he called them and would not listen to Micaiah. It is not necessary to consider them conscious and intentional deceivers, but, though they may have believed in their own oracles, yet they were deceitful prophets, since the "spirit of Jehovah" was not in them.

4. *The prophet Micaiah*, of whom we know nothing more than is to be learned from this chapter, unites, in contrast with the prophets of Ahab, all the chief features of a genuine Jehovah-prophet in a manner in which they are not to be found in a single appearance of any other prophet. We are first struck by the fulfilment of his prediction. He announces, on the authority of a vision, the fall of Ahab as a thing settled in the counsels of God, and does this in such a clear and definite way that Ahab and all the others who were present at once understood what was predicted, and there was no place for a "dim misgiving of the defeat which was to be suffered" (Ewald). According to human foresight, a great defeat was the less to be expected on this occasion, since Ahab's army was considerably strengthened by the addition of Jehoshaphat's, and the only thing sought was the capture of one city. Hence the four hundred prophets unanimously promised victory. The passage is certainly historical: according to Thenius, the vision of Micaiah "is to be regarded as a proof of the historical truth of the passage on account of its peculiarity and originality;" we have here, therefore, a definite prediction, which can have proceeded only from divine revelation, from which Micaiah expressly asserts that he received it. Then with this gift of prediction Micaiah unites also the heroic courage which marked all the true prophets. He steps forth in the face of the king and his four hundred prophets, as once Elijah stepped forth in the face of the same king and the four hundred and fifty priests of Baal on Mount Carmel. Though he came from captivity, and had now an opportunity to receive the royal favor, and although the attendant begged him, as he came, to "prophesy good," yet he speaks only what God has revealed to him, and fears neither the wrath of the king, nor the outcry and rage of the four hundred. He recognizes no fear of men and no desire to please men. The word of his God is more to him than all else, and with that he stands firm, no matter what may threaten him. To this heroic courage he adds, finally, the patient endurance of insult and abuse which he is called to endure for the sake of truth. He does not repay Zedekiah in kind, but refers him to the experience which awaits him. When the enraged king orders him into close confinement on the "bread of affliction," he does not murmur, but calls on all present to remember his prediction, and submits to his lot, leaving judgment to Him who judges righteously. So this servant of God appears as a forerunner of Him in whose mouth no deceit was found, who, when he was reviled, reviled not again, and did not threaten when he suffered (1 Peter ii. 22 *sq.*), as if the great example had already appeared before him, and he had only followed in His footsteps.

5. *The vision of the prophet Micaiah* (vers. 19–22) is original and peculiar. It has no parallel in the Old Testament. In meaning it corresponds most nearly to Isai. xix. 14 *sq.* It is very important for the elucidation of the idea of God as contained in the Old Testament. In so far as it proceeds upon the supposition that the deceitful prophecy of the four hundred prophets had its source in God, it seems to stand upon a religious idea which is not reconcilable with the holiness of God. In order to escape the offence which is involved in this view, the action of God has been described as a mere "permission." Theodoret, for instance, whom nearly all the ancient expositors follow, says of this vision: προσωποποιία τις, διδάσκουσα τὴν θείαν συγχώρησιν. But this is clearly a case in which Jehovah himself appears ordering and regulating independently and spontaneously, not merely permissively. We must bear in mind that the vision represents an executive or judicial act of God. As judge, God stands to evil not in the attitude of permission, but in one of punishment. Since evil does not come from God, but from man, who rebels against God, chooses evil, and opposes it to God, so punishment comes upon man through evil. God proves His holiness most of all by this, that He punishes evil by evil, and destroys it by itself. It is an essential feature in the divine government of the world that the evil which springs up in the world is made an instrument in the hand of the Holy One for neutralizing and destroying itself, and that it becomes a means of ruin to him who chooses it, and brings it into being. The idea of holiness as applied to God excludes all idea of His indifference as between good and evil, and therefore forbids us to think of Him as "permitting" evil. The theory of permission does not therefore reconcile this incident with God's holiness, but rather is directly inconsistent with God's holiness. Hence it has been abandoned in modern theology (*cf.* Rothe, *Ethik*, II. *s.* 204–210). It is also entirely foreign to Holy Scripture (*cf.* Hengstenberg, *Beiträge*, III. *s.* 462 *sq.*). The notion that God punishes evil by evil, which forms the basis of Micaiah's vision, runs through all the Scriptures, and is not at all, as Thenius says, "an outgrowth of the opinions of the time." Thenius is even inclined to regard its close conformity to the prevalent notions of the time as "an especial proof of the historical character of the passage." But this general notion is found in the writings of the greatest prophet of the Old Testament (Isai. xix. 14), and in those of the greatest Apostle of the New Testament (2 Thess. ii. 11; Rom. i. 24–28; ix. 17). The saying, frivolous in itself, *Mundus vult decipi, ergo decipiatur*, may be applied to Ahab, at least in this sense: He who seeks and chooses falsehood will be ruined by falsehood, against his choice (Ps. xviii. 27).

6 *Ahab's end* was truly tragical. It was brought about, not by a blind fate, but by a God who is just in all His ways, and holy in all His works (Ps. cxlv. 17), whose judgments are unsearchable, and His ways past finding out (Rom. xi. 33). The conflict which Ahab had sought, and which no warning could induce him to abandon, became his punishment. He fell in battle with that very enemy who had once been delivered into his hands, and whom he had released, out of vanity and weakness, to the harm of Israel, and so he made good just the words of the prophet in chap. xx. 42. He thought that a disguise would render him secure from the Syrian leaders who sought to find him out, and he did indeed escape them; but an unknown man, who did not know him, and had no intention against him, shot him, while Jehoshaphat, though undisguised, escaped unharmed. The arrow which struck him was not warded off by his corselet, but just struck the narrow opening between the corselet and the skirt, where it could penetrate and inflict a fatal wound. Every one, therefore, who does not regard all in-

cidents as accidents, must recognize the hand which guided this shaft. The words of the Psalmist held true: "If he will not turn, he will whet his sword, he hath bent his bow, and made it ready. He hath also prepared for him the instruments of death; he ordaineth his arrows against the persecutors" (Ps. vii. 12, 13). Finally, Ahab did not die at once, but at evening, in consequence of the loss of blood. His blood flowed down in the chariot, which was so besmeared by it that it had to be washed. It was washed at the pool before the city, where dogs drank and harlots bathed. So it came to pass, although he was buried with all honor, that he was marked in his death as one condemned by God, and Elijah's word (chap. xxi. 19) was fulfilled.

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

Vers. 1–38. Ahab's last undertaking. (*a*) What led him to it (vers. 1–4); (*b*) the question which he put to the prophets in regard to it (vers. 6–28); (*c*) how it resulted (vers. 29–38).—Vers. 1–4. The coalition of the two kings. (*a*) It is proposed by Ahab. (He aims to bring about the war under an apparently just pretext, whereas he was himself to blame for the loss of Ramoth, because he let Ben-hadad go. So, often, strife is stirred up under the pretext of a just occasion, when the real cause is an evil and godless feeling. Instead of using the time of peace for peaceful industry the restless man begs for Jehoshaphat's help in a new war. He was willing to borrow Jehoshaphat's aid for such an undertaking, but did not care to borrow anything of his piety. [He cunningly proposed the war to recover Ramoth at a time when Jehoshaphat was on a visit to him, and was most anxious to please him.]) (*b*) Jehoshaphat agrees to it (without due consideration. He was bribed by Ahab's friendly reception and hospitality. He thus brought himself into great danger, ver. 32. We must not enter into alliances with men like Ahab, who are given over to do evil. Still less ought we to form relationships with them, for we are thus liable to be led into ways which are displeasing to God and lead to ruin, 2 Chron. xix. 2. We ought to be at peace with all men, but to enter into alliances and relationships only with those who stand on the same ground with us as regards the highest interests).—Ver. 1. STARKE: God gives time and place for repentance even to the greatest sinners. If they will not repent he will whet his sword (Ps. vii. 12 and 13).—Ver. 3. WÜRT. SUMM.: It is a misfortune when great men have a fondness for war. They are not satisfied when they must be still, but seek war without necessity and imperil their country.—PFAFF'SCHE BIBEL: Do ye not know that heaven is ours, yet we be still! So should those cry out to their hearers who are charged with the cure of souls, and should encourage them to take the kingdom of heaven by force (Matt. xi. 12).—Ver. 5. WÜRT. SUMM.: We should undertake nothing without God's approval, for how can a thing prosper in which God does not help? Hence we ought to seek counsel of God in his word and in prayer, and, when the word of God does not counsel us to proceed with the undertaking we should give it up, satisfied that it would not succeed. It is well to ask God's will, but do it always before, not after thou hast asked or promised.—J. LANGE: It often happens thus, a man determines on something displeasing to God, following his own notion, and then convinces himself that it is according to God's will. Question the word of God! the best counsellor (*a*) for all who seek truth and are tossed about by doubts, 2 Peter i. 19; Ps. xix. 8 *sq.*; (*b*) for all who seek consolation and peace for the soul, Ps. cxix. 82, 92, 105; Jer. xv. 16.

Vers. 6–12. The congregation of prophets. (*a*) The question which Ahab submitted to them. (He did not ask in the simple desire to learn the truth and submit to it, but to obtain divine approval before the world for that which he had already determined on. If any one prophesies to him in any other manner he becomes angry with him. The world demands prophets, but calls only those "good preachers" whose words please its ears, 2 Tim. iv. 3, and whose words are not a hammer to break the rock, but a cradle-song to lure to sleep in the midst of vain folly.) (*b*) The answer which the assembled prophets gave to Ahab. (The answer did not proceed from the spirit of truth any more than the question, for these prophets did not stand on the ground of the divine word. He who has abandoned God's word may speak as finely as he will; he is a false prophet. [This holds true as well of the dogmatist as of the rationalist.] Ahab's prophets say to him: Go and prosper! He goes and falls into hell. So also now the false prophets promise salvation to all who walk in the broad way, Ezek. xiii. 18. Therefore, "Believe not every spirit, but try the spirits," &c., 1 John iv. 1).—Vers. 7. and 8. In many a city and country where there are preachers enough, one is still obliged to ask, as Jehoshaphat did: "Is there not here a prophet of the Lord besides?" Is there not one who proclaims the word of God simply and purely, without fear or favor of men, and who can say what Paul says: Gal. i. 10? There was indeed one other prophet of the Lord in Samaria, but he was in prison, and the king was hostile to him. STARKE: Pious people esteem a single genuine prophet or preacher more than four hundred false ones.—**Let not the king say so.** When a servant of God touches thy conscience, say not: I will go to that church no more; I do not like that preacher.—STARKE: A Christian should not keep silence when the godless speak sinfully, but interrupt and rebuke them. The Lord did so on the cross (Luke xxiii. 39).—Vers. 10–12. PFAFF. BIBEL: There is nothing which is more sinful and worthy of punishment than to flatter the great, who need to hear the truth. This is more sinful, however, in the clergy than in others.—BERLEB. BIBEL: Who is not disgusted by those who fashion their words by popular favor? Yet he who would go on smoothly and easily and prosperously must do this. Then he will not meet with opposition, nor lose his place at Jezebel's table (chap. xviii. 19), nor his other emoluments. All the four hundred agreed unanimously, and yet their prophecy was false. In matters of divine truth it matters not how many agree. Here voices ought to be weighed, not counted. The number of the unbelieving or the superstitious was always greater than that of the believers, for men agree in error or falsehood much more easily than in truth. Be not deceived, though thousands may think and say the same thing, and though the greatest and most learned may be amongst them, but cling thou to the word of Him who has said: "Heaven and earth shall pass away,

but my word shall not pass away."—STARKE: Unanimity of opinion, even in the largest congregations of theologians, is not always a proof of truth, for a great company may err.

Vers. 12–28. WÜRT. SUMM.: Here we see the marks of the true and false prophets. The false teachers say what is popular, so as to enjoy rewards; they rely upon their number; they say that they have God's word, though they have it not, and claim to be in all things equal to the true teachers; they dispute more with blows and screams than with proofs from the word of God; they are held in high esteem. On the contrary, true teachers do not speak to please anybody, but they preach fearlessly the truth of God's word, letting it strike whom it will, refusing to be turned aside, and submitting to persecution. Micaiah, the type of a true prophet (see *Histor.* § 4).—Vers. 13 and 14. Micaiah on his way to the king. (*a*) How he was tempted. (The witnesses to the truth often have to withstand the strongest temptations from those who appear to be their sincere friends. They are begged for their own sakes, and for the sake of those who depend on them, not to oppose the great and mighty, and not to declare other teachers false prophets. They are told that their declarations will do no good, but will only excite enmity against them, and deprive them of bread and of respect. *Cf.* Mark viii. 32 *sq.*) (*b*) How he repels the temptation. (Neither allurements nor threats can turn aside a faithful servant of God from the word of the Lord. That is the rock on which he takes his stand, the sword and shield with which he fights. What he has already suffered has not made him submissive; what yet awaits him cannot turn him aside. All other considerations must yield to the duty of saying what the Lord gives him to say. Acts iv. 20.)—Ver. 13. HALL: Those who offer earthly good as an inducement think that every one worships their idol.—Ver. 14. STARKE: We ought to be firm against allurements and not let ourselves be drawn from the truth by favor or disfavor. **What the Lord saith unto me that will I speak** ought to be the vow of every preacher when he enters on his office. (*a*) What pertains to the fulfilment of this vow? (Knowledge of the truth, power from above, prayer for the gifts of the spirit. 2 Tim. iv. 2 *sq.*) (*b*) What is promised to one who makes such a vow? (Jer. i. 8 *sq.*; Luke xii. 12; Matt. x. 10; Dan. xii. 3; 2 Tim. iv. 8; 1 Peter v. 4.) Vers. 15 and 16. BERLEB. BIBEL: This is a wonderful thing. People demand certain ones to speak the truth, to them, yet when the truth is spoken they are displeased by it. How many demand the truth, yet are angry when they hear it.—CRAMER: The godless often ask about the truth, not in order to make themselves better, but in order to spend their malice on the pious (Matt. ii. 3 *sq.*; xxvi. 63).—Hypocritical questions deserve no earnest answer, but only such a one as may put the questioner to shame.—STARKE: It is not wrong to sometimes answer the fool according to his folly, but with wit, in order to make him better (Prov. xxvi. 5).—Vers. 17–27. Micaiah's prediction. (*a*) Its contents, in their reference to the king (ver. 17), and to the four hundred prophets (vers. 19–23). (*b*) Its reception by the prophets (ver. 24) and by the king (ver. 26–28)—Ver. 17. Kings should be the shepherds of the people. Israel had in Ahab a master, but not a shepherd. He led the people not in the right path, but astray (Jer. ii. 13). It is the greatest misfortune for a people when it has no leader who is a true shepherd.—Ver. 18. CRAMER: The godless murmur against preachers, saying that they can do nothing but scold, but they do not murmur against their own sins (Lament. iii. 39).—Vers. 19–23. The truths which are presented to us by the prophet's vision. (*a*) The Lord in heaven stands above all earthly thrones. He appoints and deposes kings, and has power over all kingdoms (Dan. ii. 21; iv. 14; 1 Sam. ii. 7). Therefore let all the earth fear him, &c. (Ps. xxxiii. 8). (*b*) The Lord is pure to the pure, and perverse to the perverse. He gives over the perverse and hard-hearted to the judgment of obstinate error; he sends mighty errors to inthrall those who resist the truth (John xii. 40; 2 Thess. ii. 11; Ex. xiv. 4, 8). Therefore "harden not your hearts," &c. (Hebr. iii. 8). —Ver. 21. PFAFF: It is a great judgment of God upon a country when he allows false prophets to lead it astray, and to put on the mask of true prophets. It is, however, a judgment which the world does not recognize as such.—Ver. 22. KYBURZ: He who seduces others is himself seduced as a just punishment. Ahab led the people from God to Baal, therefore he is here led by a false oracle to march out upon his own scaffold. That, however, is the mightiest seduction which is brought about through those who ordinarily stand highest in authority,—the prophets.—Vers. 24–28. Micaiah's suffering for the truth. (*a*) He is publicly insulted by Zedekiah the chief of the prophets (Matt. v. 11). (*b*) He is thrown into prison by the godless king Ahab (1 Pet. ii. 19). (*c*) He is left unprotected by the pious king Jehoshaphat (Matt. xxvi. 56).—Ver. 24. KYBURZ: When the disputants cannot oppose anything to the truth, they turn to blows instead of arguments, or the controversy ends in scolding, and calumny, and blasphemy. Those are the weapons which are forged in hell against the truth. Let every one who intends to speak and write the naked truth make up his mind that he will be attacked by these if he disregards the favor of men. This salt [the truth] has lost nothing of its savor; it bites to-day as it did 3,000 years ago.—BERLEB. BIBEL: A false light makes men self-willed; they become like those who stand in a mist. Each one sees an open light space about himself, but seems to see that every other is enveloped in mist.—HALL: None boast more of having the spirit of God than those who have it not at all. Vessels which are full give only a light sound or none at all. In vituperation and abuse clerical disputants, to whom it is least becoming, are unfortunately often most vigorous. By their sensitive vanity, which can endure no contradiction, their envy, their arrogance, and their anger, they show plainly that they have not the spirit of God, which does not dwell in an arrogant and quarrelsome and self willed heart, but in a humble one, and its fruits are love, joy, peace, long-suffering, &c. (Gal. v. 22). "The Lord resisteth the proud." Ver. 25. CRAMER: Those who are boldest in prosperity generally become the most timid when their affairs begin to decline (Judges ix. 38).—Vers. 26–28. Ahab's conduct towards the witness of the Truth. (*a*) It was tyrannical. (There is no greater tyranny than to suppress by force the divine word and the truth.) (*b*) It was foolish. (We

cannot accomplish anything against the truth, 2 Cor. xiii. 8. We can put the advocates of it in prison, but not the truth. It cannot be bound in chains, nor starved. It escapes and spreads, and only gains in glory by our attempts to oppress it.)—Ver. 28. STARKE: Threats of death or of imprisonment may not frighten a true servant of God from confessing the truth (Acts v. 25–29).—He who makes a good confession can without fear call all the world to witness it (Matt. x. 14). Such a confession always leaves a sting behind, which one can never again get rid of (ver. 30).

Vers. 29–38. The war with the Syrians. (*a*) A war which was undertaken without, nay, even against, God's will, and therefore with no good conscience. (*b*) An unfortunate war, which resulted in danger to Jehoshaphat, death to Ahab, and rout to the army.—The two kings before, in, and after the battle.—Ver. 29. **So.** We should expect: "So" the two kings abandoned the war. However they went, one out of self-will, the other out of weakness.—CALW. BIB.: Men do far too readily what they want to do, although it is contrary to God's will, putting aside God's word, or the warnings of others, or the voice of conscience. The event is never good. How often men ask for advice, yet follow their own will only. KYBURZ: Jehoshaphat's example ought to make us shy of the society of the wicked. The sun of grace in his heart became gradually dimmed. At first he had courage to remonstrate with Ahab, but gradually he comes to silence and indifference, even while Micaiah is abused and remanded to prison. In the end this evil companionship would have cost him his life, if God had not wonderfully interposed.—Ver. 30. Unbelief, in Ahab, joined hands with superstition. The king despises and rejects the word of God which is announced to him, and yet he is frightened, and seeks to escape the threatened dangers by disguising himself. This stratagem was intended to prove the prophet false. Neither cunning nor might avails against God's will. Thou mayest disguise thyself as thou wilt, God will find thee when and where no man recognizes thee (Ps. cxxxix. 7–12). *Multi ad fatum venere suum, dum fata timent.*—Ver. 32. CRAMER: God sometimes lets his children come into distress and danger when they have formed companionship with the wicked, but he saves them again through His goodness and might, that they may be the more careful another time. Into what distress and danger one is thrown by a careless promise (ver. 4), an ill-timed concession, and the false shame of taking back one's promise! —Vers. 34 and 35. If not a sparrow falls, nor a hair, without His will, how much less can an arrow or a ball strike thee unless His hand guides it. —BERLEB. BIB. The less of the human there is in those things which we commonly call accidents, the more there is of the divine. The weal or woe of whole nations often depends on those things which are called accidents.—Ver. 36. Whatever any men, though they were kings, have brought together and set up, without God's approval, that is certain to fall to pieces and perish again.—Vers. 37 and 38. Ahab's end (see *Histor.* § 6). (*a*) It was sudden (1 Sam. xx. 3; Luke xii. 20. From sudden death, good Lord, deliver us). (*b*) It was unrepentant (without conviction of sin, or repentance for it, or longing for grace and pardon). (*c*) It was shameful. (He was indeed buried with honor, like the rich man, Luke xvi., but the dogs lick his blood, and his memory does not remain in honor, Ps. lxxiii. 19. Therefore, Ps. xc. 12; xxxix. 5.)—STARKE: As he lived, so he died; as he died, so he was judged. The death of Ahab is a testimony to Rom. xi. 33; Gal. vi. 7; Isai. xl. 8.—Vers. 39 and 40. What is the profit of leaving behind a great and grand house, if one has not set one's house in order (Isai. xxxviii. 1; 1 John ii. 17)?

PART SECOND.

[THE SECOND BOOK OF THE KINGS, INCLUDING 1 KINGS XXII. 41-53.]

SECOND PERIOD, SECOND EPOCH.

THIRD SECTION.

THE KINGDOM UNDER JEHOSHAPHAT IN JUDAH, AND AHAZIAH AND JORAM IN ISRAEL.

(1 Kings XXII. 41—2 Kings III. 37.)

A.—*Reigns of Jehoshaphat and Ahaziah.*

1 Kings XXII. 41—2 Kings I. 18.

1 Kings XXII. 41. And Jehoshaphat the son of Asa began to reign over Judah
42 in the fourth year of Ahab king of Israel. Jehoshaphat *was* thirty and five years
old when he began to reign; and he reigned twenty and five years in Jerusalem.
43 And his mother's name *was* Azubah the daughter of Shilhi. And he walked in
all the way of Asa his father; he turned not aside from it, doing *that which*
was right in the eyes of the Lord: nevertheless the high places were not taken
44 away; *for* the people offered and burnt incense yet in the high places. And
45 Jehoshaphat made [was at] peace with the king of Israel. Now the rest of the
acts of Jehoshaphat, and his might that he shewed, and how he warred, *are*
46 they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Judah? And the
remnant of the sodomites, which remained in the days of his father Asa, he
47 took out of the land. *There was* then no king in Edom: a deputy *was* king.
48 Jehoshaphat made ships of Tharshish to go to Ophir for gold: but they went
49 not: for the ships were broken [wrecked] at Ezion-geber. Then said Ahaziah
the son of Ahab unto Jehoshaphat, Let my servants go with thy servants in
the ships. But Jehoshaphat would not.
50 And Jehoshaphat slept with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in
the city of David his father: and Jehoram his son reigned in his stead.
51 Ahaziah the son of Ahab began to reign over Israel in Samaria the seven-
teenth year of Jehoshaphat king of Judah, and reigned two years over Israel.
52 And he did evil in the sight of the Lord, and walked in the way of his father,
and in the way of his mother, and in the way of Jeroboam the son of Nebat,
53 who made Israel to sin: For he served Baal, and worshipped him, and provoked
to anger the Lord God of Israel, according to all that his father had done.

1

THE

SECOND BOOK OF THE KINGS,

COMMONLY CALLED

THE FOURTH BOOK OF THE KINGS.

Chap. I. 1–18.

1 Then Moab rebelled against Israel after the death of Ahab. And Ahaziah
2 fell down through a [window-] lattice in his upper chamber that *was* in Samaria,
and was sick: and he sent messengers, and said unto them, Go, inquire of Baal-
3 zebub the god of Ekron whether I shall recover of this disease. But the angel
of the Lord * said to Elijah the Tishbite, Arise, Go up to meet the messengers
of the king of Samaria, and say unto them, *Is it* not [*omit* not] because *there is*
not a God in Israel, *that* ye go to inquire of Baal-zebub the god of Ekron?
4 Now therefore thus saith the Lord, Thou shalt not come down from that bed on
5 which thou art gone up, but shalt surely die. And Elijah departed. And
when the messengers turned back unto him, he said unto them, Why are ye
6 now turned back? And they said unto him, There came a man up to meet us,
and said unto us, Go, turn again unto the king that sent you, and say unto him,
Thus saith the Lord, *Is it* not [*omit* not] because *there is* not a God in Israel, *that*
thou sendest to inquire of Baal-zebub the god of Ekron? therefore thou shalt
not come down from that bed on which thou art gone up, but shalt surely die.
7 And he said unto them, What manner of man *was he* which came up to meet
8 you, and told you these words? And they answered him, *He was* a hairy man,
and girt with a girdle of leather about his loins. And he said, It *is* Elijah the
Tishbite.
9 Then the king sent unto him a captain of fifty with his fifty. And he
went up to him: and, behold, he sat on the top of a hill. And he spake
10 unto him, Thou man of God, the king hath said, Come down. And Elijah
answered and said to the captain of fifty, If I *be* a man of God, then let fire
come down from heaven, and consume thee and thy fifty. And there came
11 down fire from heaven, and consumed him and his fifty. Again also he sent unto
him another captain of fifty with his fifty. And he answered [lifted up his
voice][1] and said unto him, O man of God, thus hath the king said, Come down
12 quickly. And Elijah answered and said unto them, [him],[2] If [And if] I *be* a
man of God, let fire come down from heaven, and consume thee and thy fifty.
And the fire of God came down from heaven, and consumed him and his fifty.
13 And he sent again a [third][3] captain of the third [*omit* the third] fifty with his
fifty. And the third captain of fifty went up, and came and fell on his knees
before Elijah, and besought him, and said unto him, O man of God, I pray thee,
let my life, and the life of these fifty thy servants, be precious in thy sight.
14 Behold, there came fire down from heaven, and burnt up the two captains of the
former fifties with their fifties: therefore [but] let my life now be precious in

* [The correct translation of יהוה, rendered in our version by Lord, would be *The Eternal*. This may be regarded as a standing correction.]

15 thy sight. And the angel of the Lord said unto Elijah, Go down with him:[4]
be not afraid of him. And he arose, and went down with him unto the king.
16 And he said unto him, Thus saith the Lord, Forasmuch as thou hast sent mes-
sengers to inquire of Baal-zebub the god of Ekron, *is it* not [*omit* not] because
there is no God in Israel to inquire of his word? therefore thou shalt not come
17 down off that bed on which thou art gone up, but shalt surely die. So he
died according to the word of the Lord which Elijah had spoken. And Jehoram
reigned in his stead, in the second year of Jehoram the son of Jehoshaphat king
18 of Judah; because he had no son. Now the rest of the acts of Ahaziah which
he did, *are* they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Israel?

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

[1] Ver. 11.—The Sept. [Cod. Alex.] have here *καὶ ἀνέβη, καὶ ἐλάλησεν*, so that they read וַיַּעַל for וַיַּעַן. Thenius and Keil adopt this reading, citing vers. 9 and 13.

[2] Ver. 12.—[Sept. for אֲלֵיהֶם, *πρὸς αὐτόν*, a necessary emendation.

[3] Ver. 13.—[שְׁלִשִׁי must be read for שְׁלִשִׁים with Thenius and Keil.

[4] Ver. 15.—[אוֹתוֹ has the form of the accusative sign with suffix, instead of אִתּוֹ the preposition. The distinction is not observed in the later language. Ewald, *Lehrbuch d. hebr. Spr.* § 264, b. and Ges. § 103, 1. R. 1.—The suffix in מִפָּנָיו refers to the king.—W. G. S.]

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

Ver. 41. **And Jehoshaphat, the son of Asa, &c.** 2 Chron. xvii.–xxi. gives a more detailed account of the reign of this king, which our author here treats with remarkable brevity. On ver. 43, *cf.* chap. xv. 9 *sq.* The statement in the last part of ver. 43 is not contradictory to 2 Chron. xvii. 6, for the latter place refers to the idolatrous worship of Baal and Astarte, on the high places and in the groves, while here the author is speaking of the worship of Jehovah upon the high places, as in 2 Chron. xx. 33. (*Cf.* notes on chap. ii. 3.) Jehoshaphat had *peace* (ver. 44) as a result of his matrimonial alliance with Ahab (2 Chron. xviii. 1), not only with that king himself, but also with his successors, Ahaziah and Jehoram. On ver. 45, *cf.* chap. xv. 23, and on ver. 46, *cf.* chap. xiv. 24, and chap. xv. 12.

Ver. 47. **There was then no king in Edom.** This observation simply serves to introduce what the author desired to add, in vers. 48 and 49, as especially important, from the history of the reign of Jehoshaphat. As Edom at that time had no king of its own, but merely a governor, Jehoshaphat could build a merchant-fleet in the Edomitic port, Ezion-geber, as Solomon had done before (chap. ix. 26). The Edomites had been subjugated by David (2 Sam. viii. 14), but attempted, in the latter part of the reign of Solomon, to regain their independence under the leadership of Hadad (chap. xi. 14 *sq.*); we have no information whether at all, or to what extent, this attempt succeeded. Keil and Ewald are of the opinion that the Edomites joined themselves to the Ammonites and Moabites in their war with Jehoshaphat (2 Chron. xx. 1 *sq.*), but were conquered by him, and then placed under a governor. There is not, however, the slightest mention of the Edomites in 2 Chron. xx. There is just as little foundation for the supposition of Thenius, that Hadad's family had died out before the time of Jehoshaphat, and that the latter profited cunningly by the quarrels which arose about the succession to re-establish the sovereignty of Judah over Edom. Only this much is certain, that circumstances had arisen in Edom under Jehoshaphat which brought about the appointment of a governor, and rendered possible the re-establishment of the trade with Ophir, which had existed in the most flourishing period of the kingdom.—On *Ophir* and the *Ships of Tarshish*, see notes on chap. x. 22. The latter were wrecked, as it seems, before leaving the harbor of Ezion-geber, by a storm. According to 2 Chron. xx. 35 *sq.*, Jehoshaphat caused these ships to be built in company with Ahaziah, and the prophet Eliezer interpreted their destruction to him as a divine punishment for his connection with the apostate Ahaziah (ver. 52) after he had received a warning on account of his alliance with Ahab (2 Chron. xix. 2). Probably he hoped and believed that Ahaziah had better purposes than Ahab, and therefore he did not at first reject his propositions. When, however, Ahaziah made a second proposal to him (ver. 49) he declined to enter into it. In this opinion Keil also now agrees, although he formerly assumed that the ships were twice destroyed—first, those which, according to the passage before us, were destined for the voyage to Ophir, and then those which, according to 2 Chron. xx. 36, were intended for that to Tarshish (in Spain). The death of Jehoshaphat is somewhat anticipated in ver. 50, for 2 Chron. iii. 7 *sq.* relates how he made an expedition against the Moabites with Jehoram, the successor of Ahaziah.

Ver. 51. **Ahaziah, the son of Ahab, &c.** For the chronological statement: "The seventeenth year of Jehoshaphat," which does not coincide with the duration of Ahab's reign (1 Kings xvi. 29), and the commencement of Jehoshaphat's reign (1 Kings xxii. 41), see below, on 2 Kings viii. 16.—On ver. 52, *cf.* chap. xvi. 29–33.—On the groundlessness of the division, which commences the "Second book of the Kings" after ver. 53, see § 1

of the *Introduction*. Particularly the first verse of the second book stands in close connection with the three last verses of the first book, as is evident from the words **After the death of Ahab.** The death of this king and the accession of Ahaziah were the immediate causes of the attempt of the Moabites, who had been tributary ever since the time of David (2 Sam. viii. 2), to separate themselves from Israel. We must therefore put this attempt before the rest which is related in regard to Ahaziah, especially before the construction of the merchant-fleet, which he attempted in company with Jehoshaphat. War with the revolted Moabites did not break out under Ahaziah, who did not reign for even two full years, but immediately after the accession of his successor, Jehoram (chap. iii.). Keil thinks it clear that the revolt of the Moabites followed upon their alliance with the Ammonites, which is narrated in 2 Chron. xx. This alliance, however, was directed against Jehoshaphat and Judah, and in the entire account there is no trace whatever that Israel took part in the expedition of Jehoshaphat, whereas chap. iii. 4 *sq.* treats of a war between Israel and the Moabites. Piscator correctly states the connection between vers. 1 and 2 thus: *Ægrotavit, ac perinde nihil contra Moabitas tentare potuit.*

Chap. i. ver. 2. **And Ahaziah fell down through a (window-) lattice,** &c. According to Ewald, with whom Thenius agrees, the passage (vers. 2–16) does not come from the same author as the other passages which treat of Elijah, viz., 1 Kings xvii. xviii. and xix., and 2 Kings ii. 1–18, but is of later origin than these, as "is clear from the difference of the language in regard to the descent of fire from heaven in 1 Kings xviii. 38, and 2 Kings i. 10–14, not to speak of the difference in the nature of the contents of the two passages." When the narrative is correctly accepted, however, this latter difference disappears. Still less can we conclude, from the fact that נָפַל is used of the descent of fire in the first passage and יָרַד in the second, that they have different authors.—שְׂבָכָה is *lattice-work*, also *snare* (Job xviii. 8). It can hardly be that we have here to think of the balustrade of the flat roof, but rather of the window-opening, which was provided with a lattice. For this interpretation בְּעַד *through* is also an argument. We may suppose that he leaned too far out through the low window, although he does not seem to have fallen very far, as it did not cost him his life; possibly only on to one of the galleries of the palace. That this took place on the occasion of a drinking-bout (Krummacher) is a groundless supposition. The Sept. render *Baal-zebub* [mentioned only in this passage in the Old Testament] by *βάαλ μυῖαν θεὸν 'Ακκαρών*, and Pliny says (*Hist. Nat.* 10, 28): *Cyrenaici Achorem Deum (invocant) muscarum multitudine pestilentiam afferente quæ protinus intereunt postquam litatum est illi Deo* He is therefore the Baal who protects against the flies, which cause sickness and other calamities; "Defender against vermin," like the *Ζεὺς ἀπόμυιος, μυίαγρος* of the Eleans (Pausan. viii. 26, 4). Against this commonly received explanation (Gesenius, Movers, Ewald, Winer, *Real-Wörterbuch*, i. *s.* 120), J. G. Müller (Herzog, *Encyc.* i. *s.* 768), with whom Keil agrees, maintains that the "Fly-god" cannot have his name as enemy of flies, but that he was *Μυῖα θεός*, *i. e.*, the fly as god, and therefore an idol in the form of a fly, "who must have stood in a similar relation to flies, being a sun-god and summer-god, as the oracle-god, Apollo, who sent and warded off sickness." Stark (*Gaza*, *s.* 260) remarks further: "They (the flies) seem, in their appearance and disappearance, which depend entirely upon the weather, to be themselves endowed with some prophetic power." This view, however, cannot be made to agree with the words of Pliny, and Ahaziah was certainly anxious not only for an oracle, but also at the same time and especially for recovery from his illness through the help of the Fly-god.—*Ekron*, probably the present Akir, was the northernmost of the five principal cities of the Philistines (Jos. xiii. 3), and so lay nearest to the royal residence, Samaria. [*Cf.* Robinson's *Biblical Researches*, iii. 22–25.] Following Ephrem, Vatablus remarks that Ahaziah sent to the Idol at Ekron by the advice of Jezebel.

Ver. 3. **But the Angel of the Lord,** &c. "Not *an* angel but *the* angel of the Lord who makes known all the revelations of the invisible God to the covenant people. *Cf.* Hengstenberg, *Christologie*, I. 1, *s.* 219–232." (Keil.) We have not to think of any external appearances. [מַלְאַךְ יהֹ is the varying form under which God reveals himself on the earth, on different occasions. Indeed, in the older books there is often an ambiguity as to which is meant, God himself or some apparition, or the representations vary indifferently. *Cf.* Gen. xvi. 7, 10, 11 (yet ver. 14, "God of my sight," *i. e.*, "whom I have seen"); xxi. 9 *sq.*; *cf.* Gen. xvii. 15 *sq.*, and Gen. xviii. 9–16. In Gen. xxii. notice ver. 12, at the end, "from me." See also chap. xxxi. 11 *sq.*, and espec. ver. 13; also the story chap. xxxii. 24–32, espec. ver. 30. *Cf.*, further, Ex. iii. 2, 16, 18, and iv. 6 *sq.*; Ex. xiii. 21, and xiv. 19; Josh. vi. 2; Judges vi. 12 *sq.*, espec. vers. 14, 16 and 23; xiii. 22 and 23. The latter passages seem to recognize the distinction more clearly. Judges xiii. 16, the angel distinguishes between himself and God. It follows that "whenever God appears, he does so in an angel, and whenever an angel appears, it is God who appears in him; so that appearances of the angel and appearances of God are the same." Afterwards this method of revelation gave way to that of the prophets, with their "Thus saith the Lord!" In the poetical books we find a personification of wisdom, out of, and alongside of God, (*cf.* Job xxviii.), and all culminates in the logos-doctrine of St. John.—W. G. S.]—Where Elijah was then living we do not know. Thenius thinks "assuredly upon Mount Carmel;" but that is contradicted by the words, "Go up to meet the messengers!" for Ekron lay to the south and Carmel to the north of Samaria, in entirely opposite directions. We should have to suppose then that Elijah started much sooner, and came to meet the messengers immediately upon their coming out of Samaria.—**And Elijah departed** (ver. 4), *i. e.*, he did as the angel of the Lord had commanded.

Ver. 5. **And when the messengers turned back unto him,** &c. They must have received a powerful impression from the personal presence of Elijah, whom they did not know, since they felt themselves compelled at once to turn back and bring information to their master. The latter asks them in astonishment: **Why are ye now turned back?** as it was impossible that they

could have been in Ekron. On the words **that ye go** (ver. 3), for which they say in ver. 6 **that thou sendest,** Menken remarks, "They lay the blame entirely upon the king. The prophet, however, had spoken in such a way that they might observe that they also had incurred guilt, and had made themselves accomplices in another's crime."—מִשְׁפַּט (ver. 7) is not exactly *figura et habitus* (Vulgata), but the law or rule, as that which defines the entire personality, "the life-rule of the individual person" (Keil), his peculiarity, by virtue of which he is distinguished, and by which he may be recognized. That אִישׁ בַּעַל שֵׂעָר does not mean "long hair covered his head" (Ewald), is clear from the description of the later Elijah (Matt. iii. 4). The *vir pilosus, hirsutus* is the man who is clothed in a hairy (black) garment. Such was the peculiar dress of the prophets as preachers of repentance, and it was called (*cf.* Zech. xiii. 4) אַדֶּרֶת שֵׂעָר. It appears that this costume commenced with Elijah, who was the type of all following teachers of repentance, and that he was distinguished among the prophets of his time by means of it. (The 400 prophets of Ahab, 1 Kings xxii. 6, certainly did not wear this dress.) The girdle, generally the most expensive article of dress and the emblem of office, was made of leather only in the case of the poor and low (Winer, *R.-W.-B.* i. *s.* 448). In the case of the prophet the leather girdle signified self-denial and contempt for worldly ornament and grandeur, so that it corresponded perfectly to the coarse garment of hair (*cf.* the contrast, Matt. xi. 8), Hebr. xi. 37.

Ver. 9. **Then the king sent,** &c. Elijah had immediately withdrawn again, whether unto Carmel remains uncertain; but certainly Ahaziah must have discovered his place of abode. The hostile intention of the king shows itself in the sending of soldiers; certainly some act of violence was proposed. Perhaps he feared lest the disciples of the prophets, or other adherents of Elijah, might offer resistance. Ewald thinks he was going "to have him brought down and then (as, of course, is clear) executed." The army of Israel was divided up into bodies of 1,000, 100, and 50 (Num. xxxi. 14, 48; 1 Sam. viii. 12), each of which had its own leader, שַׂר (Winer, i. *s.* 683). The address of the leader has a military sound: **Thou man of God, the king hath said, Come down!** That the designation, "Man of God," was, in his mouth, not conviction, but scorn, is shown by the haughty and dictatorial "Come down!" (רֵדָה). The "and" with which the answer of Elijah begins (ver. 10) must not be omitted, as it is in the Vulg. and Luther, "since Elijah is thought of in this first answer (otherwise in ver. 12) as joining his speech immediately to that of the captain" (Thenius). The sense of the answer is: Thou callest me contemptuously and scoffingly "man of God;" but the Lord will show thee that I am such—thou shalt experience it. [Patrick quotes a gloss of Abarbinel to this effect: "If I be a man of God, as thou sayest, but dost not think, then I am not bound to obey the king but God, nor am I subject to his power, but to God's, who will make thee know that He judges in the earth."]—[**And there came down fire from heaven,** &c. These words do not convey an intelligible description of any physical event of which we can conceive. If we try to realize the incident in imagination we find it impossible. It is not the ordinary difficulty which attaches to an ordinary miracle. There we cannot tell *how* a thing came to pass, though we can see what the record means to assert. We can imagine that a man who never had spoken should open his mouth and speak, though we cannot conceive *how* he could be enabled to do so. Here, however, the words do not describe any external phenomenon which is conceivable, not to say anything about the difficulty which attaches to every miracle of seeing how it was done. We cannot tell what the author means to assert to have come to pass, for the words by which he refers to it do not give us a sufficient description of it. It is evident, therefore, that they refer back vaguely to a terrible judgment, the accurate literal details of which were lost. It was only thus remembered as something strange, shocking, and supernatural. See *Histor.* § 5, where Bähr seems inclined to take the statement figuratively, as a designation of the vengeance of God.—W. G. S.] The second captain who was sent (ver. 11) surpasses the first, instead of taking warning by his fate, in that he adds to the "Come down!" מְהֵרָה, "quickly," thereby insinuating a threat. How the king received information of the destruction of his two expeditions we cannot determine, as no hint is given of it. The *Berleburger Bibel* says that the people of the neighborhood acquainted him with it.—שְׁלִשִׁים in ver. 13 cannot mean "for the third time" (de Wette). If it cannot be referred to the fifty, as Keil explained it in his earlier edition, then we must read שְׁלִשִׁי as Thenius does, *i. e.*, "a third," according to the story which immediately follows.—**Afraid of him** (ver. 15), *i. e.*, not, as Thenius would have it taken, "of the captain," but "of the king" (Seb. Smith, Keil), for it is clear that מִפָּנָיו is opposed to אוֹתוֹ. He goes down with him to the king. One would be glad to learn something more about the meeting of Elijah and Ahaziah, but the account is here (vers. 16 and 17), as in fact throughout, very brief and even disjointed. On that very account, however, it is the more pregnant, and bears the more distinctly the character of genuineness and originality. In later times events were not narrated in such compressed form. Here, just as in other cases, Elijah reappears suddenly, and disappears again, and no one knows whence he comes or whither he goes. The manner in which Krummacher delineates Elijah's meeting with Ahaziah (*Elias der Thisb.*, *s.* 347) is indeed captivating, but, nevertheless, entirely arbitrary.—In ver. 17, the Sept., the Syriac version, and the Vulgata add after "Jehoram," "his brother." (*Cf.* chap. iii. 1, where he is called the son of Ahab.) On the date of his succession, **In the second year of Jehoram, the son of Jehoshaphat,** which it is extremely difficult to fix, see notes on 2 Kings, viii. 16.

HISTORICAL AND ETHICAL.

1. The *reign of Jehoshaphat* was a very successful and prosperous one for Judah, both internally

and externally, as is clear from the detailed account of the Chronicles. The author does not enter more particularly into the details of its history, evidently because from the time of the division of the kingdom on, his main object was rather to give a representation of the monarchy in Israel until its downfall. When, however, after a more general description of the reign of Jehoshaphat, he states that that king caused ships to be built which were intended to bring gold from Ophir (vers. 48–50), that is not a disconnected statement which was inserted accidentally or arbitrarily, but it stands in immediate connection with the preceding general characterization, and supplements it in an essential point. One cannot fail to recognize that there is therein a reference back to the time of Solomon, who first established a regular commerce with Ophir, and by that, as a principal means, laid the foundation for the wealth and prosperity of his kingdom (chap. ix. 26–28; x. 11, 22 *sq.*; 2 Chron. ix. 21 *sq.*). Jehoshaphat's aim, after he had established legal order in his dominions as far as possible, reduced the neighboring peoples to subjection again, and concluded peace with the brother kingdom, was to restore those times of prosperity, and to bring his realm up to the height of that of Solomon once more. The glory of the kingdom, however, as it had existed under Solomon, was, according to the purpose of God, forever gone by (see 1 Kings xii.; *Histor.* § 2). Its return was not a part of the divine plan of salvation, and every human attempt to restore it must necessarily fail. The fleet of Jehoshaphat went down in the harbor of Ezion-geber, even before it had sailed out, and that, too, not by human fault, but by a storm, that is to say, by a dispensation of God.

2. *As regards his relation to Jehovah*, which was the main point for every Israelitish king, *Ahaziah* was one of the very worst of them. This is marked. in the general description, by the fact that it is said of him, not only that "he did evil in the sight of the Lord," and "walked in the ways of Jeroboam," but that it is also added, "in the way of his father," nay even also (which is observed of no other king), "in the way of his mother," the fanatical, idolatrous, and bloodthirsty Jezebel, who was still living, and perhaps controlled him even more than she had controlled his father. All the acts of God during the reign of his father, of which he had been eye-witness and ear-witness, the proofs of God's power, long-suffering, and justice, even the tragical end of Ahab, had made no impression upon him. All had passed by him, and left no effect behind. For this very reason, then, in the first place, he is worse than Ahab. That he surpassed him in his alienation from Jehovah became apparent at the approach of his early death. So far from being brought to his senses by the unfortunate accident which ultimately caused his death, and seeking refuge in the God of his fathers, he sent messengers to a foreign divinity to seek counsel and help from him. He thereby transgressed not only the general and chief commandment (Ex. xx. 3), but also the special commandment (Levit. xix. 31; xx. 6, 27; Deut. xviii. 10 and 11), which threatened with extermination those who questioned soothsayers and wizards. That was a public and practical declaration that he esteemed the Fly-god of the Philistines above the living God of Israel; and it was a formal degradation and contempt, even an insult, of the latter. Such a crime had not previously been committed by a king, and, if ever, then certainly now, the time was come for the zealous defender of the name of the God of Israel to "break forth like a fire" (Sirach xlviii. 1) from his concealment, and to announce to the bold scoffer the divine retribution. Even this terrible announcement, however, was not sufficient to humble the dying man or to bring him to repentance; it rather embittered him and filled him with anger, and even with plans of murder. He sends out a band of myrmidons, in order to get possession of the person of the prophet, and when these meet with a frightful fate, he does not even yet recognize in it the hand of the Almighty, but, with a display of impotent stubbornness, sends out a new band of men. But neither does the destruction of this company also bend his hard and stubborn disposition; he sends out a third time a band of soldiers. All this he does while on his death-bed, face to face with death, so completely has all reverence for what is sacred abandoned him, and been supplanted by a stubbornness and wilfulness which extends even to madness. Ahab even had bowed himself and humbled himself (1 Kings xxi. 27) when Elijah announced to him the judgment of God; Jeroboam even sent, when his son was sick, to the prophet Ahijah (1 Kings xiv. 2); but Ahaziah perseveres in his senseless perversity, and so falls far below both of these. At last, however, he is obliged to hear his condemnation from the mouth of the prophet, when he is, as it were, bound hand and foot, and only death overcomes his stubborn heart.

3. *The Prophet Elijah appears* in general here, just as he always has up to this point, as the ἀνὴρ προφήτης δυνατὸς ἐν ἔργῳ καὶ ἐν λόγῳ (*cf.* Luke xxiv. 19). He steps forth suddenly from obscurity, "as it were borne on by the storm, with his fiery strength and his fiery tongue" (Ewald). His weighty, irresistible personality, and his forcible, energetic speech, make such an impression on the messengers of the king, who do not know him (ver. 8), that they do not dare to carry out the orders of their despotic master, but turn back without further action. As always, so also here, "when they sought to seize him and make him a prisoner, he was not to be reached;" the emissaries came to disgrace. Without fear, courageous and unterrified, he appears before the king himself, as he had once done before his father, and announces to the fixed and stubborn man his approaching death. Moreover, in this case, where he has to deal with apostasy in its extremest form, one side of his peculiar calling and position in the historical development of the plan of salvation comes into especial relief, namely, the function of *avenging judge*. As the second Moses, and second founder of the broken covenant, it was his task, before all else, to bear witness, both by word and deed, to the wrath and fiery jealousy of God against anything idolatrous (see above, the *Historical* notes on 1 Kings xvii. § 1). He is the representative and instrument of the jealousy of the divine Judge, the herald of the divine retributive justice, and on that account the prototype of all the forerunners of the great and terrible day of judgment (Mal. iv. 5), so that Sirach (xlviii. 10), at the end of his eulogy of him, says: ὁ καταγραφεὶς ἐν ἐλεγμοῖς εἰς καιροὺς κοπάσαι ὀργὴν πρὸ θυμοῦ. It is characteristic that

Elijah finishes his public activity, which had been directed against apostasy, by an act in the capacity of a judge, and thereby seals, as it were, the position which he occupies in the history of salvation.

4. *The two leaders who perish*, together with their soldiers, are not to be considered "simply as tools of a will which opposed itself to Jehovah;" so that "the question whether their fate was a just punishment or not is an idle one" (Thenius). On the contrary, they participated in the feelings of their master (συμβαίνοντες τῷ σκοπῷ τοῦ πεπομφότος, says Theodoret justly), as is seen from the fact that they, as faithful myrmidons of their abandoned master, scoff at the greatest of all prophets, whom they, too, know to be such. They despised in him the holy and almighty God of Israel, whose servant he was. The third captain was also a "tool" of the king; but he did not share in his feelings, and was spared just on that account. Whereas in his case the address, "Man of God," was an expression of conviction and respect, it had been conscious, intentional, and insolent contempt in the mouth of both the others. They are representatives of the apparent power of the apostate, godless monarchy, which seeks to oppose the divine purpose by human power, and which, when it has already experienced the uselessness of opposition, nevertheless still perseveres in its criminal obstinacy, until it proves its own impotence, and then finally perishes. That was destined to hold good here, which Moses once said in a similar case: "And in the greatness of thine excellency thou hast overthrown those that rose up against thee: thou sentest forth thy wrath, which consumed them as stubble" (Exod. xv. 7); and also what Isaiah prophesied of the astrologers, &c., of Babylon: "Behold they shall be as stubble; the fire shall burn them; they shall not deliver themselves from the power of the flame."

5. *The conduct of Elijah towards the captains* has given offence on the supposition of their innocence, and has been made a ground of blame against the prophet. Winer (*R.-W.-B.* i. *s.* 318) fails to find the "moral" of it, and Ewald (*Geschichte Israels*, iii. *s.* 546; 3d ed., *s.* 588) sees in this action a proof that this narrative springs from a much later time than the other ones about Elijah, *i.e.*, from a time when the history of the prophet had been expanded beyond the limits which had been observed earlier, and had been moulded in more and more gigantic proportions, and in a much stiffer manner; so that "one might almost say that a Brahminic-Indian legend upon the acts of some Jogin had been produced from it." Even in earlier times it seems to have been believed that Christ, at least indirectly, expressed disapproval of Elijah (Luke ix. 55) when he rebuked (ἐπετίμησε) his disciples who wished to do ὡς καὶ Ἡλίας ἐποίησε, so that these words are omitted in some otherwise important manuscripts, and in the Vulgata, in order not to endanger the reputation of the prophet. This view rests, however, upon an entire misconception of the narrative before us, and of the relation between the economy of the Old and the New Testaments. For we have here not the act of revenge of a prophet who was instigated by personal jealousy, but an act of divine judgment, and a revelation of God's wrath against all godlessness and wickedness of men, who "hold the truth in unrighteousness" [restrain the truth in a spirit of unrighteousness]. (Rom. i. 18; ii. 5). All judgments of God are represented in the Old Testament as a consuming fire (Num. xi. 1; xvi. 35; Deut. xxxii. 22; Ps. xxi. 9 *sq.;* Isai. xxvi. 11; Ezek. xv. 6 and 7; Job xx. 26, &c.). He himself even, in His retributive justice, is called a consuming fire (Deut. iv. 24; ix. 3; *cf.* Heb. xii. 29; x. 27). It is, therefore, perfectly in accordance with the concrete and literal character which the Old Testament economy bears throughout, that this actual fire should be the form of revelation of the divine wrath, so that in many places we can hardly distinguish whether it is intended to be taken literally or figuratively. Just as once the rebellious host of Korah was consumed by fire, and so Moses' authority, as the servant of God, was ratified (Num. xvi. 35), so the scoffing band of the idolatrous Ahaziah perished, and thereby the second Moses was corroborated as the man of God. As an act of divine judgment this catastrophe lacks "moral" so little that it is rather a revelation of the highest moral intensity—a testimony to the unchangeable justice and holiness of God. Whoever finds it shocking must be still more shocked at the prophetic declaration—"God is jealous and the Lord revengeth; the Lord revengeth and is furious; the Lord will take vengeance on His adversaries, and He reserveth wrath for His enemies. Who can stand before His indignation? and who can abide in the fierceness of His anger? His fury is poured out like fire, and the rocks are thrown down by Him" (Nahum i. 2–6). Christ does not blame Elijah, but His disciples, because in their dissatisfaction, which was just enough in itself, they did not distinguish between the time of Elijah and the time which had begun with Him, the promised Son of Man and σωτήρ, and entirely mistook Him, that is to say, His calling and station in the plan of redemption, as contrasted with that of Elijah. Menken remarks on the passage before us: "Any one who is acquainted, even in a slight degree, with the theocratical constitution of Israel; any one who sees how necessary such acts of God and of His prophets were, for the confusion and overthrow of idol-worship, and for the foundation and conservation of the knowledge and adoration of the one sole living God; any one who has a genuine love to God, and a zeal that the name of God shall be kept holy upon earth: such an one will not be repelled by this action of God and His prophet. Many, however, with whom this is not the case, who, themselves indifferent towards God and His kingdom, would gladly have all dispositions of men towards God regarded as insignificant, have been repelled by it; they have imputed to the prophet therein a carnal and unholy violence, and an angry-spirited and revengeful jealousy, and have blamed him accordingly. . . . . Elijah might do much which was not becoming for Jesus the suffering Lamb of God. . . . . In his position and in his time he had to be rather terrible and grand than mild and lovely; he had to punish, condemn, and revenge, rather than to teach, forgive, and console. . . . . His calling was to be, not a fire to warm, but a consuming flame against unrighteousness and godlessness."

6. To try to explain and do away with *what is miraculous in this narrative* is vain labor, as it is in other and similar cases. The naturalistic explanation, which points to lightning or the fiery wind-

simoom, or to a forcible scattering of the troops by the numerous "sons [disciples] of the prophets" (*Exeget. Handbuch* on the passage), has indeed been abandoned; but, on the other hand, the entire story has been explained as mythical or legendary, and reference has been made to "parallel passages in the classics." "When the Persians advance against the temple at Delphi, lightnings descend from heaven upon them (Herod. viii. 37); and when the Gauls under Brennus are going to storm Delphi, there occurs an earthquake with storm and hail, whereby great destruction is caused among them (Justin, xxiv. 8)." The legend "expresses only the general idea that the Divinity protects His favorites at all times, even by unusual means, and hears their prayers even when they ask for what is extraordinary" (Knobel, *Prophet. der Hebräer*, ii. *s.* 82; Rödiger, *Hall. Encyc.*, i. 33, *s.* 322). This view fails utterly to perceive, in the first place, that the thing to be accomplished here is a judgment upon the apostate and stubborn king and his emissaries, and that the protection which is given to Elijah is only a subordinate matter. What necessity was there then for just such a judgment, if nothing more was to be expressed by it than this general idea, which might have been affirmed in a hundred other ways? What parallel there is, finally, between the Persians and Gauls who advanced against Delphi, and perished by lightning and earthquake, and the soldiers whom Ahaziah sent out against Elijah, it is difficult to see, for one might as well find parallels to this narrative in all the accidents wherein men have perished, while on the way hither and thither, by lightning or earthquake.

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

Vers. 41–50. WÜRTB. SUMM.: All Christian rulers and governors ought to follow the example of the pious king Jehoshaphat—to do what is pleasing to God, to walk in His ways without departing from them, to maintain and extend pure religion, to remove and destroy what is evil, and especially not to permit whoredom, but with earnestness to do away with it and punish it, and to guard themselves from having too much intercourse with godless persons, or from entering into any covenant with them, because this leads to no good, as indeed Jehoshaphat got only danger and loss by it. Every one should profit by the life-experience of Jehoshaphat. All that he undertook according to God's word and will went on fortunately and attained good success, and was attended with blessing; but all that he undertook in conjunction with Ahab and Ahaziah turned out unfortunately: there was no blessing upon that.—Vers. 44–47. See notes on chap. xv. 12, 14.—Ver. 49. The heart of man proposes its own way, but the Lord alone allows it to proceed therein. (Prov. xvi. 9.) He often confounds our purposes and destroys our plans, which reach so far and so high, that we may not become puffed up, but learn to yield to His holy will and to say: "It is the Lord; let Him do what seemeth Him good" (1 Sam. iii. 18).—Ver. 50. What God has clearly destroyed, as a punishment, that let us not build up again at the counsel or demand of any man; for, when He breaks in pieces, it cannot avail to build again (Job xii. 14).—So Jehoshaphat would not build again. The offers of a man who had departed from God, even if he offer thee ever so much profit and pleasantness, do thou reject with determined will; for "what is a man profited," &c. (Matt. xvi. 26.)

Vers. 51–53. STARKE: It is bad enough indeed when one or the other of one's parents is godless, but how much more when neither fears God? How can we hope for the good nurture of children in that case? The power of example is not greater in any relation than in that of parents to children. The way in which the father or mother walks has more influence upon the children than all the doctrines and teachings which they give them.—WÜRTB. SUMM.: It is not praiseworthy, nor a thing which one can satisfactorily answer for before God, if the parents and ancestors have been godless or the adherents of a false religion, that the children should do the same and follow in their footsteps; . . . . it will not suffice before God to say: "I believe what my parents and ancestors believed. They were of this religion, and I will not believe that they have been damned."

Vers. 2–8. WIRTH: King Ahaziah on his death-bed. (*a*) The sending to Ekron; (*b*) the message of the prophet.—Vers. 2–4. KRUMMACHER: The journey to Ekron. (*a*) The seeking for refuge in Ekron; (*b*) the jealousy of God; (*c*) Jesus the only refuge (in Him rests our confidence and strength). Vers. 2 to 17. In Ahaziah we see the folly of godlessness (Ps. xiv. 1 and 2). (*a*) In the dark valley, in which he must journey, he seizes, not upon the staff and support which could comfort him (Ps. xxiii. 4), but upon a stalk of straw; he makes a work of man's hands his consolation in life and in death; that is the height of folly. (*b*) He will hear nothing of death, and hates and persecutes him who reminds him of death; death comes, however; it is inevitable. To avoid every thought of death, and to escape from everything which may remind us of it, is the greatest folly, for we must all depart sometime (Ps. xxxix. 5), and appear before Him who will give to each according to his deeds (Rom. ii. 6). (*c*) He sends soldiers against the prophet who announces to him the judgment of God, and thinks that he can thereby set aside the judgment itself. But to attempt to do away with the truth of God, and to accomplish something perforce against the decision of God by means of human power and might, is the greatest folly.—Vers. 1 and 2. God does not leave himself without a witness even in the case of those who have long ago abandoned Him and turned their backs upon Him. He seeks with all labor and care to call them home. Well is it for them, then, if they understand the testimony, and do not, like Ahaziah, become still more stubborn.—Ver. 2. If a man has once torn himself away from the living God and His Word, he does not, as infidelity pretends, become wiser and more enlightened, but only too often he becomes the prey of the most insipid and foolish superstition. How many do not believe in an holy, omniscient, and just God, to whom they must give an account of all they do and leave undone, but on the contrary in ghosts, or in the word of a gypsy, and seize upon the most senseless means in need and sickness. It is possible to so lose God that one does not find Him even when face to face with death.—KRUMMACHER: Instead of the oracle at Ekron we have to-day clairvoyants and mesmerists; and even if we do

not have soothsayers and persons who foretell by cards (the number of whom, however, among the common people, is far greater than is commonly believed), still there are "signs" and dreams upon which people trust, and on which they rest the peace of their hearts, as if it were upon oracles from idols. . . . . While people smile at the magicians of earlier times, and their arts, with a mien of superiority, they are not ashamed to take refuge in all sorts of amulets, or to expect help now from this and now from that sympathetic cure. . . . . Is that not "going to Ekron?" [COMPREHENSIVE COMMENTARY: The inquiry of Ahaziah "was very foolish. We should be more thoughtful of our duty than our fortune, what will become of us after death, than how, or when, or where, we shall die; and more desirous to be told how to conduct ourselves well in sickness, and get good to our souls by it, than whether we shall recover."]—Ver. 3. WÜRTB. SUMM.: All those who make use of formulæ of blessing or other irregular means, in sickness, seek help from Baal-zebub. God has given an example in the case of Ahaziah, how angry He is at this, and how severely He means to punish such idolatry.—**Is it then because,** &c. WIRTH: The men of our time run hither and thither in their dissatisfaction and need of help. Is there then no longer any God in our nineteenth century, that men do not take refuge in Him? Is there then no Gospel, which is the power of God, and a light upon our pathway? Is there then no longer a Saviour Jesus Christ, who calls: "behold, I make all things new?"—The Word of God is the sole, true, and correct oracle, which we are to question, and to take counsel of, in every circumstance of life, and in all darkness and doubt. This generation, however, seeks light, wisdom, and truth among the Philistines, the wise and prudent of this world, who give out that the Word of the Lord is an old and unreliable book which no longer satisfies the existing grade of cultivation. ["They that will not inquire of the Word of God for their comfort shall be made to hear it, whether they will or no, to their amazement."]—**That ye go,** &c. Whosoever lends himself to be the messenger and servant of superstition, and of contempt for God, makes himself a participant in the guilt of them; we must obey God rather than man.—Vers. 4-8. If the messengers had brought to the king a declaration of the Fly-god, he would have accepted it with faith, but he rejected the word of the prophet because it did not conform to his wishes; nay, it even filled him with anger and plans of murder. Men value the falsehood which flatters their inclinations and wishes, higher than the truth which corrects them and demands sacrifices and penitence of them.—Vers. 7 and 8. He who preaches penitence, conversion, sacrifice, and self-denial, to others, but still shows by all his conduct and external behavior, that he himself loves the world, and what is in the world, and that he is not above the world, such an one belongs to the false prophets, with whom we must be upon our guard.

Vers. 9-17. KRUMMACHER: The sermon in fire. (*a*) Ahaziah's attack upon Elijah; (*b*) the prophet's victory; (*c*) Ahaziah's end.—WIRTH: Elijah as messenger of the judgment of God. (*a*) The annihilation of the two fifties; (*b*) the sparing of the third fifty; (*c*) a visit to the sick-bed.—The judgment of God upon Ahaziah and his troops an image of the great and terrible day of the Lord (see the *Historical* section) for the warning of all scoffers and stubborn contemners of God.—Elijah in truth a Man of God. (*a*) How he sustains himself in that position in his relations to God (viz., by faithful obedience and faithful courage); (*b*) how God sustains him in it in relation to his enemies (viz., by powerful protection, and by the annihilation of his enemies, Ps. xci. 1 *sq.*).—Ver. 9. Every servant of the Lord who is really earnest in his office must make up his mind that rude, low, and godless men will scorn him and name him "Man of God" in mockery. Although no fire from heaven falls down to destroy them, yet the word of the Lord stands firm for all time: "He that despiseth you," &c. (Luke x. 16), and the Lord will not leave those unpunished who despise Him in His servants, and exercise their wit upon the calling of reconciliation (Isai. xli. 10 and 11).—Great rulers always find people who will lend themselves as instruments of their perverted will, who execute, with exactness and without scruple, what "the king says," but do not trouble themselves at all about what God says.—Ver. 11 *sq.* HALL: It is the sure sign of approaching ruin when men will not allow themselves to be warned. Those deserve only to be made examples of punishment who will not take warning from the example of others.—Ver. 13 *sq.* God does not let anything be forced from Him by pertinacity, but to the humble He grants grace. That which can never be gained by perseverance and resistance, is reached by earnest, humble, and sincere prayer.—OSIANDER: If we perform our duty, God has the hearts of men in His hand in such a way that He leads them whither He will. So it often happens that those who seek to kill us in our absence, in our presence dare not open their mouths (John vii. 44-46).—Vers. 15 and 16. A minister of God must not fear to hold up their sins before sinners and scoffers upon the death-bed, and to draw their attention to the judgment of God, in order that, if possible, even in the last hour, they may come to a knowledge of that which belongs to their peace. for (Ezek. xxxiii. 8 and 9), to offer eternal blessedness to the rich and great, instead of calling them to repentance, is the worst transgression of a prophet.—To conceal the approach of his end from one who is sick unto death, and to hold all thoughts of it from him, or even to console him with false hopes of recovery, is no genuine love; for no man can be properly prepared for death who does not think of it often and much. He who in days of health has often, in the presence of God, thought upon death, does not shrink before the message: "Set thine house in order; for thou shalt die, and not live." (Isai. xxxviii. 1.)—Ver. 9-16. Elijah and the Disciples of Jesus who wish to imitate Him (Luke ix. 51-57). (*a*) The reason why He blames and rebukes them; (*b*) whereto He calls and encourages them see *Historical*, § 5).

B.—*Elijah's departure and Elisha's first appearance as Prophet.*

Chap. II. 1–25.

1 And it came to pass, when the Lord would take up Elijah into heaven by a
2 whirlwind, that Elijah went with Elisha from Gilgal. And Elijah said unto
Elisha, Tarry here, I pray thee; for the Lord hath sent me to Beth-el. And
Elisha said *unto him*, *As* the Lord liveth, and *as* thy soul liveth, I will not leave
3 thee. So they went down to Beth-el. And the sons [pupils] of the prophets
that *were* at Beth-el came forth to Elisha, and said unto him, Knowest thou that
the Lord will take away thy master from thy head to-day? And he said, Yea,
4 I know *it;* hold ye your peace. And Elijah said unto him, Elisha, tarry here,
I pray thee; for the Lord hath sent me to Jericho. And he said, *As* the Lord
liveth, and *as* thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. So they came to Jericho.
5 And the sons of the prophets that *were* at Jericho came to Elisha, and said unto
him, Knowest thou that the Lord will take away thy master from thy head
6 to-day? And he answered, Yea, I know *it;* hold ye your peace. And Elijah
said unto him, Tarry, I pray thee, here; for the Lord hath sent me to Jordan.
And he said, *As* the Lord liveth, and *as* thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee.
7 And they two went on. And fifty men of the sons of the prophets went, and
stood to view [over against *them*] afar off: and they two stood by Jordan.
8 And Elijah took his mantle, and wrapped *it* together, and smote the waters, and
they were divided hither and thither, so that they two went over on dry ground.
9 And it came to pass, when they were gone over, that Elijah said unto Elisha,
Ask what I shall do for thee, before I be taken away from thee. And Elisha
10 said, I pray thee, let a double portion of thy spirit be upon me. And he said,
Thou hast asked a hard thing [to obtain, Bähr]: *nevertheless*, if thou see me
when I am taken from thee, it shall be so unto thee; but if not, it shall not be
11 *so.* And it came to pass, as they still went on, and talked, that, behold, *there
appeared* a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder;
and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into [towards] heaven. And Elisha saw *it*,
12 and he cried, My father, my father, the [thou, *omit* the] chariot of Israel, and the
[*omit* the] horsemen thereof! And he saw him no more: and so he took hold
of his own clothes, and rent them in two pieces.
13 [Then] He took up also [*omit* also] the mantle of Elijah that fell from him,
14 and went back, and stood by the bank of Jordan; And he took the mantle of
Elijah that fell from him, and smote the waters, and said, Where *is* the Lord
God of Elijah [even He]? And when he also [*omit* also] had smitten the waters,
15 they parted hither and thither: and Elisha went over. And when the sons of
the prophets which *were* to view [*omit* to view] at Jericho saw him [from the
opposite side],[1] they said, The spirit of Elijah doth rest on Elisha. And they
16 came to meet him, and bowed themselves to the ground before him. And they
said unto him, behold now, there be with thy servants fifty strong men; let
them go, we pray thee, and seek thy master: lest peradventure the Spirit of
the Lord hath taken him up, and cast him upon some mountain,[2] or into
17 some valley.[3] And he said, Ye shall not send. And when they urged him till
he was ashamed [to refuse them, Bähr], he said, Send. They sent therefore fifty
18 men; and they sought three days, but found him not. And when they came
again to him, (for he tarried at Jericho,) he said unto them, Did I not say unto
you, Go not?
19 And the men of the city said unto Elisha, Behold, I pray thee, the situation
[inhabiting][4] of this city *is* pleasant, as my lord seeth: but the water *is* naught
20 [bad], and the ground barren [the locality causes barrenness].[5] And he said,
21 Bring me a new cruse, and put salt therein. And they brought *it* to him. And
he went forth unto the spring of the waters, and cast the salt in there, and said,

Thus saith the Lord, I have healed these waters; there shall not be from thence
22 any more death or barren *land* [barrenness, *omit* land].[4] So the waters were
healed unto this day, according to the saying of Elisha which he spake.
23 And he went up from thence unto Beth-el: and as he was going up by the
way, there came forth little children [young persons] out of the city, and mocked
24 him, and said unto him, Go up, thou bald head; go up, thou bald head. And
he turned back, and looked on them, and cursed them in the name of the Lord.
And there came forth two she bears out of the wood, and tare forty and two
25 children of them. And he went from thence to mount Carmel, and from thence
he returned to Samaria.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

[1] Ver. 15.—[מִנֶּגֶד from over against. Sept. ἐξεναντίας: Vulg. *e contra:* Bunsen: "on the other side."

[2] Ver. 16.—[The Sept. add ἐν τῷ Ἰορδάνῃ. The chetib גֵּיאוֹת would be the regular form for the plur. of גַּיְא. The form found, however (in Ezekiel), is גֵּאָיוֹת, which the keri proposes to insert here.

[3] Ver. 19.—[מוֹשַׁב טוֹב, literally, inhabiting the city good; *i. e.*, the city is a good one to inhabit. מְשַׁכָּלֶת, causing barrenness. The district, or locality, probably on account of its bad water, produces barrenness and miscarriage in all animals.

[4] Ver. 21.—[מְשַׁכָּלֶת, a participial noun, describing the action, miscarrying; "there shall be no more death or miscarrying from it" (as a cause). *Cf.* on ver. 19.—W. G. S.]

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

Ver. 1. **And it came to pass, when,** &c. The following event certainly belongs to the time after the death of Ahaziah (chap. i. 17), and probably to the beginning of the reign of Jehoram, for in the 19th verse the public activity of Elisha begins, *i. e.*, that is the time when he stepped into the place of Elijah, and stood at the head of the prophets. The war with the Moabites, in which Elisha assumes so important a position (*cf.* chap. iii.), must have begun soon after Jehoram's succession to the throne (chap. i. 1). The letter which came into the hands of Jehoram from Elijah, according to 2 Chron. xxi. 12, proves nothing to the contrary (see below, *Historical*, § 3, *b*).—On בְּהַעֲלוֹת see notes on ver. 11. The first half of the verse forms the title of the entire passage.—Gilgal cannot here be a place between Jericho and the Jordan (Jos. iv. 19; v. 10), for Elijah and Elisha went *down* from there to Bethel (וַיֵּרְדוּ), and came from Bethel to Jericho. It is rather, as in Deut. xi. 30, the place known now as Jiljilia, which was on an elevated site, southwest of Seilun (Shiloh), near to the road leading from the latter place to Jericho (*cf.* Thenius and Keil on the passage; Raumer, *Paläst.* s. 155). This Gilgal, which lay in Ephraim, and not the one in Judah, is the one referred to also by the prophets Amos (iv. 4) and Hosea (iv. 15) who mention it, together with Bethel, as chief seat of the false worship of Jehovah. Probably it was precisely on this account that schools of the prophets were founded there, which should counteract the error.

Ver. 2. **And Elijah said,** &c. It was known not only to Elijah himself (ver. 9), but also to Elisha (ver. 3), and to the "sons of the prophets" at Bethel and Jericho (vers. 3 and 5), that the time of his departure was come. Evidently the object of his visit to the three schools of the prophets, one after another, was to see them once more before his departure, and to warn and strengthen them. Keil, following the older expositors, says: "The Lord had revealed to both (Elijah and Elisha) that the seal of the divine ratification should be set to the work of Elijah by his miraculous translation to heaven, ... but to each of them separately, so that Elijah did not surmise that Elisha was aware that he was to be taken away. For this reason he wished to separate himself from his servant, not in order to test his love and attachment (Vatablus), but from humility (Corn. a Lapide, and others). He did not wish to have any witness of his glorification, without being fully satisfied that such was the divine will. . . . . His ascension had been revealed to the disciples of the prophets also. . . . . He took this road (to Bethel and Jericho) by the direction of the Divine Spirit, ... without supposing that they (the disciples of the prophets in those places) had been informed of his approaching departure from this life by the Spirit of God. God had revealed it to so many in order that they might be established in their calling by the miraculous glorification of their master, still more than by his words and teachings and warnings." But the most important considerations are opposed to this very common conception of the passage. In the first place, the assertion that a divine revelation had given, not only to Elijah, but also to Elisha, and to the disciples of the prophets at Bethel and Jericho, information of the approaching ascension of the first, is a pure hypothesis: the text knows nothing of it, and even any remote hint of it is wanting. To pass over that, however, in the second place, no analogy can be found in the Scriptures for any such thing as that different persons, nay, even entire communities, in different places, at one and the same time, received the same divine revelation; and no one of these persons surmised that the same thing had happened to others. Thirdly, the disciples of the prophets at Jericho would never have urged so perseveringly upon Elisha, after his return, to allow fifty men to seek for the departed master on the mountains and in the valleys (vers.

16–18), if they had been informed in regard to Elijah's ascension into heaven by a divine revelation. We are therefore compelled to conceive of the event, we might almost say, more simply and naturally. As concerns Elijah himself, he knew, of course, that the time of his departure was come, and that the Lord was going to take him away; the manner in which he would be taken, however, he did not know, nor did he say a syllable about it; especially he did not know, as Krummacher affirms, that "the horses of fire and the chariot of flame were already standing behind the clouds ready to come for him," and that he "should ride, in a few days, past Orion and the Pleiades, on a gleaming road, far above the sun and the moon, and away through the veil into the divine sanctuary." Still less did Elisha and the disciples of the prophets know it. In the 3d and 5th verses the latter only say that "now" (הַיּוֹם does not mean here "to-day," but as in 1 Sam. xii. 17; 2 Kings iv. 8; Job i. 6, at this time) Elijah is going to be taken away from them and from Elisha; even *this* they could only know from Elijah himself. For Elijah had no reason for wishing to conceal his departure from Elisha; on the contrary, he must have felt himself driven to make it known to him, since Elisha was now to step into his place and be his successor. Neither did he conceal it from the disciples of the prophets; for his visit to them had for its chief object to take leave of them. He simply did not wish that his departure should be much spoken of, and still less would he permit that any one should be a witness of it; therefore he urged Elisha himself to remain behind. This he did, however, not "from humility," in view of his approaching glorification, but "because he was uncertain whether it was agreeable to God that Elisha should go with him; *cf.* ver. 10" (Thenius). Only when Elisha would not allow himself to be held back, and had declared earnestly three times over (*cf.* the similar triple repetition, John xxi. 15 *sq.*) that he would not leave him until the final moment—only when he had thus stood the trial of his unchangeable fidelity and perseverance, and thus maintained himself as competent and fit to carry on the office of prophet, did Elijah yield his scruples, and allow Elisha to accompany him. (*Cf.* in general on the verse the apt remarks of Vilmar, *Pastoraltheol. Blätter*, 1862, *s.* 234.)

Ver. 3. **And the sons of the Prophets . . . . came forth, &c.** [The בְּנֵי־הַנְּבִיאִים are the pupils or disciples of the prophets; not necessarily their sons in a literal sense, though they probably were such in very many cases.—W. G. S.] This does not mean: "In Bethel, the disciples of the prophets came to meet Elisha, with the information, 'Knowest thou?' &c." (Keil), but that after Elijah had come with Elisha to Bethel (ver. 2), in order to take his leave there also, the disciples of the prophets came forth with them, that is, accompanied them, and said to Elisha: "Dost thou also ponder," &c.? In like manner they were accompanied by those of Jericho (ver 7). [This explanation does violence to the meaning of the preposition אֶל, which never contains any idea of accompaniment, above all with a verb of motion; moreover, ver. 7 is not the parallel, but ver. 5. וַיֵּצְאוּ אֶל can only mean "They came forth to" (*cf.* Gen. xix. 6), and it is stated that they came forth to "*Elisha*," which certainly seems to imply that they already had heard of the expected event. וַיִּגְּשׁוּ אֶל, ver. 5, is less certain. It might mean that as they were all standing in a group, and after Elijah had declared that he had come to them for the last time, some of them approached Elisha. The objection taken to the theory of independent revelations is, however, a just one, and must be maintained, even if we cannot fix definitely the details of the occurrence which the words refer to. Many hypotheses suggest themselves, as, for instance, that Elijah went on to the schools of the prophets in the first place alone, and that they then "came forth to Elisha."—W. G. S.] לָקַח מֵעַל רֹאשֶׁךָ, according to Keil, "expresses graphically the removal from his side by elevation into heaven." Thenius also says, following Böttcher: "*Nihil aliud nisi viam modumque tollendi pingit:* away off above thine head." [So also Bunsen.] It is very improbable, however, in the first place, that the disciples of the prophets, at Bethel as well as at Jericho, should have expressed themselves "graphically," independently of one another, and just on this occasion. The words מֵעַל רֹאשֶׁךָ are equivalent to מֵעִמָּךְ and מֵאִתָּךְ, which are used by Elijah, in vers. 9 and 10, for the same idea, *i. e.*, literally, "from with you," the sense being "out of connection or companionship with you," except that the first form hints at the nature of this connection more distinctly than the others. Luther, in a marginal gloss on the passage, says: "To be at the head is to be master and teacher; to be at the feet is to be pupil and subject. For when the teacher teaches he sits in a more elevated position than the pupils, so that he has them at his feet, and they have him at their head. Therefore St. Paul says (Acts xxii. 3), that he had learned the law at the feet of Gamaliel." (*Cf.* Schöttgen, *Hor. Hebr.* on this passage.) Elisha is the disciple of Elijah; the latter is his "master," as he is called here. The words, "The Lord will take away thy master from thy head," do not therefore mean, He will cause Elijah to arise away above thy head towards heaven, but, He will take him away from thy head, *i. e.*, break up the relationship which has existed hitherto between you, as pupil and master, and as thy chief thou wilt lose him. (מֵעַל is used as in Gen. xlviii. 17; Amos vii. 11.) When the words are thus taken, each gets its full force, and it is easy to see why both the disciples at Bethel and those at Jericho put the question to *Elisha*, "Knowest thou?" &c. The separation touched Elisha nearest of all, and was more important for him than for any of the rest. The question signifies: Knowest and considerest thou also, that thou wilt now lose the master whose servant and disciple thou art (1 Kings xix. 21)? What will become of us when thy guide and ours is gone? The answer of Elisha, which would otherwise be obscure and difficult, is then appropriate to this question: "Yea, I know it," *i. e.*, Alas! I know it and consider it well, even as ye do. When he then adds, "Hold ye your peace," he does not mean to say: Tell no one that he is now going to ascend into heaven, in order that there may be no concourse of people (Clericus, J. Lange), nor: Speak

no further of it, for Elijah, on account of his modesty and humility, does not wish that much should be said of his glorification (Seb. Smith, Keil), but: Compose yourselves, yield to the will of Jehovah; do not sadden my heart now that I am about to lose my beloved master and lord. [Bunsen.]

Ver. 7. **And fifty men of the sons, &c.** As Elijah and Elisha departed in the direction of the Jordan, a band of prophets followed them at a distance, and remained standing at a point (probably on an elevation) from which they could see "whether and in what way the departing ones would get over the Jordan at a place where there was no arrangement for crossing" (Hess, Thenius); that is to say, they followed, out of sympathy and anxiety, and not "that they might be eyewitnesses of the removal of their master" (Keil), for, according to ver. 10, it was not certain that even Elisha, who accompanied him, would see this. They were witnesses only of that which is narrated in ver. 8. The manner of crossing the Jordan must have reminded them involuntarily of Ex. xiv. 16 (*cf.* Josh. iv. 23). As once Moses struck the water and divided it, in the presence of the whole people, with his staff, which was the insigne of his office as teacher, and is called the "rod of God" (Ex. xvii. 9), whereby he was confirmed and accredited as chief, so Elijah, the second Moses, here strikes the water, and divides it in the presence of the band of the prophets, with his mantle, the sign of his prophetical calling (1 Kings xix. 19), an action which confirms him, before the disciples of the prophets, just as he is leaving them, in his position as chief of the prophets. He folds or rolls the mantle together, possibly in order to give it at the same time the appearance of a staff, for in other cases the water is always struck with a staff (Isai. xi. 4; x. 24; Num. xx. 11). [The first two passages cited refer to a beating with a rod as punishment or correction, and the third to the smiting of the *rock* to make water come out. There is no ground for supposing that the words in the text have any further significance than such a folding as would make the mantle convenient to handle in smiting the water.—W. G. S.] However, the very fact that he makes use of the prophet's mantle instead of making use of the staff, makes the action a distinctly prophetical, *i. e.*, symbolical one. The miraculous power is no more attached, in any magical way, to the mantle than to the staff; but it is the prophetical calling which God has armed with such power for the attainment of His ends, as was shown immediately afterwards in the case of the successor and representative of Elijah (*cf.* vers. 14, 19 *sq.*).

Ver. 9. **And it came to pass when they were gone over, &c.** The command of Elijah: "Ask," &c., and the reply of Elisha, "Let a double portion," &c., are to be explained by their relation to one another, which was not so much that of a master to his servant or of a teacher to his disciple, as rather that of a (spiritual) father to his son (ver. 12). Elisha had maintained his attachment, love, and fidelity to the very end, in that he would not quit Elijah; and now the latter treats him as a dying father would (Gen. xxvii. 4), and says: "If thou hast yet any wish in thine heart, tell it to me;" he is ready to grant him the blessing of a father and of a prophet. Elisha answers as son to father: "I pray thee, let a double portion of thy spirit be upon me!" According to the law (Deut. xxi. 17), the first-born son received, of what the father left behind, פִּי שְׁנַיִם, *i. e.*, two parts, twice as much as the other sons received. According to this analogy, Elisha begs that Elijah will regard him as his first-born, and will give to him, as compared with the other sons of the prophets, a richer measure of his (prophetic) spirit, that is to say, of that רוּחַ, which is the condition of all prophetical activity, whether in word or deed, and which is not only a spirit of knowledge and wisdom, but also of strength and power (Isai. xi. 2). The translation of the words of Elisha, "That thy spirit may be doubled in me" (Luther, following the Sept. and Vulg.), is unquestionably false. Still this interpretation is found again and again in modern expositions. Krummacher even asserts, as a result of this interpretation, that the spirit of Elisha, as an evangelical (?) spirit, was certainly twice as great as the spirit of Elijah, which was Mosaic and legal. If this had been the prayer of Elisha, however, it would have been, not only in the highest degree immodest, but also incomprehensible, since Elijah could not give more than he himself had. Elisha did not wish to be more or greater than his master and lord. He only desired so much as was necessary for him, in order that he might be that to which Elijah had destined him, namely, the one who should succeed to his place as leader of the prophets. Menken's interpretation of the words of Elijah is also a mistake, *i. e.*, that Elisha should give him a commission for the other world, and beg for himself some service there, where the Lord would not refuse Elijah any request he might make on behalf of his faithful servant. Not to notice other objections, Elijah says: "Ask what I can do for you *before* I be taken away," and not when I am in heaven. Neither can this place, therefore, by any means be cited as a support of the Roman Catholic dogma of the effectual mediation of the saints in heaven, as is often done.—Elijah means to say, by the words in ver. 10: Thou hast prayed for something which it is not in my power, nor in that of any man, to give, but only in the power of God; if it is granted to thee alone, of all the sons of the prophets, to remain with me until my removal, and to be a witness of it, then thou mayest know, by this fact, that thou art to continue the prophetical work, which I have begun, and which I must now abandon, and then shalt thou also receive that measure of the prophetical spirit of which thou hast need for this work.

Ver. 11. **And it came to pass, as they still went on, &c.** The verse is generally translated as it is by Luther, "Behold! there came a chariot of fire and horses of fire, ... and so Elijah rode, in a whirlwind, towards heaven." This is then understood to mean, that a fiery chariot with fiery horses attached to it came, and that it received Elijah and took him to heaven. According to that, Elijah really "rode" into heaven, as indeed we find it often represented, especially in pictures. This conception of the event has struck such deep root that people scarcely inquire whether the text really justifies it or not. It is especially welcome to those who explain the story of Elijah as myth and poetry, because, as they think, such an ascension would remove all doubt as to the

mythical character of the narrative. Here it is necessary, before all else, to take the words of the text accurately, and not to add or fill out anything which is not absolutely demanded. In the first place, the text knows nothing whatever of a fiery chariot, with fiery horses attached, but only says: "Behold! chariot of fire and horses of fire!" Then it does not say that Elijah mounted into this literal chariot, as it is supposed to be, and rode in it towards heaven, but the עָלָה took place "in a whirlwind" (בַּסְּעָרָה), and not in the chariot. Still further הַשָּׁמַיִם does not mean: up into heaven, but: towards or in the direction of heaven, heavenwards; especially when it is used with עָלָה (Judges xx. 40; Ps. cvii. 26; Jerem. li. 53). Finally, עָלָה is not ride, but go up, in the sense of disappear [like the German *aufgehen*, it is used in the sense of come to an end, disappear, be consumed.—W. G. S.], see Judges xx. 40: "The entire city [E. V. has, incorrectly, "the flame of the city"] עָלָה הַשָּׁמַיְמָה, arose towards heaven, *i. e.*, disappeared, was consumed by the fire. Also, Ezek. xi. 24: "So the vision that I had seen (וַיַּעַל) went up from me," *i. e.*, it disappeared (Vulg.: *et sublata est a me visio*); it was taken away. In the hifil (ver. 1) it means exactly *tollere*, *auferre*, take away, as, for instance, in Ps. cii. 25: "Take me away in the midst of my days," *cf.* Job v. 26; xxxvi. 20; Amos iii. 5. Furthermore, the word עֹלָה is the name of the burnt-offering, because it, in distinction from the other sacrifices, disappears entirely—is completely consumed by the fire. The clearest proof that the word here has the signification, take away, remove, is the fact that the disciples of the prophets, as well as Elisha himself, always make use of the word לָקַח, and not of עָלָה, when speaking of Elijah's removal (vers. 3, 5, 9 & 10), and say nothing of any taking *up* into heaven. It is not possible, therefore, that עָלָה should signify something altogether different from לָקַח here. Precisely this latter word is used, Gen. v. 24, in reference to Enoch: "And he was not (וְאֵינֶנּוּ, *i. e.*, he disappeared suddenly, and left no trace behind, Job vii. 8; *cf.* Delitsch on Hebr. xi. 5. Luther: 'He was seen no more'); for God took him (לָקַח)." The removal is therefore the main point; and it is only stated here in addition—which is not done in the case of Enoch—in what way the removal took place, viz.: בַּסְּעָרָה, in the whirlwind; and besides, הַשָּׁמַיִם, towards heaven. סְעָרָה signifies not only "the rapidity of the elevation" (Thenius), but also a storm, combined with thunder, dark clouds, wind, and fire (Isai. xxix. 6; Ezek. i. 4; xiii. 11, 13; Ps. cvii. 25). Through such a storm, then, Elijah was separated from Elisha, and removed heavenwards. Now when Elisha sees, in this fiery storm-cloud, "chariot and horses" of fire, that does not mean to say that he saw a literal chariot and literal horses. On the contrary, he recognized, in the fiery appearance, that which "chariot and horses" signify. According to the usage of the Old Testament language, these things, as the principal means of protection and defence of a people against foreign aggression, are the representations of its might and strength, of its glory and fearfulness (*cf.* Isai. xxxi. 1 *sq.*; xxxvi. 9; Ex. xiv. 9, 17; Deut. xx. 1; 1 Kings x. 29). They are also ascribed to Jehovah, and then they are an indication of His great might, majesty, and glory, with which He conquers and annihilates His opponents, but protects and saves His own. Thus Habakkuk: "Was thy wrath against the sea, that thou didst ride upon thine horses and thy chariots of salvation?" Also Isaiah (lxvi. 15): "For behold the Lord will come with fire, and with his chariots, like a whirlwind, to render his anger with fury, and his rebuke with flames of fire." *Cf.* also Ps. civ. 3: "Who maketh the clouds his chariots." That we have here also to think of the chariot and horses of Jehovah, is shown by the אֵשׁ which occurs with both words, for fire is the well-known form of theophany in the Old Testament (Ex. xxiv. 17; Deut. ix. 3 *sq.*; Ps. l. 3; Isai. xxix. 6; Ezek. i. 4, 27). Just in the same manner, the servant of Elisha, after his eyes have been opened, in accordance with the prayer of the prophet (2 Kings vi. 14–17), sees, opposed to the "horses and chariots" with which the Syrians had surrounded the city in which Elisha was, the whole mountain full of "horses and chariots of fire;" *i. e.*, over-against the earthly power, he sees the infinitely greater protecting and saving might of Jehovah. The following verse (12), where Elisha calls Elijah "Chariot of Israel and Horsemen thereof," especially supports the figurative interpretation. Recognizing the inadmissibility of the literal acceptation, which presupposes the existence of literal fiery chariots, with fiery horses attached to them, passing down from heaven and up again into heaven, in which one could ride without being burned, some expositors have understood by "chariot and horses," as Grotius does, *Angeli ea specie apparentes*. "The vehicle," says, among others, J. Lange, "or the outward sign with which Elijah rose towards heaven, was doubtless a cloud. Still, as Elijah was no doubt accompanied by an entire band of angels, as Christ was afterwards, these gave to the cloud the form of a fiery chariot and fiery horses, by virtue of the divine power and the divine will, so that the cloud took the form of a heavenly triumphant chariot." Similarly Menken says that Elijah "was taken up by the service of angels; but that the appearance was that of a flaming chariot and flaming horses." But the text, in this place, says not a word about angels, although, according to this view, they would be the chief agents; and although the history of Elijah makes mention of the service of angels in other places (1 Kings xix. 5, 7; 2 Kings i. 3, 15). Ps. lxviii. 17 cannot be cited to support this interpretation, for there also רֶכֶב is not equal to angel, but is a designation of the immeasurable and mighty war-power of Jehovah. The interpretation of Keil seems more probable: "The storm-gust is the earthly substratum of the theophany; the fiery chariot with the fiery horses is the symbolic form in which the translation of the master into heaven presents itself to Elisha, who remains behind."

The chariot and the horses would, however, in that case, have been just as much definite and visible forms, even if symbolic ones, and we should have to suppose that Elisha saw Elijah actually in the chariot and riding in it towards heaven, of which the text knows nothing. It is not the form and outline which is symbolic, but the expression "chariot and horses of fire." We have not to think of a "symbolic form" in ver. 11 any more than in ver. 12, when Elisha calls Elijah "Chariot of Israel and Horsemen thereof." In this way, under a more accurate observation of the text, it is true that the supposition that Elijah rode away into heaven in a fiery chariot, drawn by fiery horses, which is still so generally adopted, is overthrown; by no means, however, is the miraculous removal or translation of Elijah overthrown: that is the main point of the narrative, with which we must satisfy ourselves, just as we must satisfy ourselves with what is said, Gen. v. 24 (*cf.* Hebr. xi. 5), in regard to the translation of Enoch. So Von Gerlach remarks on the passage in Genesis: "All the questions in regard to the departure of this patriarch and that of Elijah, whither they were removed? where they now are? what changes they underwent in the translation? are left unanswered by the Scriptures." Keil also says: "All further questions, *e. g.*, in regard to the nature of the chariot of fire and the place to which Elijah was translated, ... are to be set aside as useless subtleties concerning things which surpass the limits of our understanding." We are only justified in thus setting them aside, however, if we have rejected the fiery horses and the fiery chariot and the ride up into heaven, which Keil does not do. It is well worth observing that the primitive church, little inclined as it was to shrink back from a miracle, still did not know anything of any heavenward ride of Elijah. The Sept. render הַשָּׁמַיִם, in ver. 1 and ver. 11, by *ὡς εἰς τὸν οὐρανόν*, and thereby show clearly that they conceived of a raising up *towards*, but not *into*, heaven. Ephraim Syrus says, "Suddenly there came a fiery storm-gust from on high, ... and divided the two from one another; the one it left upon earth, the other, Elijah, it bore away on high; but whither the Ruach bore him, or in what place it let him down, the Scriptures do not tell us." (*Cf.* Keil's remarks on the passages.) Theodoret says: *Ὁ μέγας Ἠλίας ἀνελήφθη μέν, ἀλλ' οὐκ εἰς τὸν οὐρανόν, ἀλλ' ὡς εἰς τὸν οὐρανόν.* In like manner Chrysostom, Theophylact, and Œcumenius (see the citations in Suicer, *Thesaur. Ecclesiast.* i. 1317). That the Jews also, before and at the time of Christ, knew nothing of an ascension of Elijah into heaven, is clear from the fact that in the great eulogy of Elijah (Sirach xlviii. 1–12), where this wonderful removal is mentioned, neither in ver. 9 nor in ver. 12 do we find *εἰς τὸν οὐρανόν*: Josephus, also, who narrates all the miracles in the history of Elijah, says, at length (*Antiq.* ix. 2, 2): *Ἠλίας ἐξ ἀνθρώπων ἠφανίσθη·—καὶ οὐδεὶς ἔγνω μέχρι τῆς σήμερον αὐτοῦ τὴν τελευτήν*, and then he adds that the Scriptures declare of Enoch and Elijah: *ὅτι γεγόνασιν ἀφανεῖς· θάνατον δὲ αὐτῶν οὐδεὶς οἶδεν.* In the Scriptures themselves there is no mention whatever of the ascension of Elijah into heaven, not even in Hebr. xi. where we should most expect it. Now if this ascension was, as is asserted, "one of the most glorious, significant, and joyful events which the world, before the time of Christ, had seen" (Krummacher), how does it happen that, however often mention may be made of Elijah, just this event, which is asserted to be the most important in his career, remains utterly unmentioned? Kurtz (in Herzog's *Encyclop.* iii. *s.* 758) asserts indeed that "as regards the ascension of Elijah, all those who are not ready to look upon the gospel history as a collection of myths will be compelled to adopt the opinion which regards this as an historical event, for the Transfiguration of Christ, Matt. xvii., can only be maintained as a fact if 2 Kings ii. is also a fact; the one narrative stands or falls with the other." This conclusion, however, is incorrect; for, if Elijah could only appear in and at the Transfiguration of Christ, because he had ascended into heaven, then Moses also, who appears with him, must have ascended into heaven, of which there is not the least mention, either in Deut. xxxiv. 5 *sq.* or anywhere else. [A general protest should also be raised against the last clause of this opinion of Kurtz. The mode of defending a disputed point by connecting it with some other very important and generally accepted one, and then asserting that they stand or fall together, is very often adopted, but it is on every account to be condemned. It is not a sound method of procedure either according to logic or history, and it is fatal to all exegetical science.—W. G. S.]

Ver. 12. **And Elisha saw it,** &c., *i. e.*, that Elijah "was miraculously carried away" (Keil). By the words: "My father, my father!" Elisha expresses what the departing one was for himself (see ver. 9), and by the words: "Thou chariot of Israel and horsemen thereof!" what he was for the whole nation. King Joash makes use of the same figurative expression in ch. xiii. 14, in regard to Elisha. It does not mean "that Elijah had been the protection and help of Israel even in war" (*Calwer Bibel*), but "Elijah is thereby designated as the one in whom consisted that true defence of Israel, which far surpassed its physical strength." (Thenius.) See notes on ver. 11. Elijah was the might for war and the strength for defence of Israel, especially in so far as he defended it against its greatest and most dangerous enemy, who threatened it with ruin—against the intruding idolatry, with which he struggled victoriously. The exclamation stands, as was noted above, in unmistakable connection with the words "chariot of fire and horses of fire." If this is a designation of the protecting, saving, and conquering might of Jehovah, then it was very natural to call the great prophet, who had maintained himself, in all his career, as an instrument of this power in its dealings with Israel, "the Chariot of Israel and the Horsemen thereof." If, on the other hand, this fiery phenomenon which separated the two prophets from one another had had the form and figure of a chariot drawn by horses, which was intended to bring Elijah to heaven, it would be inexplicable how a mere equipage, even if it were ever so wonderful a one, could have led Elisha to call his departing master a "Chariot." Elijah's whole nature was fiery and energetic: "He burst forth like a fire, and his word burned like a torch, ... thrice brought he down fire" (Sirach xlviii. 1, 3). To this the mode of his removal in the fiery whirlwind corresponded, and it was, as it were, the divine seal upon his entire career; so that he stands, for all coming time (*εἰς καιρούς*,

Sir. xlviii. 10), as the man of the fiery jealousy of God.—**And he saw him no more;** that is, he did not see how Elijah rode into heaven in a fiery chariot, but from the moment when the fiery blast, the storm-cloud, separated them from one another, he saw him no more: ἐν λαίλαπι ἐσκεπάσθη (Sir. xlviii. 12), he disappeared suddenly from his eyes, became ἀφανής. Then Elisha rent his garments, and that too "in two pieces," *i. e.*, from top to bottom, as a sign of the greatest grief and the deepest sorrow. If he had been a witness of the "triumphal entry" of his master into heaven, as it has been often supposed that he was, he would have had more cause to rejoice than to rend his clothes for grief; his feelings were by no means joyous, they were rather in the highest degree sad.

Ver. 13. **He took up also the mantle,** &c. The mantle is here, as in ver. 8, the insigne of the office of the prophetical leader. When Elijah chose Elisha as his successor he threw this mantle upon him (1 Kings xix. 19). Now, however, he leaves it to him as a bequest and sign that his prayer in ver. 10 is fulfilled, and that he must now undertake the leadership of the prophets. He returns with this symbol in his possession, and, when he arrives at the Jordan, has to make the trial whether the power itself has been granted him together with the symbol. As Elijah had done in passing over the Jordan, he also strikes the water with the mantle, and says: **Where is the Lord God of Elijah, even He?** Jer. ii. 6, 8, where the severest charge against the people, and especially against the priests and teachers, is, that they have not asked the question אַיֵּה יְהוָה, "Where is Jehovah?" but have turned away from Him, shows that this was not a question of doubt or imperfect faith. On the contrary, Elisha presents a prayer, full of faith and confidence, to Jehovah, in the more emphatic form of a question: "Thou God of Elijah, if Thou art also mine, and if I am Thy servant according to Thy will and command as he was, then let this become evident by granting that that may take place at my word which Thou grantedst should come to pass at his" (Menken). The masoretic punctuation separates the words אַף־הוּא from the question, and joins them with the following sentence. Accordingly De Wette translates: "Also he (as Elijah had done before) smote the water," [and Bunsen: "Also when *he* smote the water;"] and Ewald: "Hardly had he smitten the water, when it divided again." But the ו before יכה is a bar to this interpretation, and אַף nowhere has the meaning of "hardly." [Apparently feeling the force of this latter objection, Ewald, ed. vii. *s.* 853, note, changes אַף to אָךְ. The reading of the E. V. agrees with that of De Wette and Bunsen.—W. G. S.]. Böttcher and Thenius following Houbigant wish to read אֵפוֹא: "Where is *now* Jehovah, the God of Elijah?" This reading, however, is entirely without authority, and the position of the word at the end of the question is also against it. The Sept. render it meaninglessly by the same sounds in Greek letters: ἀφφώ. We take אַף here as in Prov. xxii. 19, (where Gesenius translates: *doceo te, te inquam,*) that is to say, even He; He, I say. (So also Keil [and Scott].) The Vulg. has in ver. 14: *et percussit aquas, et non sunt divisæ. Et dixit: ubi est Deus Eliæ etiam nunc? percussitque aquas et divisæ sunt.* The Complutensian edition of the Sept. has the addition: καὶ οὐ διηρέθη, following which Theodoret and, later, Dathe explain the verse thus: that Elisha considered the mantle of Elijah capable of working miracles, and, in the first place, struck the water with it, without saying anything; but that, as this was unsuccessful, he called upon the God of his master complainingly. It is evident, however, that the addition is only an explanatory gloss, occasioned by the repetition of וַיַּכֶּה, which does not, however, indicate any repetition of the act of striking.

Ver. 15. **And when the sons of the Prophets,** &c. They saw Elisha come back alone, and, since he had been able to do the same as Elijah, they concluded that the רוּחַ of Elijah rested upon him, that is, that the same extraordinary power and gifts had been given to him by Jehovah, as preparation for the same calling; therefore they went to meet him and showed their respect for him. From their words in ver. 16, however, it is clear that they were uncertain whether Elijah had been "taken up" forever, or only for a time, perhaps in the manner referred to by Obadiah, 1 Kings xviii. 12. It would have been impossible for them to speak in this way if they had had especial information, by a divine revelation, of a formal ascension of Elijah into heaven, as has been deduced from vers. 3 and 5. It is a supposition which cannot be maintained, that, although Elisha had no doubt narrated to them what had occurred, they still believed that "the Lord had taken his (Elijah's) soul up into heaven, but that his earthly body had fallen down somewhere upon the earth, and that they desired to find this in order that they might show it the last honors" (Keil), for, in this case, Elisha must have answered them: I saw Elijah ride on a fiery equipage in glory into heaven; he is therefore no longer upon earth, but in heaven, as was revealed to you beforehand:—or else, what reason did he have for *not* saying this? Moreover their words, ver. 16, do not indicate by any means that they simply desired to find his corpse, in order to bury it. It is evident that they expected to find the living and not the dead. The fact that they insisted upon their proposition in spite of Elisha's attempts to dissuade them shows plainly that he had not communicated anything in regard to an ascension into heaven to them. He was certain that Elijah had departed or been taken away forever. Hence he said: "Ye shall not send." When, at length, he permits them to send, on account of their ceaseless persistency, he does so in order that they may become satisfied, by their own investigation, that he has now succeeded to the position of Elijah, and that they have henceforward to attach themselves to him as their leader. עַד־בֹּשׁ (ver. 17) does not mean: very long, *justo diutius* (DeWette and others), nor: more than was becoming, nor: in a shameless manner (Menken, Thenius), but: until he was himself disappointed in the hope (of dissuading them from their purpose). בּוֹשׁ often has this meaning (*cf.* Ps. xxii. 5; xxv. 2, 3, 20; lxix. 6), and it is also a very appropriate signification for Judges iii. 25, and 2 Kings viii. 11. The sons of the prophets wished to have "strong men" sent out, because the search over mountains and in valleys was at-

tended with difficulty and danger. It should also be observed that Elisha on the return of the fifty men, only reminds them of his advice which they had neglected, but does not say a word of the ascension of Elijah, much as we might expect that he would now do so.

Ver. 19. **And the men of the city said,** &c. Perhaps it was the authorities who, in the name of the city, addressed themselves to Elisha, who now stood at the head of the prophets, and whose affable disposition had inspired them with confidence. הָאָרֶץ cannot here mean "ground" (Keil), for it is not the ground, but, as ver. 21 says distinctly, "the water" which was drunk, which caused miscarriage, and "in fact the direct use or enjoyment of this or that water has either a beneficial or a prejudicial effect on the functions of conception and parturition." (Thenius). אֶרֶץ stands here, therefore, as it does Gen. ix. 19; xi. 1; xix. 31. It was "pleasant to dwell" in Jericho, for it lay in a magnificent situation, "rising like an oasis from a broad plain of sand" (Winer, *R.-W.-B.* i. *s.* 543). Ver. 20. Elisha calls for a "new" vessel, *i. e.*, one which had not yet been used for any purpose whatever, because it was intended for a religious act, for, in general, all that was employed in the service of Jehovah must be as yet unused, *i. e.*, uncontaminated (*cf.* Numb. xix. 2). Keil takes the "new cruse" "as a symbol of the renewing power of the Word of God," but it was only the receptacle for the salt, by means of which the water was to be made good and healthful, and it had nothing to do with the "Word of God." The prophet made use of salt because it is used as a means of preserving that into which it is placed, and keeping it from rottenness and decay (death), in that it draws out the impure particles. In so far, then, it has healing and vivifying power (*cf. Symbol. des Mosa. Kultus*, ii. *s.* 325 *sq.*); it is a symbol of the purifying, restoring power which proceeds from Jehovah, for it was He, and not the salt, as such, who purified the spring and made the waters uninjurious, as ver. 21 distinctly declares. [The "salt" was neither more nor less significant in this case than the "meal" in ch. iv. 41.—W. G. S.] The act of casting the salt into the spring was a prophetical, symbolical action, in which (see 1 Kings xvii. *Hist.* § 6) the prophet represents that which the Lord is about to do, by visible signs, and with the corresponding natural means. When P. Cassel (*Der Prophet Elisa*, *s.* xxi.) declares that there is a reference here to the salt of the covenant in the sacrifices (Levit. ii. 13; Numb. xviii. 19), and says: "The miracle of Elisha signified, for the inhabitants of Jericho and for Israel through all time, a covenant of salt with the word and promise of God," it is an evident error, for Jehovah does not say: I make with you a covenant of salt! but: I make this water healthful, I heal it. It is true that salt serves as the symbol of a covenant, to indicate its durability and sanctity, but only on account of its power of preserving and protecting from corruption and decay, which is the only thing that here comes into consideration. In this connection there is no reference whatever to a "covenant of salt."—The spring in question exists "unto this day," ver. 22; and is "doubtless the spring now known as *Ain es Sultan*, the only spring in the neighborhood of Jericho. Its waters spread over the plain of Jericho. . . . A large spring of water, which is indeed not cold, but at the same time not warm, and has a sweet and pleasant taste" (Keil.; *cf.* Robinson, Bibl. Res. in Palest. i. 554–5, or, ii. 283–4, ed. of 1841).

Ver. 23. **And he went up from thence unto Bethel,** &c. As the successor of Elijah in the office of leader of the prophets, Elisha wished to visit, for the first time, the school of the prophets at Bethel, the principal seat of the illegal worship (ver. 3). The נְעָרִים קְטַנִּים can scarcely be "little boys" (Luther), *i. e.*, irresponsible children, who do not know what they say. In the first place their mocking address is opposed to this view, and still more the judgment which fell upon them. Solomon was at least twenty years old when he commenced to reign, and yet he calls himself נַעַר קָטֹן (1 Kings iii. 7). Jeremiah also calls himself a נַעַר at the time of his calling to be a prophet, Jer. i. 6, 7, likewise Joseph was so called at a time when he was at least seventeen years old (Gen. xxxvii. 2). It is also shown by 1 Kings xii. 8, 10, 14, where the young counsellors of Rehoboam are called יְלָדִים, that this word (ver. 24) need not necessarily be understood of little boys. Therefore Krummacher and Cassel translate correctly by "young people." [There is an element of modesty in the use of the word by Jeremiah and Solomon, at a comparatively advanced age. There were quite a number of these persons, more than forty-two, according to ver. 24. נְעָרִים is the word which would be used of them if they were of various ages, from children up to young men. It would not exclude the possibility that there were two or three older persons among them.—W. G. S.] Both the older and more recent expositors, Krummacher, J. Lange, and Kurtz, translate the mocking address by "Ascend, bald-head! (*i. e.*, like Elijah)," so that there would be in it, at the same time, scorn for the ascension of Elijah [Patrick and Comp. Comm.], and the sense would be: "Let him also ascend and be off, that they might be rid of him," or: "Elisha, fool that thou art, show thyself a prophet. If thou canst do anything, let us see it!" (Krummacher.) This is certainly incorrect, for עֲלֵה evidently refers to the preceding עָלָה, and it is impossible that it should mean something entirely different from this. Furthermore, עָלָה never means ascend (see notes on ver. 11); and how could these young people have heard and known already about the "ascension" of Elijah, which (ver. 16) was not known even to the disciples of the prophets? Doubtless the young people had recognized him from a distance by his prophet's mantle (perhaps the one left behind by Elijah, ver. 13), as a prophet, and therefore, as a zealous opponent of the calf and Baal worship, which had its principal seat in Bethel (1 Kings xii. 29); as they saw him now going up the hill to the city, they called to him in mockery: Go up into our city, thou bald-head, what dost thou want here among us? The expression "bald-head" is not to be understood as it generally is, of actual baldness, nor of "a smooth place on the back of the head" (Keil), for how were the young people to notice this in Elisha as he approached them from a distance? Moreover, Elisha was still in his best years, and he

lived for at least fifty years after this time, so that he could not possibly have been bald-headed already on account of age. Still less can there be any reference to an artificial bareness of the head, for the Law forbade directly all persons who were consecrated to the service of Jehovah, as, for instance, the priests and nazarites, to shave the hair of the head (Levit. xxi. 5; Numb. vi. 5). In general, to make bald the head was a sign of dishonor and disgrace (Isai. iii. 17; xv. 2), and baldness was also a mark of leprosy (Levit. xiii. 43). "Bald-head" is, therefore, a disgraceful epithet, which refers, not to a bodily imperfection, a "natural fault" (Keil), but to the calling of Elisha as man of God and prophet; he is thereby designated as one who is the opposite of that which he pretends to be and appears to be, as an impure and expelled person. Cassel remarks: "The expression of the Jews for Roman Catholic priests, during the Middle Ages, and until recent times, was 'bald-heads:' the tonsure passed among them as a mark of the very opposite of consecration and holiness." [The epithet either had its origin in fact and Elisha was prematurely bald, or else it was a standing epithet of insult used for old or reverend people, independently of the fact whether the particular person addressed was bald or not.—W. G. S.] It is evident, then, from this epithet, that the young people had recognized, in Elisha, a prophet, and that they meant to scoff at him precisely as such. Therefore the prophet had to deal here with something very different from mere wantonness, such as little boys sometimes practise with a failing old man.

Ver. 24. **And he turned back**, &c. That which Moses and Aaron say to the people about their complaints: "Your murmurings are not against us but aganist the Lord" (Ex. xvi. 8; *cf.* Acts v. 4), is also applicable here. The scorn of the children attacked not so much the person of Elisha as the calling which had been bestowed upon him by Jehovah, and, in so far, it was a contemning of Jehovah himself, which the prophet, on his first appearance in that capacity, and here in Bethel, of all places, could not allow to pass in silence and unrebuked, without denying his holy calling. He **cursed them in the name of the Lord**, that is, he threatened them with a divine judgment, which in the sequel did not fail to befall them. **There came forth two she-bears**, whether at once, and in the presence of Elisha, or not, is uncertain (Köster: "How long afterwards, is not mentioned"). Bears, especially she-bears, are represented as very fierce and ravenous (Prov. xvii. 12; xxviii. 15; Hos. xiii. 8; Dan. vii. 5. *Cf.* Winer, *R.-W.-B.* i. *s.* 130). That they ate up forty-two of the children is not asserted in the text, for תְּבַקַּעְנָה only means: they split, opened, *i. e.*, tore to pieces (Hos. xiii. 8). Perhaps it only means to say in general that they perpetrated a great massacre among them; the word מֵהֶם shows that there were many more than forty-two of them in all, and this has led to the conjecture that their meeting, for the purpose of reviling the prophet, was planned and prepared. It is possible that they had heard of the coming of a new head of the prophets, and had gone out to meet him in a body, in order to revile him. Nevertheless, the number, forty-two, which cannot be a round or symbolic number, is a very large one to be destroyed by two bears. In general, such is the brevity and disconnectedness of the narrative, that all sorts of questions arise, which remain unanswered, although they do not justify us in declaring the story a simple legend, or indeed a mere fiction.

Ver. 25. **And he went from thence to Mount Carmel**, &c. It can hardly be that Elisha stayed for any length of time at Bethel. Whether, as Krummacher thinks, he hastened away because "the vision of the monstrous act which he had performed lay upon his heart with the weight of mountains," and because the consciousness: such a deed have I done! drove him into retirement, in order that "he might take breath again and recover his composure in the arms of Jehovah," is very doubtful. On the contrary he seems to have sought solitude after the manner of the prophets (see *Exeg.* on 1 Kings xvii. 3), as soon as he had presented himself to the sons of the prophets as the successor of Elijah, in order to prepare himself for his further public life. He chose Carmel for this purpose, because this mountain, with its numerous grottos and caves, was especially fitted for a residence in concealment; perhaps, also, because Elijah had there first broken the power of idolatry (see notes on 1 Kings xviii). After the return from Carmel he dwelt in Samaria (*cf.* ch. vi. 32), from which fact we see that under Jehoram, although Jezebel still lived, the persecution of the prophets had diminished or indeed entirely ceased.

HISTORICAL AND ETHICAL.

1. The *removal of Elijah*, with which the visible existence of this great prophet ends, is the main point of the narrative before us, and is, therefore, before all else, to be thoroughly comprehended. In the first place, the mode and form in which it took place, come into consideration. It was not a mere disappearance, a becoming invisible, but it was brought about by a fiery storm-blast. The peculiar mode of Elijah's removal stands in an unmistakable relation to his vocation, which consisted in this, that he was to be, by word and deed, the herald and the instrument of the divine judgment against apostasy and idolatry, and was to renew the broken covenant (see 1 Kings xvii. *Hist.* § 1). His entire public life and work had, therefore, the character of that of a judge—on the one side destroying and consuming, and on the other reforming and constructing. Just as everywhere in the Scriptures, and especially in the Old Testament, fire is the form in which all the action of God as judge presents itself (Deut. iv. 24; ix. 3; xxxii. 22; Numb. xi. 1, 2; xvi. 35; Isai. iv. 4 xxvi. 11; xxix. 6; Ps. xxi. 9; l. 3; Zeph. i. 18; Hebr. xii. 29; 2 Peter iii. 7, 12, &c.), so the words of this instrument of the divine energy were words of fire, and his deeds were deeds of fire. Thus he appears, not only in the historical books, but also especially in the great panegyric of the holy fathers, in the book of Sirach, which begins its description, when it comes to this prophet, with the words: "And Elijah arose, a prophet like fire, and his words burned like a torch," and closes with these: "And he was taken up in a whirlwind of fire, in a chariot of fiery horses. And he is appointed for the discipline of future times, to soothe away anger before judgment, and to convert the heart of the father to the son, and to establish the tribes of Jacob" (Sirach xlviii. 1, 9, 10). When

now this fire-prophet is removed and carried away by God in a fiery storm, it is clear that it is not a divine judgment which was executed upon him, but a divine confirmation of his work, in its predominant aspect, viz., the judicial; so that it is, as it were, the seal of God upon that which Elijah was for his own and for all future times, viz., the surety for and the herald of, every great judgment-day of God, *i. e.*, of the fire, which acts as well to purify and build up as to destroy and devastate (Mal. iii. 2; iv. 1–6. *Cf.* Hengstenberg, *Christologie des A. T.* iii. *s.* 441 *sq.*). As such an actual witness of the all-conquering judicial might of God, he was not destined to come to his end in weakness and decay, to experience the usual death, the embodiment of all human powerlessness and transitoriness, but he was destined to be removed in divine power and might. His translation, far from being indifferent, accidental, and insignificant, bore the same stamp as his temporal and earthly appearance, and corresponded perfectly to his peculiar and unparalleled position in the divine economy of salvation. Only in this way can his removal and the mode of it be explained, whereas, according to that conception of the event, which lays all the stress upon a chariot, drawn by horses, instead of upon the fire, any connection between it and the life and peculiar work of the prophet is wanting, and we can at best only suppose that this was an extraordinary reward for his labors. The question, What became of the body of Elijah upon his translation? is exactly like the other one, Into what place did he come? and it must remain, to say the least, an open question, since the Scriptures are entirely silent in regard to it. Those expositors, both in earlier and later times, who maintain a formal ascension of Elijah, adopt either the idea of a transmutation of his body during the ascension (Krummacher: "While he is riding on, lo! his body, the dust, is gradually transmuted." ["His body being transformed in his passage toward heaven, he was carried up to live among the angels." Patrick]), or that of a sudden transformation, citing 1 Cor. xv. 51 *sq.:* "But we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump." (Keil: "Elijah did not die, but was taken up by a transformation into heaven," and he remarks on Gen. v. 24: "Whoever is raised above death by the grace of God, cannot arise from the dead, but arrives at the *ἀφθαρσία*, or the purified state of perfection by a transformation, or 'being clothed upon,' 2 Cor. v. 4.") But, not to speak of other objections, "transformation," or new-clothing of the believers in Christ, presupposes the entire work of Christ, especially his elevation to the right hand of God and his second advent; it is conditioned upon that second coming, and it is something which is to take place but once, in an extraordinary manner (*cf.* 1 Thess. iv. 15, 16). So St. Paul designates it as a "mystery," which he could not have done if it had already taken place in like manner under the old covenant. To carry back, therefore, [this Christian conception of the resurrection of the dead, in a spiritual and incorruptible body,] and apply it to Enoch and Elijah, is an inadmissible mixing up of the economies of salvation of the Old and New Testaments.

2. *The translation of Elijah* has been compared in many ways with the *ascension of Christ*, and taken as a type of the same. So, for instance, Richter says: "By this means it was intended that the Ascension of Christ should be typified and made more credible," and Keil: "Elijah . . . as forerunner of Christ (Mal. iii. 3; Matt. xi. 10 *sq.*) was received up into heaven without tasting death, in order to foretell the ascension of our Lord, and to typify it, after the manner of the Old Testament." This opinion rests, however, directly upon the premise that Elijah ascended into heaven in the same manner as Christ. Yet the Scriptures speak with very different, and in fact very definite, expressions of the departure of Christ, not as a removal or translation, but as an ascent into heaven and a reception there, an entrance into the glory, which he had before the foundations of the earth were laid (Mark xvi. 19; Luke xxiv. 51; Acts i. 9–11; ii. 33 *sq.*; vii. 55; John xvii. 5, 24). Christ actually tasted death, but he arose from the dead and was elevated, as victor over sin and death, to the right hand of the Majesty in heaven (Hebr. viii. 1). He himself says: "No man hath ascended up to heaven, but He that came down from heaven, even the Son of Man, which is in heaven" (John iii. 13); although these words may refer, in the first instance, to the insight into, and knowledge of, divine things, yet they also testify, nevertheless, to something which the Son of Man alone is capable of, as the Apostle also writes: "He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that He might fill all things" (Eph. iv. 10). In the case of Christ, the Ascension forms an integral and essential moment in His work of salvation. There begins His kingly function, and that redemptive work which lasts into eternity (Hebr. iv. 14; v. 9, 10; ix. 12). In the case of Elijah, on the contrary, his entire work ceases upon his translation. It is not the entrance into a broader, higher activity in heaven, but the end, even though a glorious end, of his work, and on this account it cannot pass for a type of the Ascension of Christ. To compare it with this, therefore, or to put it on the same line with this, is to take from Christ what belongs to Him alone, and, according to the nature of the thing, can belong only to Him. If Elijah had ridden upon a fiery chariot, drawn by fiery steeds, up into heaven, his ascension would have been far more glorious and brilliant than that of the Lord of Glory, when He was raised to the right hand of the Majesty on high; how then can it be a type of this? If Keil, in spite of this, insists upon an "ascension" of Elijah, and observes: "He, to be sure, who does not know how to estimate the spirit and nature of the divine revelation of salvation, will also be unable to comprehend this miracle," then we may assert, at least with just as much right: He who does not know how to estimate Christ and the significance of His Ascension into heaven, will indeed also talk about an ascension of Elijah into heaven. Even Theodoret, in his day, wrote on Ps. xxiv. 9: *Αἰωνίους δὲ πύλας ἀνοιγῆναι παρακελεύονται ὡς μηδέποτε τῇ φύσει τῶν ἀνθρώπων ὑπανοιγείσας. Οὐδεὶς γὰρ ἐκείνας τῶν ἀνθρώπων διεπέρασε πώποτε, ἀλλ' ὁ ἐνανθρωπήσας Θεὸς λόγος, τὴν ἡμετέραν ἀναλαβὼν ἀπαρχήν, ἀνήγαγέ τε εἰς οὐρανούς, καὶ ἐκάθισεν ἐν δεξιᾷ τῆς μεγαλωσύνης ἐν τοῖς ὑψηλοῖς, ἐπάνω πάσης ἀρχῆς καὶ ἐξουσίας κ. τ. λ.* (Eph. i. 21). *ὁ δὲ μέγας Ἠλίας ἀνελήφθη μέν, ἀλλ' οὐκ εἰς τὸν οὐρανόν, ἀλλ' ὡς εἰς τὸν οὐρανόν.*

The departure of Elijah points back to that of Enoch and Moses, rather than forward to that of

Christ. It is not only said of Enoch, as it is of Elijah, "God took him away" (Gen v. 24); but also that he announced (προεφήτευσε) to the rebellious and godless of his time the coming of the Lord "to execute judgment upon all, and to convince (ἐξελέγξαι, *cf.* Sir. lxviii. 10; ἐν ἐλεγμοῖς) all that are ungodly among them of their ungodly deeds" (Jude 14 *sq.*). He, therefore, had a calling like to that of Elijah in its essential character; and, as "the seventh from Adam" (through Seth), he marks an epoch in the divine plan of redemption (see the COMMENT. on Gen. v. 24, and Jude 14). Then, in regard to *Moses*, it is not indeed stated that God "took him away," but, that he buried him, and that no one learned anything of his sepulchre, or, as some say, of his burial (Deut. xxxiv. 6). The Jewish tradition goes still further. According to Origen (Περὶ Ἀρχῶν, iii. 2), Jude took what he states in ver. 9, about the struggle for the body of Moses, from a well-known Jewish document, which had for its title: Ἀνάβασις τοῦ Μωσέως; and, according to Josephus (*Antiq.* iv. 8, 48), after Moses had embraced Joshua and Eleazar for the last time, while he was still talking with them, he was suddenly carried away (ἀφανίζεται) by a cloud into a valley, and disappeared from their eyes. However it may be with regard to the authority of these traditions, so much remains certain, that the departure of Moses is "placed in the same category" with that of Enoch and that of the second Moses, Elijah (Kurtz, *Gesch. des Alten Bundes*, ii. *s.* 526). All these mark definite epochs in the development of the Old Testament plan of salvation—they are prophets in the highest sense of the word. Enoch walked "with God," *i. e.*, in the most intimate intercourse with him; Moses stood in such close relation to God that he talked with him face to face, as a man talks with his friend (Ex. xxxiii. 11); Elijah's entire life was consumed in fiery zeal for the cause of the Lord, so that Sirach closes his panegyric with the words: μακάριοι οἱ ἰδόντες σε. No one of the three witnesses and preachers of the divine judgments, for his own and for all future times, was destined to undergo the sentence of death and corruption. The world was not to "see them submit to death" (Schultz). God took them away: and although Moses died, on account of his transgression in the desert of Zin (Deut. xxxii. 51), nevertheless he died עַל־פִּי יְהוָה ["according to the word of the Lord" (Deut. xxxiv. 5). The author does not translate these words, but seems to give them a peculiar signification. It is true that עַל־פִּי often means "according to the command of," *i. e.*, something was executed or performed, according as some one had commanded, but it never means that something took place at or upon some one's command or fiat. The author seems to give it some such signification as this last, that is, that although Moses died—passed through the individual experience and the physical change which we know as death, yet he did so, not as a result of disease, or after decline and weakness and age, but "at the word of the Lord," which omnipotently removed him, in a moment, from life to death. If such an interpretation were justified by the usage of the language, it would go far to establish the parallel between Enoch and Elijah on the one hand, and Moses on the other, and to put his end on the same line with theirs. As it is, the interpretation is rather born of the attempt to make out the parallel, than founded on the usage of the language. The end of Moses was mysterious, and its significance is most justly stated in the remark quoted above from Schultz. We are not justified in saying more about it; and the Hebrew words in the text mean simply that he died, as God had said that he would, without entering Canaan. It is right to deny the parallelism between the end of Elijah and the Ascension of Christ, and to bring the former into relation with the end of Enoch certainly, and, perhaps, with that of Moses also, to some extent; but the latter parallelism must not be urged too far.—W. G. S.] After he had ascended (עָלָה) Mount Nebo, and enjoyed a view of the Land of Promise, he was withdrawn forever from the sight of the world. This removal was the main point in the case of all three, however different the mode of it was in the separate instances. It has, however, as a "taking away," only an essentially negative character (וְאֵינֶנּוּ Gen. v. 24; *cf.* 2 Kings ii. 12; Deut. xxxiv. 6), whereas the Ascension of Christ, as the elevation of the victor over sin and death, to be Lord over all which can be mentioned, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come (Eph. i. 21), is of a purely positive nature, and in fact, as well as in significance, something totally different.

3. *The different views of the end of Elijah* may be divided into two classes.

(*a*) The *old realistic* view, which maintains an actual "ascent into heaven," has been presented, in recent times, most definitely, and with the most earnest hostility to any other view, by Krummacher (*Elias der Thisbiter*, *s.* 414–425). By way of introduction he says: "We are on the side of biblical realism. Whosoever takes that from us, takes from our heart everything: for facts—facts are what it must have, this human heart; the more palpable and substantial they are the better. . . . My taste is for the massive in the Bible." Having adopted this stand-point, he refuses to be satisfied with "fiery clouds, in the form of a chariot and horses" (*Calwer* and *Hirschberger Bibel*), or with a cloud of angels, by whose ministry Elijah was received up to heaven, as Grotius, Menken and others suppose, but he gives the following representation of the event: "The black clouds fringed with glowing fire, burst. A gigantic gate of fire opens, ... and out of this blazing portal there dashes forth into the air a flaming chariot and gleaming horses of fire, who spring with it to the earth as if harnessed to a pole of adamant, ... only a few steps from the man of God, an invisible charioteer draws up the reins, and the horses stop. . . . . How wonderful, how unheard-of is the event! Here stands a chariot of fire! Here are real horses from on high! . . . Raised upon invisible hands, the prophet mounts, with joyful courage, into the blazing chariot. . . The horses of fire raise themselves, and swiftly as an arrow from a bow, they spring away upon the road of air, heavenwards, toward the open flame-gate of the firmament. Ha! how it rolls away from cloud to cloud! When the gleaming wheels touch a cloud, the thunder rolls; where the supple steeds set down their feet, there the lightnings flash forth under their hoofs. . . . . The King of kings himself it is who guides the equi-

page by invisible reins. . . . . They have soon flown through the atmosphere of the earth, and now the road loses itself in those regions where the mortal eye stands at the limit of its sight. Between the heavenly orbs they fly along, these flaming steeds, and the thundering wheels roll on, as it were through a fiery ocean, past thousands of suns and stars. . . . . The fire-steeds plunge forward, as with redoubled steps, toward the open portal, and now through it into paradise—into the ever-green meadows and the palm-groves of heaven. The chariot stops," &c., &c. This entire representation, in which the fiery steed of the phantasy seems to have run away with his rider, only shows what we may come to, if we take the words of the text, "chariot of fire and horses of fire," in a literal sense. The war against every figurative interpretation of these words as a "spiritual dish of froth, offered by an over-estimated wisdom," appears all the more remarkable, as the words which immediately follow: "The chariot of Israel and the horsemen thereof," and which correspond to the previous words, cannot possibly be understood literally, but only figuratively, as they are understood also by Krummacher himself. Passing by all else, it only remains now to call attention to one point, viz., how mean, we might almost say, the Ascension of Him who was more than all prophets, and who was elevated to the right hand of the Majesty on high, appears in contrast with this supposed magnificent ascension. For the rest, Krummacher is good enough to declare, for the comfort of those whose taste is not for the "massive in the Bible," that "in truth, it is not belief in these horses which brings us salvation, just as doubt of their existence would not damn anybody."

(*b*) The *rationalistic view* will not hear anything of an ascension into heaven, nor of a miraculous removal of Elijah. On the authority of the passage, 2 Chron. xxi. 12, J. D. Michaelis asserts (*Anmerkungen für Ungelehrte* XII. on 2 Kings ii. 1) that Elijah was only carried away out of Palestine, and that he lived at least twelve years longer, for "no one receives letters from people in heaven." For the same reason Winer (*R.-W.-B.* i. *s.* 318) also believes that he "only withdrew into solitude, leaving it to his pupil to carry on the prophetical ministry." So also recent Jewish expositors, as, for instance, Philippson. But in 2 Chron. xxi. there is not a word about a letter (סֵפֶר), but only about writing (מִכְתָּב), which is said to have reached Jehoram from the prophet Elijah. Such a writing, however, Elijah might very well have written before his removal, and entrusted to Elisha, that he might send it, at the appropriate time, to the king (Keil); and it is not necessary to suppose, as some do, a mistake between the names Elijah and Elisha. Precisely this passage of the Chronicle can, least of all, be brought to bear against the story in 2 Kings ii. Bertheau says in regard to it: "It is not mentioned anywhere else that Elijah performed any prophetical action by means of writing. At the time when Jehoram ruled in the southern kingdom, Elijah might still have been alive, according to the chronological data of the Old Testament. It is probable, to begin with, that he did speak in regard to Jehoram's sin, and that he threatened him with punishment; but the 'letter' is composed in general terms, and gives only a prophetic explanation of the misfortunes by which Jehoram was visited. From this we must conclude that it proceeds, in the form in which we have it, from a later historian, who, drawing from sources which we do not know, described the relation between Jehoram and Elijah with a few words, and according to its broad and general features." Still less is it possible to uphold the different attempts which have been made to explain the miraculous event in some natural manner, as, for example, that Elijah was carried off by a water-spout, with accompaniment of thunder and lightning (Jahn, *Einleit. in's A. T.* ii. 1, *s.* 261), or that he was hurled away by a storm-wind, or that he lost his way in a cloud, or that the king caused him to be seized and hurried off in a chariot, during a storm (*Exeget. Handbuch des A. T.*, on the passage), or, finally, that a whirlwind drove dust and sand into the air, as often takes place when horses and chariots run over sandy ground, and that Elisha imagined, when he heard the thunder-like rolling of wheels, and saw the frequent lightnings, that his master had ridden away towards heaven in a fiery equipage (Hetzel, on the passage). Even Knobel (*Der Prophet. der Hebr.* ii. *s.* 85) declares that all these explanations are "very forced." They are to be regarded as antiquated, and they do not deserve refutation. It is not much better, however, to put the removal of Elijah on the same line with the apotheosis of Ganymede (Hom. *Iliad.* xx. 233), or of Romulus (Liv. i. 16), (Knobel, *l. c.*), for what does this genuine Old Testament narrative contain in the slightest degree similar to the genuine heathen and Roman legend of Romulus, who did not live till a hundred and fifty years after Elijah, or with the genuine heathen and Greek legend of Ganymede, who was thought worthy of the society of the immortal gods on account of his physical beauty? Such comparisons prove as great self-will as thoughtlessness.

(*c*) The *purely idealistic* view, which has been maintained, especially by Ewald (*Gesch. Israels*, iii. *s.* 543 [3d ed., 584]), followed by Eisenlohr and Bunsen, starts from the premise (see *Prelim. Rem.* after 1 Kings xvii.) that the history of Elijah, in the form in which it lies before us, was remoulded by an historian who lived two hundred years later than Elijah, and who was gifted with a genuine poetical soul, and that he presented the highest prophetical truth in historical form. "A life on earth, purer than that of any other man of that time, consecrated to the service of Jehovah, and yet spent in such all-controlling exertion for the advancement of the kingdom of God, could only have a corresponding termination: ceasing to be in the visible world, it will work all the more powerfully and undisturbedly in the spiritual realm, that is, will be received up into heaven. In that moment heaven bends itself down here to earth, to raise up from hence to itself that soul which already belongs to it. Therefore, a fiery chariot with fiery steeds moves down from heaven and takes up Elijah in a whirlwind to heaven. It is only eternal truth which seeks to explain itself in this bold expression." Especially, however, it is said the remainder of the description represents, at the same time, more precisely "how an Elijah quits his friends on earth and they him," and thus gives expression to the following truth: "When the moment approaches when a holy man like Elijah is to be taken away from the earth, then a dis-

crimination takes place among those who have hitherto passed for his friends and followers. The great mass of these draw back in fear and unbelief—only a few remain faithful unto the end; but only upon these (as in this case upon Elisha) does the blessing and spirit of the saint who is to be removed from the earth directly fall." According to this mode of acceptation, the entire narrative of the translation of Elijah would be an allegorical fiction. But, elevated as the delineation certainly is, it still bears by no means the features of poetical composition, in which "every limitation of the vulgar historical material has been disregarded." On the contrary, as Menken has observed: "The tone of the narrative is the same which predominates in the preceding, and which we also find in the following, chapters. This incident is narrated just as simply, prosaically, and unpoetically as the entire history of both prophets, or anything else which is historical in both Books of the Kings." (See also *Prelim. Rem.* after 1 Kings xvii.) Not to dwell upon that, however, where under the heavens would a poet of the Old Testament suppose the "purely spiritual realm" to be? and, bold as the figurative expressions of the Old Testament certainly are, where does anything occur which would be in any degree similar to this: that "a fiery chariot and fiery horses" should be the expression for the purely spiritual realm which receives up into itself the soul which already entirely belongs to it? There would be no need of such a detailed historical dress as we here find for the utterly simple and prosaic truth, that on the end of a great man a discrimination between his followers is wont to occur; and besides that, in the case before us, no such discrimination or distinction took place. There is no sign whatever of any "contrast between Elisha and the ordinary pupils of the prophets;" on the contrary, they are so warmly and faithfully attached to Elijah, that, in spite of the dissuasion of Elisha, they will not be prevented from sending out fifty men to seek for the translated master and lord. It is impossible, therefore, that they should be a figure for the "great mass," which "draws back in fear and unbelief," when the master is taken away from the earth. However fine and spiritual the idealistic acceptation may appear, it shows itself, on a more close investigation, to be utterly unmaintainable both as a whole and in the details.

[A peculiar interest has always attached to *the prophet Elijah*, differing in nature from that which is felt for the other prophets, just as he differed from them. The manner in which he appears in the narrative, suddenly, without preparation or introduction, and without reference to his antecedents; the way in which he traverses the history, from time to time, each appearance forming a crisis; the enigmatical character of his existence; the doubt as to where he had been in the meantime, how he went, how he returned, and how he had lived during his absence; finally, his mode of working, which was despotic, all-controlling, sure of itself, free from hesitation or doubt, and, as it seemed, from any deliberation; self-assuming to a degree which nothing could warrant but the inner conviction of the very highest prophetical calling, and which could only be maintained by the most direct and certain inspiration;—all these things conspired to make his name one of terror and wonder, and to leave a deep impression on the popular mind, so that we find that his name still lives in wild legends and fables among the Mohammedans and ignorant Christians of the East (see Mr. Grove's article in Smith's *Dict. of the Bib.* and authorities there referred to). The question is sometimes asked, Why have we no Elijahs any more? Why are there no men so penetrated and inspired by the Divine Spirit now-a-days? Why have *we* no men whom the world, with its temptations of all sorts, cannot touch, but itself lies open to their insight and judgment, with all its deceits and weaknesses, all its follies and vices, all its corruptions and falsehoods? Many men aspire to purity, communion with God, elevation above the world, and seek to obtain influence over it, that they may improve it and lead it up to God, but, although kings and rulers are depraved, and are often seduced into vice and injustice and corruption, although laws and institutions are unjust, and nations forget God and abandon Him for false worship of all sorts, yet no Elijah appears to destroy and dash in pieces what is base and wrong, and to consume it with a fire of divine vengeance, or to nourish and build up institutions which may regenerate the world. The first reason is that we do not *believe* that any such men will arise. We have made up our minds that they cannot be and so they never will be. Here again faith is the grand postulate. Who knows what measure of His Spirit God might give to-day to any one who held himself ready to receive it? Elijah, if he were here to-day, would hear and understand the Spirit of God as much as he did centuries ago. Few men, in the whole history of the world, are ready to accept the necessary preconditions of such a calling. The first of these is utter self-abnegation and self-surrender. He who thinks of himself at all, or carries with him one care for self and one consideration of his own pleasure, profit, or renown, is no prophet. A prophet must cast himself utterly into the plan and providence of God, and exist, thereafter, only for it. His calling is to be above the world and to oversee, weigh, condemn, and correct, from the elevated stand-point of God's eternal providence, all which men do and plan and hope for, or despise and reject and battle against, on earth. He must see, to some extent, as God sees. He must judge, so far as a man can, as God judges; that is, according to His eternal providence and plan. He must be in and of his own time, but so elevated above it as to grasp its significance in the history of redemption, as a product of the past and a fountain of the future. From this standpoint he must judge all separate incidents, all individual characters, all proposals and plans, all new institutions, which it is proposed to found, all old ones which it is proposed to abolish. To such a calling no man is called for his worldly honor that he may be the adored of millions. The world has too strong a hold on all who are in it. They can never tear off its bands while they are touched by its attractions. No man can raise himself above his time while his interests are all in it. It is only in the severance of all these ties that he can gain freedom to mount up to God. If there were men, however, who were capable of this absolute denial of the world and absolute surrender to God, let no one dare to say what they could not receive from God. A false idea of Elijah and other Old Testament prophets, as if they had possessed powers of divination and magic, which, as we well

know, no man now possesses, has led us to despair of such gifts as they had, and to regard them as belonging entirely to a past age. The "arm of the Lord is not shortened," however, and He can fill His servants with as rich a measure of His Spirit *for their work* to-day as He did His prophets of old, if they will only expect it and wait for it. If such men as Elijah were needed to-day for carrying on the work of salvation, God could raise them up. This brings us to another reason why none such arise. Elijah was a phenomenon of a turbulent period, in a disorganized state. He was a hero, in a heroic age. For him it was possible to live in a desert, to appear only at intervals, and then to speak with majestic authority. The later prophets, especially those of Judah, lived among their countrymen and had homes and families. They could not lay aside the cares of life. They lived in an organized state and a well-ordered society, whose obligations they could not throw off. The heroic period had given way to that of law. Their work was, therefore, no longer the same in character as that of Elijah. They could not demolish opposition with such dictatorial absoluteness as he. They could not step forth so surely, nor speak in such a commanding tone, nor have recourse to such terrible instruments and means. They had to maintain the truth of God, proclaiming it at the right moment, and the right point, bearing witness against all falsehood and wrong, and then to wait for the truth to prevail. It was not given them to command, they had to teach. They could not presume to wield the instruments of punishment as Elijah did, they must warn, and admonish, and threaten. They therefore had recourse to writing. Their words were not commands which required instant obedience, but testimonies, whose truth time and experience must prove. Still more is all this true of our times. We live in a society with fixed institutions and traditions. Men move now not in a mass, controlled by a few individuals, but in an organized body, moved by its own intelligence and the general convictions. All which presents itself from outside the social order, and bases itself upon a violation of the same, is met with suspicion and ridicule, and moreover (for this would be a light thing in itself), must remain destitute of any deep influence. Society has come into absolute dependence upon, and faith in, law. No man and no doctrine can work efficiently in this society if it tries to work from without the social order. The efficient means of operation now-a-days are organized combinations of men of similar opinions and aspirations. Individuals cannot attain controlling positions. The power has been broken up and diffused. Individuals are assigned to positions in the organization which moves as a whole. The mass is stubborn, and can only be acted on from within. It will not submit to dictation. The only means of influence is, to form a smaller opinion, inside of the great one, and so leaven the whole lump. The calling of the prophets has been inherited by institutions, above all by the Church, and these are the influences to which we must look to regenerate modern society. The ministers of the Church are the bearers and perpetuators of this calling. Their duty it is to bear witness of God and of His judgment in the world. Their duty it is to advise, exhort, warn, and condemn, with the fearlessness of Elijah, even if not with his tone of authority and command.—W. G. S.]

4. The *prophet-communities*, or so-called schools of the prophets, which Elijah visited again before his departure, are a phenomenon which is in many respects important and deserving of attention (*cf.* in general, with regard to them, Knobel, *Prophet. der Hebr.* ii. *s.* 39–52; Winer, *R.-W.-B.* ii. *s.* 281; Keil, on 1 Sam. xix. 24, *s.* 146–151; Kranichfeld, *De iis quæ in V. T. commemorantur, prophetarum societatibus. Berol.* 1861, where the older literature is also mentioned). They come into consideration here principally in their relation to Elijah. Such communities are mentioned as early as the time of Samuel (1 Sam. x. 5, 10; xix. 20), but not sooner, so that he is commonly regarded as their founder, and indeed he is mentioned in the last place quoted as their נִצָּב, governor or overseer. They appear, from their names, חֶבֶל, *i. e.*, band, company, or crowd, and לַהֲקָה (for קְהִלָּה), *i. e.*, congregation, not to have been organized and exclusive unions or "orders," but freely united companies. Under David we find no sign of their existence whatever. Not until the time of Elijah and Elisha do they appear again, and here they always bear the name בְּנֵי הַנְּבִיאִים, which refers to a more definite relation, to firmer and closer connection, similar to that between father and son, and especially to the relation between teacher and pupil, for the Hebrew always calls his teacher "father" (1 Sam. x. 12; 2 Kings ii. 12; Matt. xxiii. 9), and his pupil, "son" (Prov. i. 8, 10, 15; ii. 1; iv. 1; Titus i. 4). We see, from the passage before us, and 2 Kings iv. 38; vi. 1, that they dwelt together in definite places, and lived in common; therefore, that they were not unregulated companies, but exclusive unions or communities. They stand in a subordinate relation to their teachers and masters (at first Elijah, and after him, Elisha, *cf.* 2 Kings ii. 15), and call them "master" (2 Kings ii. 3; vi. 5) and themselves "servants" (2 Kings ii. 16; iv. 1; vi. 3). According to all this, these schools of the prophets can hardly be identified with the free unions of the prophets under Samuel, or be considered as the immediate continuation of those. In the latter was concentrated the religious life, which at that time lacked a fixed arrangement. When this was established by David, they ceased to exist, although prophets continued to appear from time to time. The real schools of the prophets, however, came into existence for the first time, at the period of apostasy and idolatry under Ahab, and their founder was Elijah, who may, nevertheless, have had those combinations under Samuel in mind, though he gave them a different organization, and made of them institutions for planting and preserving the pure worship of Jehovah, in opposition to the intruding idolatry. Such certainly the combinations of the prophets under Samuel never were. Even if we were willing to allow Elijah to pass, not for the founder, but simply for the restorer of the schools of the prophets, yet these remain, nevertheless, an actual and important testimony that this prophet not only stepped forth publicly, in fiery zeal and heroic strength, to battle against idolatry, but also, at the same time, worked to build up and to lay foundations. Although this quieter part of his influence did not attract so much attention, yet it was not less successful. He must have understood well how to draw hearts to

himself and enchain them, as is evident from the number of these pupils of the prophets (*cf.* 1 Kings xviii. 4; 2 Kings ii. 16; iv. 43; vi. 1). The bloody persecution of them under Ahab and Jezebel did not avail to exterminate them, or even to diminish their numbers. In the evening of the prophet's life we even find schools of the prophets in precisely those places where the worship of the Calf and of Baal had their principal seats, so that we see that they had to be endured at last publicly—a proof that the general strength of the apostasy had been broken by Elijah. How much the heart of the faithful servant of God was set upon these foundations, is evident from the fact that he visited the three schools at Gilgal, Bethel, and Jericho before his departure, and spoke to them encouragement and consolation.

5. The *prophet Elisha* is the chief person after Elijah in the passage before us, from which the relation which we must think of as existing between the two prophets may be directly deduced. This relation is often conceived of as one of specific difference or even contrast. So Krummacher says (*Elisa*, 2d ed. Elberfeld, 1844, i. *s.* 7): "Elisha was appointed to appear as an evangelist in Israel, whereas Elijah, as the second Moses, was to enforce due respect for the Law, which had been forgotten and trodden under foot. Elisha's duty was, as herald of the divine tenderness, to restore and lead back to the father's arms, with tempting invitations, the hearts which his predecessor had broken with the hammer of the law," and (*Elias der Thisb. s.* 409): "As an evangelist he needed, first of all, that his own heart should acquire a thoroughly evangelical disposition, and that he should, in his internal relation to the Lord, himself foretaste, so far as was possible, the tender nature of the New Testament" (see also 1 Kings xix. *Hist.* § 8). This opinion springs from the utterly false interpretation of the spirit of ver. 9, which makes it mean that Elisha prayed for a double measure of the spirit of Elijah. Under this interpretation Elisha's manifold acts of healing and assistance, have then been brought into connection with this prayer. Accordingly, this view falls to the ground with the correct exposition of ver. 9. As for the acts referred to, they were not by any means like those of the Saviour, altogether in the nature of assistance, but many of them served as punishments (*cf.* ver. 24; v. 27; vii. 19, 20). On the other hand, the miracles of Elijah were not entirely punishment-miracles (1 Kings xvii. 6, 14, 23; xviii. 45). Moreover, the time of Elisha was so far from being a time of "divine tenderness," and "gentle murmuring after the storm," that, on the contrary, it was exactly in this time that the most violent convulsion inside the kingdom (2 Kings ix. and x.), and the most violent struggles abroad (2 Kings vi. and vii.), took place. Finally, according to the oracle, 1 Kings xix. 17, it was Elisha's destiny to "slay" all who should escape from the sword of Jehu, which certainly was no New Testament calling. The spirit for which he prays (ver. 9), and which then rests upon him (ver. 15), is the "spirit of Elijah," not a different one, much less a contrasted one. This spirit of Elijah is so far from being a New Testament spirit, that the Saviour rebukes His disciples who desire to act in accordance with it (Luke ix. 55), and says: "Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of." [Bähr takes it as a question, and emphasizes the latter "*ye*." So also many good authorities, whom Meyer is inclined to join. Lachmann and Tischendorf omit it from the text. There is a heavy weight of authority against it, and the only argument for retaining it is the one suggested by Meyer, that it is difficult to account for its interpolation; while, on the other hand, it might have been omitted out of a false consideration for the reputation of Elijah.—W. G. S.] It was one and the same spirit which inspired both prophets, and worked in and through them. Elisha was not indeed "a feeble copy" of Elijah; but neither was he, what, as an evangelist before the time of the evangelists, he would have been, viz., greater than Elijah. He only desired, as first-born son of the prophet, a richer measure of the spirit than the other sons of the prophets were to obtain, because he was to be their leader and master. His relation to Elijah was like that of Joshua to Moses. Elijah had broken the strength of the apostasy in Israel—fought with fiery zeal against idolatry, and laid anew the foundation of the law and the covenant. On this foundation Elisha was to continue to build. The same spirit which, in Elijah, had to work chiefly to destroy and condemn, was to work in Elisha chiefly to cultivate and preserve. "Elijah had done the work of laying the foundation. There had been introduced among the people, in the schools of the prophets, which had arisen again under the shield of Elijah's mighty energy, a healing salt of life, which now only needed to be kept from losing its savor and to be preserved in its vigor, and blessing would proceed from it in silence and without display. To guard these germs of the newly-awakened life—to nourish them and bring them to vigorous development—was . . . the task of Elisha" (Sartorius, *Vorträge über die Prophet. s.* 38, 41). Like Elijah, Elisha was also the "chariot of Israel and the horsemen thereof" (2 Kings ii. 12; xiii. 14).

6. The *three acts* of Elisha after the translation of Elijah, of which we have an account, are not by any means arbitrarily placed in succession, as it were mere anecdotes of the prophet, but they belong together in time, as well as in significance, and form, to some extent, a whole, by means of which Elisha, on his first independent appearance as successor of Elijah, is represented as heir of his spirit and calling. The last act of the master before the eyes of the pupils of the prophets (ver. 8) was also the first performed before them by the disciple, after he had succeeded to the position of Elijah, and he performed it with the significant mantle of his former master. This was a sign for him that his prayer for the רוּחַ of Elijah had been fulfilled, and for the sons of the prophets that the spirit of his master now rested upon him, and that they must henceforth recognize him as leader and guide (ver. 15). In this capacity he returns with them to Jericho, their dwelling-place. Here, when the men of the city, full of confidence, complain to him of their misfortune, he maintains himself as the Man of God, who helps and protects, and brings safety and blessing. At Bethel, on the other hand, when they come to meet him with derision and contempt, it becomes evident what judgment falls upon those who impudently despise the servant and messenger of Jehovah. Thus Elisha, like Elijah, to whose place he had succeeded (see 1 Kings xvii. *Hist.* § 1), in his first appear-

ance, is seen to be a prophet of action—he inaugurates himself, not by a detailed *speech* to the sons of the prophets and the believing or unbelieving people, but by actions. These actions, however, are of a prophetical character, not insignificant workings of superhuman power, but rather "signs," and therefore also testimonials (*cf.* John x. 25). The passage through the Jordan bears witness that the Lord opens paths for those whom He has chosen and called to be His messengers and servants. It is a surety for the words: "Fear not, for I have redeemed thee. I have called thee by thy name: thou art mine. When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee: and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee" (Isai. xliii. 1, 2; Ps. cxxiv. 4). The act at Jericho proclaims aloud that it is the Lord who gives health. It is surety for the words: "I am the Lord that healeth thee" (Exod. xv. 25; xxiii. 25, 26), "who healeth all thy diseases [infirmities]" (Ps. ciii. 3; cxlvii. 3; *cf.* Jer. viii. 22). Finally, the event at Bethel is a sign for the rebellious and apostate that judgment waits for the scoffers—a testimony to the truth of the words: "The Lord revengeth and is furious; the Lord will take vengeance on his adversaries" (Nahum i. 2); "who visits the sins of the fathers upon the (like-minded) children" (Exod. xx. 5).

7. Many have taken offence, in various ways, at *the judgment which befell the derisive youths at Bethel.* For instance, Köster (*Die Prophet. s.* 85) says: "The story sounds very unworthy of the great prophet: it appears as if he ought not to have noticed the derision of irresponsible children;" and Thenius remarks on the passage, that "the immorality of cursing (especially wanton children) has been lost sight of in the desire to bring into prominence the inviolability of the prophetical dignity, which stands under the protection of God." The incident appears, however, in a very different light when the persons in question, as was shown above, are not wanton little children, but youths who knew what they were doing and saying. Neither must we overlook the fact that these youths belonged to the city which was the centre and principal seat of the apostasy, and which, on this account, is called by the prophets, "Beth-Aven," *i. e.*, House of the Idol, instead of Beth-El [House of God], (Hos. iv. 15; x. 5; Amos v. 5). They were, therefore, literally the offspring of apostasy, and they represented in general the offspring of apostates which was growing up. The older expositors, *e. g.*, Bochart, suppose, not improbably, that the older people had incited the younger ones, and that the object was to make the new head of the class of the prophets ridiculous and contemptible at the very commencement of his career. When, therefore, Elisha threatened with divine punishment the impudent youths who despised in the prophet the holy office to which Jehovah had called him, it was no immorality, nor was it unworthy of him; on the contrary, he therein did what belonged to his prophetical office. He did not, however, execute the punishment himself; he left that to Him who says: "To me belongeth vengeance and recompense" (Deut. xxxii. 35). It was no more Elisha who caused the bears to come (but Jehovah, ver. 21) than it was he who caused the waters at Jericho to become healthful. It was a judgment of God which befell those depraved youths and, indirectly, the whole city out of which they came, and it referred back to that threat of the law: "If ye walk contrary unto me, and will not hearken unto me, ... I will also send wild beasts among you, which shall rob you of your children and destroy your cattle; and your highways shall be desolate" (Levit. xxvi. 21 *sq.*). Nevertheless, the narrative bears a strongly Old Testament character; it is no portion of the gospel; we cannot make out of Elisha an "Evangelist" and disciple of the Saviour; we must bear in mind that he was the successor of an Elijah, and that the God of Israel is a jealous God. Cassel's application of the incident seems very far-fetched (*Der Prophet Elisa*, *ss.* 7 and 9): "The wrath and judgment upon the youths is an image of that wrath and judgment which falls upon all Israel. . . . . Who does not seek in it the faithful image of the fortunes of Israel itself! . . . . Like bears from a wood Hazael and Jehu burst in upon the people and the royal race. Without pity and without mercy they strangled the youth of Israel. Even the number—forty-two—signifies such a judgment, for forty-two was the number of the sons of Ahaziah whom Jehu fell in with in his capacity of avenger." That the author of these books did not think of *that*, is at all events certain.

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

Vers. 1-12. BENDER: Elijah's Departure from the Earth. (*a*) The solemn journey on the eve of his departure, and (*b*) the glorious exit of the departing prophet.—Vers. 1-6. KRUMMACHER: The Vigil. (*a*) How Elijah seeks retirement; (*b*) how he comes to the schools of the prophets; (*c*) what reception he meets with there.—Elijah on the Approach of his End. (*a*) He goes to meet it quietly and submissively, for he had fought a good fight and kept the faith (2 Tim. iv. 7 and 8). (*b*) He takes leave of his friends and companions in faithful love; as he had "loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end" (John xiii. 1). —Ver. 1. STARKE: God does not leave His faithful children and servants forever in unrest, but delivers them finally from all evil and helps them to come to his heavenly kingdom (Ps. lv. 23; 2 Tim. iv. 18).—Vers. 2-4. MENKEN: That which Elijah had done and labored at throughout his life, that he also pushed forward and did in his last hours: he was still active for the advancement of the kingdom of God, still active in the labor of assisting and serving love, which does not seek its own. Even his last hours were consecrated to others. He was in a state of the soul, in which he was ready, at every step, in every occupation and in every conversation which might occur, to pass over into the invisible world, without need of any further preparation. Oh! let us employ all diligence, that we, too, may arrive at such a precious and blessed soul-state . . . . that we, too, in all our conversation and business, whether it is spiritual or worldly, whether it is grand or small, may not only think of eternity with pleasure, but also be ready at any moment, if our Lord should so please, to pass on into the invisible world.—Vers. 2-6. The faithful Love of Elisha to his Master and Lord. (*a*) The ground and source of it. (It does not rest upon a natural, human basis, but upon a divine and holy one. The band

which bound him to Elijah was living faith in the living God, and life and labor in and with him. He honored and loved his father after the flesh [1 Kings xix. 20], but he left him; with his spiritual father he wished to remain unto the end [ver. 12]. *Cf.* Matt. x. 37.) (*b*) Its test and successful endurance. (Thrice did Elijah beg him to remain behind, but he would not be persuaded. Whithersoever the path may lead, and whatsoever may come to pass, I will not leave thee until God shall take thee from me. His love was not a mere passing, bubbling enthusiasm, but it was strong as death and firm as hell. That love alone is true which endures trial and will not be turned aside by any prayers, for which no hindrance is too great, no journey too long and too hard. *Cf.* John xxi. 17.) (*c*) Its victory and reward. (Elijah opens for him the path through the Jordan, after his fidelity has stood the test. He is allowed to see what no human being besides him might see. He attains to that which he has prayed for; with Elijah's mantle he inherits also Elijah's spirit; he is a witness of his master's glory. *Cf.* Rev. ii. 10: "Be thou faithful," &c. That fidelity conquers and is crowned, which holds fast to God and Jesus Christ.)—The words of Elisha: **As the Lord liveth,** &c., as marriage-vow. The right foundation, the trial, and the duration, of conjugal love (until God shall separate).—Elijah and the Sons of the Prophets. (*a*) Elijah had not only one disciple and pupil, but a great company of them, which he collected from among those who had not bowed the knee to Baal, and to whom he stood in the relation of a father to his children, whom he led and taught, protected and nourished. This was the other side of the activity of the great Man of God.—MENKEN: In his public life he was, according to the needs of his time, a fire to consume rather than to warm; in his more retired life he was an enlightening and warming light.—Labor in the kingdom of God consists not only in tearing down and removing superstition and unbelief, but at the same time in building up faith, in planting and nourishing a divine and holy life. Compare the great reformers. (*b*) The children of the prophets were not children, but sons, young men, bound to a life in common, in the fear of God. Reading and hearing the Word of God, prayer and praise of the Lord, practice in obedience, mutual encouragement and strengthening, these were the aim and end of their union. They were, therefore, in a time of apostasy, communities for the cultivation of the knowledge of God and of the life which proceeds from God. They were for Israel the salt which gave savor, and the light which gave light, to all in the house (Matt. v. 13–15), schools of true wisdom. whose beginning is the fear of God, through which alone, until this day, all knowledge and learning receive their true value.—**Yea, I know it; hold ye your peace!** We should not make the heart of a departing friend heavy in the moment of separation, but, with him, yield quietly and peacefully to the holy will of God, who is calling him away. —Neither Elijah nor Elisha wished to have that which was about to befall the former according to the decision of God, made a subject of conversation.—VILMAR: No over-hasty gossip or sensation ought to be made about acts of God, especially about those which are still future; they may not be treated as objects of curious or worldly questionings. The acts of God are meant to be awaited in respectful silence. . . . . Those who are capable of seeing the majesty of the living God keep silent of themselves, upon others they have to enjoin silence.

Vers. 7–10. The two Prophets before their Separation. (*a*) Elijah's last act; (*b*) Elisha's last request.—Vers. 7, 8. KRUMMACHER: The Passage through the Jordan. (*a*) The escort of the sons of the prophets; (*b*) the position of the two men of God at the Jordan; (*c*) the marvellous passage through it.—MENKEN: Elijah was to finish his course by an act of faith, he was to build for himself, in a certain sense, the path to his glorious end, by an act of faith, and so impress indelibly upon the hearts of his friends and followers, who saw him, even in the hour of separation, the grand truth that Jehovah is the sole living and all-controlling God, and that faith pleases Him above all else, and that . . . . no other way than faith in God's promises leads to the higher and better inheritance in light.—WIRTH: On the other side of the Jordan is the place of the glorification of the prophet. Between him and this spot there flows yet a broad and deep stream. Through this he must go, ... there is no bridge, no ferryman; but he does not despair. He knows: He who has called me to the other side will help me to the other side. . . . . Such incidents occur to many on the pilgrimage of life. . . . No stream is so deep, and no flood of calamity so dangerous, that God could not lead through it unharmed. . . . . The prophet-mantle, which to-day as ever, when it falls upon any Jordan, divides its waves, is faith, strong, glad, living, rock-firm faith. . . . . "Faith leads through fire and flood."—Vers. 9 and 10. The parting Conversation of the two Prophets. (*a*) Elijah calls upon Elisha to make a request; (*b*) the request of Elisha; (*c*) the answer of Elijah.—Ver. 9. Elijah speaks in the name of God: **Ask what I shall do,** &c. The Lord will not only listen to our prayers, but He even demands of us that we shall pray to Him, and pour out our hearts with all our wishes before him (Ps. lxii. 8). Not only are we allowed to pray to Him, but it also is our duty to do so (Matt. vii. 7 *sq.*).—WÜRTEMB. SUMM.: If the saints in heaven could hear our prayers and could aid us, there would have been no necessity that Elisha should beg anything of Elijah before he went thither. The invocation of deceased saints is therefore to be regarded as erroneous and false. —MENKEN: If we were called upon to make a request, as Elisha was, what would we choose? Would we pray for things of this world, which might delight us for the few days of this life here below; or would we pray as he did, and choose spiritual and heavenly things, in the possession and enjoyment of which we should have rich and pure sources of joy in the other world throughout eternity? The sincere and conscientious response to this question can give us an instructive indication of the nature and worth of our sentiments and of our spiritual value.—STARKE: The highest good on earth is not gold nor money, but the Holy Spirit. —WÜRTB. SUMM.: We see and learn from Elijah that we ought only to pray for necessary and useful things, even where we have the choice.—Ver. 10. CALWER BIBEL: The request was great, but even great prayers are permitted when they serve the ends of the kingdom of God.—KYBURZ: Pray, dear soul, pray freely for something great; it is

equally hard for God to give thee something great or something small. He does not charge it upon thee as ambition if thou prayest so soon for a large faith, or a great measure of the spirit, or a high grade of holiness. Thou must only possess all in humility and use it for the honor of the giver.—OSIANDER: We may indeed pray for glorious gifts of the Spirit from God, yet we must not make a display of them, but only serve the Church usefully.

Vers. 11 and 12. Elijah's Departure from this World. (*a*) The mode in which he was taken away by God; (*b*) cause and aim of this removal (see the *Exeget.* and *Histor.* sections).—Ver. 11. **They still went on and talked,** certainly not about a temporal inheritance nor about anything temporal at all, or any worldly affairs, but about God and eternity, life and death, rest after labor, the eternal Sabbath. How consoling it is, in the last days and hours, to have a friend with whom one can hold such a conversation, and how elevating for him who must still remain in the world, to hear words from the mouth of the departing one, which sound already as if from the other world.—STARKE: "Blessed is that servant whom his Lord, when He cometh, shall find so doing" (*i. e.*, watching. Matt. xxiv. 46).—THE SAME: Pious Christians ought to remain faithful to one another in life and in death, and not to separate until God separates them by earthly death. . . . . At our death we ought to be glad to have faithful Christians about us, and be glad to converse with them and to entrust our souls with our Heavenly Father in the midst of their song and prayer.—We shall not, indeed, pass out of this world as Elijah did, without tasting the death of the body, but we shall be received into heaven, for we trust in Him who said: "I go to prepare a place for you;" and: "I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me" (John xiv. 2; xii. 21).—In storm and whirlwind Elijah was taken away, just as his life, outwardly, had been a storm-tossed one. This last storm, however, brought him to eternal rest and eternal peace. So still, in our day, human life is often stormy, but when it is led in and with God and directed by Him, eternal sunshine follows the storm of time, there, where there is no suffering or crying any more, and where God will wipe away all tears from our eyes. There is rest prepared there for all who have fought the good fight of faith.—MENKEN: He who could not here gain any taste for heavenly things, who his whole life long only grubbed in the earth like an earthworm, can he hope to pass away toward heaven with joy? Our life and death lie in the hands of the Almighty, who takes one away in storm and whirlwind and another in the enjoyment of happiness and pleasure. Thou knowest not when and where and how thou shalt die, therefore pray: let me set my house in order in time, that I may be ready at all times, and say continually in all circumstances: O Lord! dispose of me as Thou wilt.—Ver. 12. Elisha's Exclamation. (*a*) **My father, my father!** (An exclamation which does no less honor to Elisha than to Elijah. If such an exclamation from an equally full heart might only follow every teacher from every one of his pupils, and every shepherd of souls from every one of the souls entrusted to him!) (*b*) **The chariot of Israel and the horsemen thereof.** (Elisha does not forget what the entire people has lost in Elijah, in the thought of what his master has been to himself. *One* such man as Elijah is more than equivalent to an entire army. Such was Luther for the German people. Lord, send us one such man in this time of apostasy and unbelief.)—STARKE: If God takes away faithful teachers out of the world, it ought justly to touch our hearts and to fill us with pain, but we ought also to hope that He will not leave us desolate (John xiv. 18), and to pray diligently: Lord, send faithful laborers into Thy vineyard.

Vers. 13–25. The three significant Signs which confirm Elisha as Prophet and Successor of Elijah. The sign (*a*) of his path-making, (*b*) of his preserving and conserving, and (*c*) of his avenging work (see *Historical*, § 6).—Vers. 13–15. KRUMMACHER: The Bequest. (*a*) Elisha with Elijah's mantle, (*b*) with Elijah's God, (*c*) with Elijah's spirit, (*d*) with Elijah's office.—Vers. 13–18. Elisha's Return to the Sons of the Prophets. (*a*) What he brings with him (the mantle of Elijah as a precious souvenir and significant sign—with the sign, however, the thing itself. The spirit of Elijah rests upon him, and by virtue of this spirit he makes a path for himself through the stream of the Jordan. How many a one is in possession of a prophet's mantle, but lacks the prophetical spirit! He who has not this spirit is not fit and capable for the prophetical office; it is given, however, to him who earnestly prays for it. Luke xi. 13). (*b*) The manner in which they receive him. (They go to meet him and evince their respect for him, because he had shown by his first act, which was also the last one of Elijah, and which they themselves had seen, that he is appointed by God to be Elijah's successor. At the same time, however, they did not forget their former father and master, and would not let themselves be dissuaded from seeking for him. These sons of the prophets are, therefore, a type of true and noble fidelity, and they teach us by their deed that to which Hebr. xiii. 7 exhorts us.—Vers. 16–18. How many, especially young and inexperienced persons, will not be dissuaded from their opinions, views, and doubts, and will not heed the words of their teachers and parents, who have the best intentions toward them, and far more experience; they must become wise by bitter experience, and then hear to their shame: **Did I not say unto you?**—HALL: Nothing makes a man wise better than to tire himself out in prosecuting his own courses and yet to fail of his object.—Vers. 13–15. It was not the mantle but the spirit of Elijah, by virtue of which Elisha divided the water and went through the Jordan. So also now, the coat of Christ does not help us to go through life unharmed and holy, but only His spirit, which He has promised to those who believe on Him from the heart. He who has not the spirit of Christ is not His (Rom. viii. 9).—STARKE: We may well preserve relics of holy people, but we must not worship them.

Vers. 19–25. Elisha's Reception at Jericho and Bethel. In the former place they come to meet him with confidence and respect, in the latter with derision and contempt. Thus he has to experience, at the very commencement of his course as a prophet, what is the inevitable fate of all true prophets and servants of God; they are sought and honored and loved by some, rejected, despised, and hated by others. So it was with the Lord himself—His whole life long, until His end upon the cross (Luke xxiii. 39 *sq.*); so also with His apostles, as He foretold to them (Luke x. 5–

12). He who enters upon an ecclesiastical office may indeed hope for respect and love, but he must also make up his mind to disrespect and hate.—Vers. 19–22. Elisha's Assistance at Jericho. (*a*) The need, out of which he helps; (*b*) the manner in which he helps.—Ver. 19. God is wont, in most cases, to put some internal or external need by the side of prosperity and good fortune, in order that men may bear in mind their weakness and need of help, and in order that they may not be too well off upon earth. Where nothing is wanting that the place may be pleasant to dwell in, there that comes to pass which is written, Hos. xiii. 6. In the districts and countries where there is no want of anything, and nothing to complain of, there is, as a general rule, the least religious life and the least morality.—When the men of Jericho perceived that a man of God, upon whom the spirit of Elijah rested, was within their walls, they sought him and presented their concern to him. How many trouble themselves about everything that takes place in their city, or about everything which is to be seen or heard, but not about a faithful servant of God, who proclaims the way of salvation.—STARKE: It is not enough to have teachers and preachers; it is necessary also to make use of their counsel, at the right time (Acts xvi. 30).—Vers. 20 and 21. KYBURZ: Would that all rulers, preachers, and others, to whom souls are entrusted, would exert themselves to fill up every spring of evil in the country, or, like Elijah, to heal and improve it and make it healthful. . . . . For this, however, *salt* is necessary, the salt of heavenly wisdom. This does not come in an old vessel, but is stored in a new heart.—KRUMMACHER: In a place where the spiritual fountains are poisoned, and the people receive to drink, from all the pulpits and school-teachers' desks, not the water which streams forth unto eternal life, but the death-draught of that modern babble of deceit and falsehood, ... there there is a more deadly curse upon the land than that which once lay upon the district of Jericho. . . . . May the Lord of Elisha raise up those who shall carry the healing salt also into these fountains.—It was not the natural salt which Elisha cast into the fountain which purified it, but that of which the salt was a figure and sign, viz.: the Word of the Lord, by means of which He created heaven and earth and continually carries and preserves all things (Ps. xxxiii. 6, 9; Hebr. i. 3), which also creates anew the hearts of men, and brings them out of death unto life, preserves them from internal decay, and purifies them from all uncleanness. Therefore the Lord says: "Have salt in yourselves" (Mark ix. 50; *cf.* Ps. xix. 8 *sq.*).—Ver. 21. **I have healed these waters.** The Lord is the right Physician for both Soul and Body (Ex. xv. 26). (*a*) He makes healthful those who are diseased in body and saves them from death; the human physician is only an instrument in His hand, as Elisha was here, for without Him, His strength, His blessing, no physician can accomplish anything (Sir. xxxviii. 1, 2). Therefore when thou hast regained thy health, give to Him before all others the honor, and say: "Praise the Lord," &c. (Ps. ciii. 1–5). How many sick persons travel about to every physician of whose skill they have heard, without turning, with all their hearts, to Him who says: "I give health" and "Call upon me," &c. (Ps. l. 15). (*b*) He healeth the broken in heart and bindeth up their wounds (Ps. cxlvii. 3). We are all sick and in need of the physician who came into the world to seek and to save that which was lost. God directs us all to this physician, and He alone can help us, of whom it is said: "Neither is there salvation in any other" (Acts iv. 12). He gives life and true health, and that man remains diseased in time and eternity whom He, the Saviour, does not heal and sanctify. Therefore, listen to His voice when He calls: "Come unto me," &c. (Matt. xi. 28).—Ver. 22. Faithful and genuine servants of God, who cast the salt of the divine, healing, purifying, and sanctifying Word into the springs of life, are a blessing for every village and every city, unto children and children's children, for whom God can never be thanked enough.

Vers. 23–25. KRUMMACHER: The Judgment at Bethel. (*a*) The cause of the insult; (*b*) the insult itself; (*c*) the results of the same.—Elisha on the Road to Bethel. (*a*) The derision of the youths. (Bethel had been for many years the seat and home of apostasy. "The fathers have eaten sour grapes," &c., Ezek. xviii. 2. As the old ones sing so the young ones twitter. Brought up without discipline and exhortation to follow the Lord, having grown up in rudeness, unbelief, and superstition, these youths had lost all reverence for what is holy, so that they not only held the men of God in light esteem, but even practised their wit upon them. Are there in our time no longer such youth?) (*b*) The curse of the prophet (was no vulgar, rude cursing from ill-temper and anger, no misuse of the holy name of God, but the correct use of this name, threatening with divine punishment those who, in the prophet, treated with contumely Him who had sent him. The punishment itself he left to Him who ever judges rightly, and whom no one may ask: Lord, what doest thou? As Elisha was not silent, so also now a faithful servant of the Lord may not keep silent if young people are brought up badly and godlessly; he ought not to let pass unnoticed their wickedness and impudence, and their contempt for that which is holy. It is his duty to warn them and their parents of the divine punishment. Woe to the watchmen who are dumb watch-dogs, who cannot punish, who are lazy, and who are glad to lie and sleep!) (*c*) The avenging judgment of God. (It is certain, and will not fail to come, for: "Be not deceived, God is not mocked," &c., Gal. vi. 7. The judgment at Bethel is recorded as a warning to us, 1 Cor. x. 11. If God punished the mocking children so severely, what will He do to the older mockers, who seduce youth and incite it to mocking? Though He may send no bears from the wood, yet He has countless other means in time and in eternity, whether earlier or later, for executing his just judgments. Those who mocked the Lord upon the cross had afterwards to call "to the mountains: Fall on us; and to the hills," &c., Luke xxiii. 30; Rev. vi. 16. Nor will those be better off who, now-a-days, exercise their wit upon the story of the cross, however learned and enlightened, *spirituel* and witty, they may be. "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly," Ps. i. 1). ["In vain do we look for good from those children whose education we have neglected; and in vain do we grieve for those miscarriages which our care might have prevented." Bp. Hall, quoted in the COMP. COMM.]—KRUMMACHER: A man in whom Christ has found a dwell-

ing, cannot go unattacked through Dan or Bethel.—CALWER BIBEL: The prophets, even, in their day, were despised on account of righteousness, and the name of God. Be not astonished at the contemptuous epithets of to-day for pious people.—CASSEL: Young people are always ready to make wanton sport of any peculiar appearance which they do not understand. The unripe behavior of the young generation which is growing up, always forms a shadowy reflection of the shallow opposition in moral and religious ideas which exists in public opinion. The separate bearers and supporters of the truth, which is deep, and hence misunderstood by the masses, are, for the most part, objects of blind scorn to wild youth. That which found expression against Elijah has also fallen upon many in later times. He who, in the exercise of his calling, goes up to perverted Bethel, must expect it. [The Residence at Carmel. "He can never be a profitable seer who is either always or never alone." Bp. Hall, quoted in the COMP. COMM.]

C. *The Reign of Jehoram, and his Expedition against the Moabites.*

CHAP. III. 1–27.

1 Now Jehoram the son of Ahab began to reign over Israel in Samaria in the
2 eighteenth year of Jehoshaphat king of Judah, and reigned twelve years. And
he wrought evil in the sight of the Lord; but not like his father, and like his
3 mother: for he put away the image of Baal that his father had made. Never-
theless he cleaved unto the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, which made Israel
4 to sin; he departed not therefrom.[1] And Mesha king of Moab was a sheepmaster,[2]
and rendered unto the king of Israel a hundred thousand lambs, and a hundred
5 thousand rams, with the wool [the wool of a hundred thousand rams].[3] But it
came to pass, when Ahab was dead, that the king of Moab rebelled against the king
6 of Israel. And king Jehoram went out of Samaria the same time [at that time],
7 and numbered all Israel. And he went and sent to Jehoshaphat the King of Judah,
saying, The king of Moab hath rebelled against me: wilt thou go with me against
Moab to battle? And he said, I will go up: I *am* as thou *art*, my people as thy
8 people, *and* my horses as thy horses. And he said, Which way shall we go up?
9 And he answered, The way through the wilderness of Edom. So the king of Israel
went, and the king of Judah, and the king of Edom: and they fetched a com-
pass of seven days' journey: and there was no water for the host, and for the
10 cattle that followed them. And the king of Israel said, Alas! that the Lord
hath called these three kings together, to deliver them into the hands of
11 Moab! But Jehoshaphat said, *Is there* not here a prophet of the Lord, that we
may inquire of the Lord by him? And one of the king of Israel's servants
answered and said, Here *is* Elisha the son of Shaphat, which poured water on
12 the hands of Elijah. And Jehoshaphat said, The word of the Lord is with him.
So the King of Israel and Jehoshaphat and the king of Edom went down to him.
13 And Elisha said unto the king of Israel, What have I to do with thee? get thee
to the prophets of thy father, and to the prophets of thy mother. And the king
of Israel said unto him, Nay:[4] for the Lord hath called these three kings together,
14 to deliver them into the hand of Moab. And Elisha said, *As* the Lord of hosts
liveth, before whom I stand, surely, were it not that I regard the presence of
Jehoshaphat the king of Judah, I would not look toward thee, nor see thee.
15 But now bring me a minstrel. And it came to pass, when the minstrel played,
16 that the hand of the Lord came upon him. And he said, Thus saith the Lord,
17 Make[5] this valley full of ditches. For thus saith the Lord, Ye shall not see
wind, neither shall ye see rain; yet that valley shall be filled with water, that
18 ye may drink, both ye, and your cattle, and your beasts. And this is *but* a light
thing in the sight of the Lord: he will deliver the Moabites also into your hand.
19 And ye shall smite every fenced city, and every choice city, and shall fell every
good tree, and stop all wells of water, and mar every good piece of land with
20 stones. And it came to pass in the morning, when the meat-offering was
offered [at the time of offering sacrifice], that, behold, there came water

21 by the way of Edom, and the country was filled with water. And when
all the Moabites [had] heard that the kings were come up to fight against
them, they [had] gathered all that were able to put on armour, and up
22 ward, and stood in the border [had stationed themselves on the boundary]. And
they rose up early in the morning, and the sun shone [rose] upon the water, and
the Moabites saw the water on the other side [opposite them] *as* red as blood:
23 And they said, This *is* blood: the kings are surely slain [have fought, to their
own destruction],[6] and they have smitten one another: now therefore, Moab, to
24 the spoil. And when they came to the camp at Israel, the Israelites rose up and
smote the Moabites, so that they fled before them: but they went forward smit-
25 ing[7] the Moabites, even in *their* country. And they beat down the cities, and
on every good piece of land cast every man his stone, and filled it; and they
stopped all the wells of water, and felled all the good trees [until there were
left][8] only in Kir-haraseth left they [*omit* left they] the stones thereof; howbeit
26 the slingers went about *it*, and smote it. And when the king of Moab saw that
the battle was too sore for him, he took with him seven hundred men that drew
27 swords, to break through *even* unto the king of Edom: but they could not.
Then he took his eldest son that should have reigned in his stead, and offered
him *for* a burnt-offering upon the wall. And there was great indignation
against [in] Israel: and they departed from him [Mesha], and returned to *their
own* land.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

[1] Ver. 3.—[מִמֶּנָּה, sing-fem. suff. referring to a plural noun, when separated from it by a considerable interval, as in chap x. 26; xvii. 22.

[2] Ver. 4.—[נֹקֵד is well translated by sheep-master. The word was unintelligible to the Sept., who reproduce it in Greek letters. They add *ἐν τῇ ἐπαναστάσει*, "after the insurrection," a detail which does not seem to be well founded.

[3] Ver. 4.—[אֵילִים צָמֶר. The words are best understood as suggested above. So the Sept. (*ἐπὶ πόκων*, either, *in lanam*, or *in tonsuram*, Schl.), Thenius, Bunsen, Bähr, and Ewald (*Widder*, *i. e.*, *Vliesse*, *Wolle*). Keil undecided between this and "wool of lambs or rams."

[4] Ver. 13.—[אַל כִּי. The Sept. and Vulg. take this as a question; so also Ewald, § 324, b: the same as *μὴ ὅτι*—a question implying fear, and expecting an answer confirmatory of the fear. Keil, Bunsen, Bähr, Thenius, all take it as in the E. V.

[5] Ver. 16.—[Ew. § 328, c, takes עָשֹׂה as standing for the first person, and compares 1 Kings xxii. 30.

[6] Ver. 23.—[נֶחֶרְבוּ, they have fought. The hof. inf. abs. הָחֳרֵב is joined with it in the adverbial usage, to be destroyed.—W. G. S.]

[7] Ver. 24.—The keri וַיַּכּוּ is no improvement. We can read וַיָּבוֹ, as in 1 Kings xii. 12, where it stands for וַיָּבוֹא (Bähr). [The Sept. read וַיָּבֹאוּ בוֹא, "And they went in farther and farther, and smote Moab more and more." Thenius and Bunsen adopt this, and it makes the best sense. הַכּוֹת is the const. used for the abs.—W. G. S.]

[8] Ver. 25.—[הִשְׁאִיר is infin. as הִשְׁמִיד in 1 Kings xv. 29; *cf.* also 2 Kings x. 11 and 17. Ew. § 238, d. (Keil). Fürst, in the concordance, takes it as perf. עַד must then be taken for עַד־אֲשֶׁר.—W. G. S.]

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

Ver. 1. **Jehoram the son of Ahab**, &c. In regard to the chronological statements see notes on chap. viii. 16.—In ver. 2 the Sept. and Vulg. read מַצְּבֹת for מַצֶּבֶת, which Thenius wrongly declares to be better. According to chap. x. 26 *sq.*, when the temple of Baal, which had been built by Ahab (1 Kings xvi. 32), was destroyed, in the first place the (wooden) מַצְּבוֹת were burned, and then the (stone or metal) מַצֶּבֶת הַבַּעַל was broken in pieces. It is clear that this last was the principal statue, and we have to think here of the same or a similar one, which stood before the royal palace, and not in the temple. It is to be noticed that Jehoram only removed and did not destroy it. It is not entirely certain whether he did it immediately after his accession, or after the expedition against Moab.

Ver. 4. **Mesha king of Moab**, &c. The fruitful and well-watered land of Moab was especially fitted for the pasturage of flocks (Winer, *R.-W.-B.* i. *s.* 99). The wealth of the king seems, as he is himself called נֹקֵד [shepherd or sheep-master], to have consisted in flocks, hence he paid the tribute in these. Michaelis, Maurer, and others, refer צָמֶר [wool], at the end of ver. 4, to both lambs and rams, so that Mesha would have had to pay only the wool from both; in that

case, however, the rams must certainly have had a different wool from the sheep, which cannot be proved. Ewald and Thenius make it only refer to the אֵילִים, mentioned last before it, so that the sense is, since כַּר is used especially for a fatted lamb, that the lambs were given alive for food, but that from the rams only the wool or the fleeces were given up. The tribute was, in any case, a very considerable one; but this does not justify the conclusion that it was paid only on every change of government (Clericus). There is no doubt that we have to regard it as a regular annual tribute (*cf.* Isai. xvi. 1). At the division of the kingdom, Judah took Edom and Israel Moab. As early as the time of Ahaziah the Moabites had declared their independence of Israel (chap. i. 1); as he, however, soon fell sick, and did not reign for even two full years, it remained for Jehoram to try to resubjugate the rebels, and to retain them in tributary subjection. [In the year 1869 a basalt column, three feet high by one and a half feet wide, and one and a half feet thick, was discovered near *Dibon*, in Moab, on which was an inscription running in the name of Mesha and detailing his acts, especially the conquests made, and the temples built, by him. It was broken, through the jealousy and suspicion of the Arabs, before it could be removed, or a copy taken of it. Nothing remains but fragments. There are, therefore, several gaps in the inscription as we now possess it. It refers to the oppression of Moab by Israel. Omri is the king mentioned as having afflicted Moab, "because Chemosh was angry with the king [of Moab]." A gap destroys the names of kings of Israel who reigned "for forty years." The reference which is thus lost would be of the highest value for determining the date of the inscription. It goes on to say that Chemosh became gracious again in the days of Mesha, so that the king gained victories over Israel. Chemosh told him to take Nebo. He took it, and sacrificed seven thousand of its inhabitants to Ashtor-Chemosh, and took the vessels of Jehovah and offered them to Chemosh. The last part of the inscription is so fragmentary as to be hardly intelligible. As usual in such inscriptions, only the king's victories, and not his defeats, are mentioned. *Cf.* Art. "Writing;" Smith's *Dict. Bib.*, Am. ed.—W. G. S.]

Ver. 6. **And king Jehoram went out of Samaria the same time,** &c. That is, at the time when he became king, and Mesha refused him the tribute.—**He numbered,** or mustered, *i. e.*, he brought together, a large army, by a levy of men throughout all Israel who were capable of bearing arms; but he addressed himself to Jehoshaphat at the same time, in order to be so much the more certain of attaining his object, and the latter then entered into an alliance with him. *Cf.* on ver. 7, the remarks on 1 Kings xxii. 4. The combined army could advance by the "way" (ver. 8) over the Jordan, and then along the eastern side of the Dead Sea, and so fall upon Moab from the north; or it could march down on this side of the Jordan and the Dead Sea, as far as the southern extremity of the latter, and then force its way into Moab from the south through a portion of the land of Edom. Jehoshaphat decided in favor of the latter road, although it was longer and beset with more difficulties than the other, chiefly, we may well believe, because they could then call the king of Edom with his army to their assistance, and make sure that he did not profit by the opportunity and make war upon them himself. Perhaps they also thought that Moab could be more easily surprised from the south. [The fortifications of the Moabites were on their northern boundary. On the south they relied upon the natural obstacles to the advance of a hostile army. On the northern route moreover, the armies of Israel would have been exposed to an attack from the Syrians, who were in a disposition to seize eagerly upon any such opportunity.—W. G. S.] Edom had at this time no king of its own, but a governor appointed by Jehoshaphat (1 Kings xxii. 48). The **seven days' journey** (ver. 9) cannot be understood of the distance from Jerusalem, which is only about sixty miles, for the king of Edom had already joined the two other kings with his army [*i. e.*, it is said that the three kings wandered seven days' journey, so that the time must be reckoned after their junction; but the king of Edom would not go to Jerusalem to meet them, and then march back again. He joined them at the borders of Edom, a very short distance from the scene of the distress for want of water.—W. G. S.]. More probably "they suffered for seven days from want of water in the desert-region to the south of the Dead Sea" (Ewald). For a more particular description of this region, see Keil on the passage. כִּי in ver. 10 is not equivalent to "for;" but it serves either to intensify the assertion: "Alas! for Jehovah," &c. (Keil, De Wette), or its only use is to introduce the assertion, and it is not to be translated (Luther, Thenius), as in Isai. xv. 1.

Ver. 11. **But Jehoshaphat said,** &c. *Cf.* 1 Kings xxii. 5–7. As in that case, Jehoshaphat desires to hear *a prophet of Jehovah*, *i. e.*, a true prophet, not a pretended one, a prophet of Ahab. That which Jehoram himself did not know was known by one of his servants, *i. e.*, no doubt one of his chief officers, who was, perhaps, like Obadiah (1 Kings xviii. 3), secretly a friend of the prophet.—**Which poured water,** &c., *i. e.*, who "was about Elijah daily as his servant, and who is certainly the most reliable prophet since he is gone" (Thenius).—It is clear from the definite declaration of Jehoshaphat (ver. 12), that the reputation of Elisha had extended already to Judah. It is very significant that the three kings did not summon him to them, but themselves went down to him. Probably "the tents of the kings were set upon an eminence so as to overlook the encampment" (Thenius). The inference which Josephus affirms, that the prophet had his tent outside the encampment, and at some distance from it, is not justified by the words.

Ver. 13. **And Elisha said unto the king of Israel,** &c. The prophet addresses himself to Jehoram because he is the principal person here, through whom the others have been brought into these straits. The question: **What have I to do with thee?** means: Why dost thou desire to come to me, the prophet of the God whom thou hast abandoned? The prophets of his father were, no doubt, those court-prophets, at whose head Zedekiah once stood (1 Kings xxii. 6, 11); the prophets of his mother Jezebel can have been only Baal-prophets (1 Kings xviii. 19). We see from this that Jehoram, although he had removed the statue of

Baal, still allowed the priests of Baal to perform their functions, as they had done before, without molestation. This is also clear from 2 Kings x. 19. Jehoram does not mean by the curt expression אַל: it cannot help me to go to the prophets of Baal (Rabbis), but (*cf.* Ruth i. 13): Do not repel me, I am not alone at stake; shall three kings with their armies perish?—On the words: **Before whom I stand,** see notes on 1 Kings xvii. 1; xviii. 15.—Elisha demands (ver. 15) a "minstrel" or harp-player, certainly not "that he might chant the reply of God to the accompaniment of the harp" (J. D. Michaelis), nor "in order to pronounce his directions with a sufficiently solemn tone" (Knobel). Bleek observes: "The recitations of the prophets were, in early times, very lively, in a lyrical form of composition, and, as is generally the case with respect to the recitation of lyrical poetry, accompanied by music;" the accompaniment in this case, then, was most probably "the mode of prophetic recitation, which was not unusual at the time." But there is no mention in any other place of any such method, and it is impossible to appeal to 1 Sam. x. 5, according to which an entire band of the prophets came out with drum and flute and harp. That only proves that music was practised in the prophet-communities. It is also certain that Elisha's master, Elijah, did not cause his recitations or speeches to be accompanied by music. The extraordinary means, which does not occur again in the story of Elisha, presupposes an extraordinary occasion therefor. In ancient times harp-music was often employed as a means of withdrawing the soul from the outer world, and of collecting, quieting, and elevating it. Among the numerous places which Bochart (*Hieroz.* i. 2. 44) collected upon this point, it may suffice to quote here only one. Cicero (*Tusc.* iv.) says that the Pythagoreans were accustomed *mentes suas a cogitationum intentione cantu fidibusque ad tranquillitatem traducere.* *Cf.* also 1 Sam. xvi. 16, and Clericus' remarks on the place. Elisha's dissatisfaction, which he expresses in vers. 13 and 14, although it was natural and just, was, nevertheless, not the disposition of soul which is demanded if one is to hear the voice of God within. The situation, the encampment, and the entire surroundings were unadapted for composure and elevation of soul, for we find that the prophets usually received their revelations in retirement and quiet, not in the noise and bustle of the world. In order that he may be brought into the right disposition, may direct his inner self entirely towards the Lord, and may be able to surrender himself to the higher influence, Elisha makes use of the usual means, probably the one which was regularly employed for this purpose in the schools of the prophets, and indeed not without success, for during the playing upon the harp, "the hand of the Lord came upon him." *Cf.* notes on 1 Kings xviii. 46 (Jer. i. 9).

Ver. 17. **For thus saith the Lord, &c.** According to Thenius we must identify the valley where they were to dig ditches in order to collect the water, which otherwise would have run quickly away, with what is to-day called *Wady el Ahsy*, which is the natural boundary of Moab on the south (Isai. xv. 7), and from which several ravines run up into the mountain region of Moab [Robinson ii. 112, 157]. The prophecy itself, vers. 17–19, contains a climax in its two members: The Lord will not only save you out of the present need, but he will also grant you glorious victory over Moab. The words in the 19th verse are not a command, as ver. 16 is: they only declare what will occur. For this reason, in the first place, it is impossible to charge the prophet with commanding what Deut. xx. 19 *sq.* forbids; but, besides that, the place in Deut. refers to the conquest of Canaan, during which no fruit-tree was to be used for palisades or fortifications in sieges. To **mar every good piece of land with stones,** means to throw so many stones upon it that it would no longer be available for cultivation (Sept.: ἀχρειώσετε).—מִנְחָה (ver. 20) has the same meaning as in 1 Kings xviii. 29, 36. The interpretation which Von Gerlach and Keil give to this statement, that on account of the morning sacrifice offered in the temple at Jerusalem, according to the Law, God turned His favor once more upon the people, goes too far. The statement can scarcely be more than a mere designation of time, *i. e.*, as it became light. Before the exile time was not defined by hours. Nevertheless, a reference may lie in it to the fact that help came just at the moment of time sacred to Jehovah. The express mention that **there came water by way of Edom,** makes the supposition inadmissible that, in digging the ditches (ver. 16), "the fresh springs bubbled up under the feet of the laborers" (Krummacher). or that we must think of "subterranean cisterns" (Richter). A much more probable explanation is that "a great shower fell at some distance from the Israelitish encampment" (Josephus even asserts: three days' journey from it), "or a kind of a cloud-burst (water-spout) took place, by which the wady was filled all at once, although the Israelites did not notice the wind, which always arises before a rain-storm, in the Orient, nor see the rain itself" (Keil).

Ver. 21. **And when all the Moabites heard, &c.** In order to await the attack on their own mountains—that is, in an excellent position—the Moabites had stationed themselves, with all their military force, on the frontier. The morning sun arising with a red light, caused the water to appear red, besides which the water itself was reddened by the red earth of Edom (Ewald). That they took it for blood was not, as the older interpreters supposed, a mistake which was brought about by God in a miraculous manner, but a perfectly natural error, into which they would fall all the more readily as they knew very well that there was no water in that desert. The supposition also, which they express in the 23d verse, is not by any means far-fetched, since similar events often occurred (2 Chron. xx. 23; Judges vii. 22); and they well knew what jealousy existed between Israel and Judah, and the inclination of Edom to throw off the yoke of the latter (Gerlach). This supposition rose to a certainty in their eagerness for booty. The sentence in ver. 25 from עַד to חֲרֶשֶׂת is "to be joined with the commencement of the verse: 'and they beat down the cities.' (What comes between describes the devastation of the land, which also had an influence on the cities.) Accordingly אֲבָנֶיהָ can only be understood in its real sense of actual wall-stones, and not of cliffs or rock, and the suffix on this word refers to קִיר

חֲרֶשֶׂת and not to Moab" (Thenius). The city *Kir Hareseth* is the same which is called Kir Moab, קִיר מוֹאָב (Isai. xv. 1), and Kir Heres, קִיר חֶרֶשׂ (Isai. xvi. 1; *cf.* Jer. xlviii. 31, 36). It was the capital city, "the most important, perhaps the only fortification in the country, built upon a high, steep, chalk-cliff" (Keil), now called Kerak, and provided with a fort [see Robinson, ii. 66], (Winer, *R.-W.-B.*, i. *s.* 658 *sq.*). The קַלָּעִים are not those who applied siege-engines (Grotius: *tormentarii*), but slingers, in the common meaning of the word, *funditores*, who shot at the garrison upon the walls. —**Unto the king of Edom,** *i. e.*, toward the side where the king was with his subjects, either because this seemed to be the weakest part of the besieging force (Thenius), or because they hoped that they could most easily draw away the Edomite contingent from the allied army (Ewald).

Ver. 27. **Then he took his eldest son,** &c. Many take these words with the Rabbis, thus: During the sortie against the king of Edom, Mesha captured his son and offered him as a sacrifice. This occasioned such bitterness among the Edomites that they refused to continue the fight, and thereby compelled Israel to give up the war altogether and withdraw. This interpretation is decidedly false. The passage, Amos ii. 1, to which reference is made to support it, refers to an entirely different event, which is not known to us more particularly. Amos, who lived, moreover, one hundred years later, there announces to the Moabites the avenging judgment of God, because they had "burned the bones of the king of Edom into lime." In this case, however, the question is in regard to a son of the king, who was offered as a living sacrifice. The bones of the dead were never burned as a sacrifice, and captive kings or their sons, although they were sometimes executed out of revenge, were never sacrificed to the gods. Even in the darkest heathenism, sacrifice was always an offering of that which was nearest and dearest, and it was considered efficient only in so far as it was such. This is the case especially in respect to the child-offerings of western Asia. It was a custom among the ancients, says Philo, in the *Phœnician History* (Euseb. *Prep. Evang.* iv. 16) ἐν ταῖς μεγάλαις συμφοραῖς τῶν κινδύνων ἀντὶ τῆς πάντων φθορᾶς τὸ ἠγαπημένον τῶν τέκνων τοὺς κρατοῦντας ἢ πόλεως ἢ ἔθνους εἰς σφαγὴν ἐπιδιδόναι λύτρον τοῖς τιμωροῖς δαίμοσι. So also, in this case, Mesha sacrificed, in order to avert the threatening destruction, his first-born son, who should have succeeded him upon the throne; *i. e.*, the dearest and most precious thing which he had, not to the God of Israel (Josephus and Grotius), but to the Moabitish War-god, Chemosh (*cf.* on 1 Kings xi. 7). (*Cf.* on human sacrifices, *Symbol. des Mos. Cultus*, ii. *s.* 241; Movers, *Die Relig. der Phœniz. s.* 299, *sq.*) That the son also, "for his part, willingly yielded himself to death for his fatherland" (Ewald), is not in the text, and is in itself very improbable. The sacrifice was offered **upon the wall,** in order that the besiegers might see it, and fear the divinity, who might now be supposed to be appeased.

Ver. 27. **And there was great indignation in Israel, &c.** This sentence, on account of its curtness and brevity, is quite obscure and difficult. Its meaning has been taken in different ways. Most of the expositors, citing the same phrase, Numb. i. 53; xviii. 5 (comp. with Levit. xvii. 11); Josh. ix. 20; xxii. 20; 2 Chron. xix. 10; xxiv. 18, think of divine wrath or a divine judgment, and give as the meaning: As a result of this abominable action, which is so strictly forbidden in the Law (Levit. xviii. 21; xx. 3), and to which the allied army had compelled the king of Moab, there came a divine judgment upon Israel, so that they withdrew without subjugating Moab (Keil). There is no objection to this in the usage of the language; but the context is decidedly opposed to it. The divine קֶצֶף [wrath] is, in all the places mentioned above, the result of a definite guilt on the part of Israel; in this case, however, there is not a word to the effect that Israel had incurred guilt. That which had been brought about by the allied army, had taken place as the prophet had foretold (ver. 18 *sq.*), and he had represented it as an especially great assistance of God. When, then, the king of Moab did something of his own accord which the Law strenuously forbade, that was his guilt and not Israel's. On the hypothesis proposed, the withdrawal of the army, which was a piece of good fortune for him, would have been even a reward for his abominable crime, instead of being the punishment which he deserved, whereas the punishment would have fallen upon guiltless Israel. Moreover, in what did the heavy judgment of God against Israel consist? The text contains not a syllable in regard to any plague or calamity. These expositors are therefore compelled to take קֶצֶף as meaning human anger (dissatisfaction, resentment, bitterness), in which sense it occurs, Eccles. v. 17 [Hbr. text, 16]; Esther i. 18, and as קָצַף is so often found (Gen. xl. 2; xli. 10; Ex. xvi. 20; Levit. x. 16; Numb. xxxi. 14). Many expositors, then, give to the words this sense, that on account of this shocking crime, there sprang up, in the kings of Judah and Edom, a great wrath or resentment against Israel and its king, as original cause of the war, and therefore of the crime, so that they would not fight any longer with and for Israel, but withdrew, and so compelled Israel to to do the same (Dereser). It is not right, however, to fill out the text in this manner; and nothing justifies us in understanding under יִשְׂרָאֵל here, simply the army of Jehoram. We therefore follow the old translations, according to which עַל־יִשְׂרָאֵל is not, as it is generally understood, a designation of the object, but of the subject of the anger. The Sept. have: καὶ ἐγένετο μετάμελος μέγας ἐπὶ Ἰσραήλ; the Vulgata has: *et facta est indignatio magna in Israel;* so also the Syr. and Arab., and Luther in like manner: "*da ward Israel sehr zornig*" (Grotius, Clericus, Thenius). עַל stands in a similar use ver. 15; Jerem. viii. 18; Jon. ii. 7 [Hbr. text, 8], and often. According to Ps. cvi. 37–39, by the sacrifice of sons and daughters the whole land was covered with bloodguilt, and was rendered impure and accursed. In the present instance this took place by the sacrifice of the first-born son of the king, which the ruler of the land himself offered. They did not wish to remain any longer in such a country, on account of their horror at this deed; they preferred to renounce further possession of it. The words: **They departed from him and returned**

to their own land, certainly do not mean to say: "The end of the expedition was attained, and the land was forced back under the sceptre of the king of Israel again" (Krummacher); on the contrary, they gave up the attempt to subjugate Moab by force.

HISTORICAL AND ETHICAL.

1. The brief and general *description of the reign of Jehoram* brings out into prominence, as characteristic of it, two points. In the first place, that this king removed the statue of Baal, which had been erected by his father Ahab, then, however, that he clung all the more decidedly to the Calf-worship of Jeroboam. From the first statement it does not by any means follow, as has often been assumed, that he "abolished the Baal-worship" altogether (Winer, *R.-W.-B.* i. *s.* 599), for, according to chap x., this worship endured yet throughout his entire reign, and Jehu was the first who put an end to it. It appears, therefore, that he only broke with the worship of Baal for himself, as king, and meant to declare publicly, by the removal of the statue, that the worship of Baal was not the prevailing state-religion. This was, at all events, a step towards improvement, yet without especial value; for, if the fear of the living God of Israel, and the conviction of the absolute repulsiveness of idol-worship had led him to this course, then he could not possibly have allowed idolatry to continue in its complete development. That he persevered so firmly in maintaining the institutions of Jeroboam, was brought about by the same cause as in the case of all his predecessors: the existence of the kingdom, separate from Judah, was conditioned upon these institutions (see 1 Kings xii. *Hist.* § 1). It is therefore very probable that they were rather political motives and considerations than anything else which prompted him to the removal of the statue. By means of Elijah and the schools of the prophets, a large portion, and that, too, the best portion, of the people had already been won over to a disposition hostile to the worship of Baal, so that from that side danger might arise for the house of Ahab, which had introduced this worship of idols, as, in fact, at a later time, this danger became a reality through Jehu (chap. ix.). Jehoram, therefore, for his own part, renounced the worship of Baal, and desisted from all persecutions of the opponents of the same; but he still tolerated it for the sake of his mother, the fanatically idolatrous Jezebel, if for no other reason. His policy of government was therefore a half-way one, and for that reason an ineffective one. Indecision, want of firmness, and a disposition to do everything only half-way, are the characteristics which present themselves prominently, in many ways, throughout his entire behavior, as will be shown still further, below.

2. *King Jehoshaphat* appears here just as in 1 Kings xxii. He yielded to the request of Jehoram, in spite of the unsuccessful results of his undertakings with Ahab and Ahaziah, and in spite of the warning of the prophet Jehu not to help the apostates (2 Chron. xix. 2), probably influenced by the conviction that the war against rebellious Moab was a necessary and just one, and was also in the interest of Judah. The restless Moabites had always had a disposition hostile to all the people of Israel (Deut. xxiii. 4–6). They had already once entered into an alliance with the Ammonites against Jehoshaphat (2 Chron xx.), and were, therefore, dangerous neighbors for Judah: to permit them to become independent would have been only to make this danger greater. It was in the highest degree important for both kingdoms, on general principles, to hold the different kings who had been tributary since David's time in subjection, since every defection or rebellion which succeeded would only have encouraged and stimulated to another. The restoration of the ancient greatness and glory of the united kingdom, which Jehoshaphat was striving for (see above on 1 Kings xxii. 41 *sq.*), would have become more and more improbable. His behavior during the expedition stands in strong contrast with that of Jehoram. The latter does not know what to do in the time of need; he mourns and complains despairingly, while Jehoshaphat, the god-fearing, does not lose dignity and composure; he desires that the Lord should be inquired of, and he relies upon His help and counsel. The old expositors thought that he ought to have inquired of the Lord *before* the expedition, and that it was because he did not do this that he too came into so great distress. But Elisha is so far from giving utterance to any blame against him, that he declares, on the other hand, that it is only on his account that he is willing to, and will, answer and give counsel. The tendency of the whole story is to show how Jehovah, for the sake of the one king who is faithful to Him, saves the two others, in order that both they and the entire army may see that this God alone is mighty, and that victory comes from Him (Ps. lxii. 11 [Hbr. 12]; Prov. xxi. 31).

3. We see *Elisha* here, for the first time, step out face to face with kings, and interfere in the fortunes of the entire nation. Here too he maintains himself as one on whom Elijah's spirit rests (chap. ii. 15), and not alone as the one who had poured water on his hands. Without the orders or the knowledge of the king, he joins the toilsome expedition, and shares all the dangers of the army, by no means from soldier-like passion for war, or from compulsion, but from prophetical zeal, in order that he may bear witness, by word and deed, to the God of Israel, His power and faithfulness, wherever and however circumstances might demand. Now, when need and distress occur, and the three kings and their train, Jehoram at the head, come to him, he knows nothing of fear, he neither allows himself to be overawed or terrified, nor does he feel himself honored and flattered; but he steps forth to meet the wavering king firmly and independently, as Elijah had once gone to meet Ahab (1 Kings xviii. 18), and rebukes his sins, so that the king stands before him, as it were, with fettered hands, feels himself smitten, and begs that the prophet will not repel him, at least for the sake of the two other kings. Köster (*Die Propheten des Alt. Test. s.* 86) asserts that "the prophet appears here, under the control of unspiritual pride and anger, to profit by the distress of the king, in order to hurt his feelings deeply," and that his conduct "cannot be entirely justified;" but he mistakes entirely the nature and position of the prophetical calling in Israel, in regard to which that holds true, which was said to Jerem. (i. 9 *sq.*): "Behold, I have put my words in thy mouth. See, I have this day set

thee over the nations and over the kingdoms, to root out and to pull down, and to destroy and to throw down, to build and to plant," and to Ezekiel (chap. iii. 17): "Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel; therefore hear the warning from my mouth and give them warning from me." It is just on account of this directly divine calling that the prophecy of the Israelites stands as unparalleled in the world as the chosen people itself. Not of their own will or power did the holy men speak, but moved by the Holy Ghost (2 Peter i. 21). In the case of Elisha it would have been impossible ever to say that the spirit of his master Elijah rested upon him, if he had fulfilled the desire of that king who clung firmly to the calf-worship, and at the same time tolerated idolatry, without saying to him a single word of rebuke. The reproof of Elisha deserves besides to be considered in another aspect. Ewald (*Geschichte des V. Isr.* iii. *s.* 487, 3d ed. *s.* 525) asserts: "There is not a single sign from which it appears that Elijah and his school made war upon this image-worship (*i. e.*, that introduced by Jeroboam) in any such powerful manner as Hosea did at a later time. On the contrary, the opposite of this appears true, in the case where this school reaches its final aim, namely, at the reestablishment of the constitution of the kingdom by Jehu" (2 Kings x. 31). He also goes on to say that, even if Elijah himself was not favorable to the image-worship, yet in his time there was no controversy about it in the kingdom of the ten tribes, but that it was allowed to endure among the people. Duncker (*Gesch. des Alterthums*, i. *s.* 404) goes still further. He perceives in the worship of Jeroboam's calf-image "a national reaction against the foreign worships which Solomon had introduced," nay, even "the establishment of the Jehovah-worship," and then says: "That those images did not shock the feelings of the people at that time, and did not give offence to the then existing measure of religious culture, is proved by the circumstance that such honored prophets as Elijah and Elisha had no objection to make to them." These assertions find their direct contradiction in this reproof of Elisha to Jehoram. Jehoram was no idolater, he had even removed the statue of Baal which his father had set up. All the more firmly, however, did he cling to the cultus which had been introduced by Jeroboam (Vers. 2, 3). In like manner the prophets of Ahab, whom Elisha here definitely distinguishes from the prophets of Jezebel, were no idol-worshippers, as 1 Kings xxii. shows, but they were false prophets of Jehovah (belonging to Jeroboam's cultus). When now Elisha, nevertheless, assails the king so severely, when he then declares solemnly, in answer to the prayer of the king, that he will not repulse him, that he will respond to this prayer, not for the king of Israel's sake, but for the sake of Jehoshaphat, who was not addicted to the image-worship, then nothing is clearer than that he "made war mightily" not only upon the Baal-worship, but also upon the worship of the calf-image. How could Elijah, the re-establisher of the organic law of Israel, the second Moses, and his successor Elisha, have been so zealous against the transgression of one Mosaic commandment: "Thou shalt have no other gods before me," and then, on the other hand, have overlooked and allowed to pass without rebuke that other commandment which stands beside it and is most closely connected with it: "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image" (see 1 Kings xii. *Hist.* § 1)? [It is a very remarkable fact that Elijah and Elisha say nothing about the Jehovah-calf-worship. The nation may have been so devoted to Baal-worship at this time that the calf-worship did not deserve attention. If there is any reference to that worship in this rebuke of Jehoram, which is very doubtful indeed, then, to say the least, it is a very indirect and indifferent reference, not by any means in the style of Elijah or Elisha. When they had anything to condemn we find that they did it without circumlocution or innuendo. Even if we recognised in this rebuke a reference to the calf-worship, the difficulty would scarcely be lessened: Why did he not explicitly condemn this worship? Why do we find no direct reference to it in his recorded words? —W. G. S.]

4. The *prophecy of Elisha* forms the central point of the whole story; by the fulfilment of it he is confirmed, before the three kings of the entire army, as man of God and prophet. Although the fulfilment of this prophecy did not induce Jehoram to desist from his course (ver. 3), yet it seems to have accomplished this much in his case, that he abstained from all persecution of the prophet—did not dare to behave towards him as Ahab had done towards Elijah, but took up a friendly disposition towards him (*cf.* chap. iv. 13), and from that time on allowed him to reside at Samaria in peace (chap. v. 24). To reduce this prophecy to a mere foreboding or presentiment, would be to make of the prophet a dreamer and a hero of mere thoughtless daring, and to cut out the nerve of the entire narrative, which even Thenius reckons among the purely historical portions of these books; for it is evidently incorporated in the historical record before us, for the sake of this prophecy. Elisha needed for a mere supposition or presentiment no harp-player, who should raise him into a higher state of mind, and yet no one can call this feature of the story legendary or unhistorical; it is described rather as "in the highest degree characteristic of the more ancient Israelitic prophecy" (Eisenlohr). He *intended*, then, to prophesy and to have his promises regarded, not as *his own* opinion but as *divine revelation*. This circumstance by itself contradicts the rationalistic explanation, which is again repeated by Knobel (*Der Prophet. der Hebrä.* ii. *s.* 95): "Elisha was a distinguished master in the knowledge of nature, for the times in which he lived. In this character he appears when he commands the soldiers, who are suffering for want of water, to dig ditches upon ditches, and thus procures them a rich supply. He seems to have recognised in the district the signs that it contained water, while these signs escaped the notice of those who were less instructed." In order to perceive that the locality contained water, or, in general, in order to make use of his remarkable knowledge of nature, he did not need harp-music; he could do all that without music. If he, however, demanded music when he really relied upon his knowledge of nature, he sinks to the level of a mere wizard. It has been inferred, not without justice, from this passage in connection with 1 Sam. x. 5, that, as was remarked above, music was practised in the schools of the prophets. It must, therefore, have been regarded as an essential means for withdraw-

ing the soul from the external world, and for disposing it to divine things, so that they ascribed to it, as a gift of God, great value. This reminds us involuntarily of Luther's declaration (*Luth. Werke, von Walch*, xxii. *s.* 2062, 2248 *sq.*): "One of the finest and noblest gifts of God is music. This is very hostile to Satan, and with it we may drive off many temptations and evil thoughts. . . . . After theology, I give the next place and highest honor to music. . . . . It has often aroused and moved me, so that I have won a desire to preach. . . . . I have always loved music. He who is master of this art is always well disposed and ready for anything which may arise. Music must necessarily be retained in the schools (N. B. in the higher, so-called Latin schools, not in the common schools, which did not then exist). A schoolmaster must be able to sing, or else I do not esteem him. We ought not to ordain young men to the office of preacher if they have not trained themselves and practised [singing] in the schools."

5. *The salvation of the Israelitish army* from the destruction which threatened it "did not consist in a miracle which overruled the laws of nature, but only in this, that God caused the powers of nature, which He had prepared, to work in the manner which He had foreordained. As the abundance of water which suddenly presented itself was brought about in a natural way by a sudden flood of rain at a distance, so the illusion also, which was so ruinous to the Moabites, is to be explained in the natural manner which is stated in the text" (Keil). [The inference would be more just to say that, as the Moabites' mistake is explained in a natural way in the text, so we are justified in adopting a natural explanation of the supply of water.—W. G. S.] Nevertheless this salvation of the army belongs to that series of extraordinary events which have their foundation in the selection of the Israelites to be the chosen people, and which bear witness to their especial, divine direction and guidance. The Old Testament knows nothing whatever of the difference between absolute and relative, or direct and indirect miracles. Every act of God in which there is revealed an especial, divine guidance and providence, especially a helping and saving might and grace of God, is called a miracle (Ps. ix. 1 [Hbr. 2]; lxxi. 17; lxxii. 18; lxxvii. 11 [Hbr. 12]; cxxxvi. 4). In this sense the action before us is also a miracle, which had for its object not only to confirm Elisha as prophet, but also to serve the end that all Israel, and especially its king, who was tolerating idolatry, should perceive that Jehovah alone is God, and should confess, with the psalmist: "Thou art the God that doest wonders; thou hast declared thy strength among the people" (Ps. lxxvii. 14). This act of God is great enough in itself, and does not need to be made greater, as it is by Krummacher:* "Without delay they follow the counsel of the prophet and dig out the trenches. Hardly, however, is the sand penetrated when, oh! marvel to relate! the fresh springs of water bubble forth beneath the feet of the laborers," or as it was by the old expositors, who assumed that God had miraculously influenced the eyes and imaginations of the Moabites (Menochius, Tostatus, and others).

6. *The departure of the Israelitish army in consequence of the human sacrifice of the king of Moab*, whether we understand by קֶצֶף, ver 27, human or divine anger and dissatisfaction, is a very remarkable sign of the difference between the fundamental opinions of the Israelites and of the heathen. Whereas, among almost all heathen peoples, sacrifice culminates in human sacrifice, and this is considered the most holy and most effective, in the Mosaic system, on the other hand, it is regarded as the greatest and most detestable abomination in the sight of God. It is forbidden, not merely from considerations of humanity, but also because, as the Law declares with especial emphasis, the sanctuary of the Lord is thereby defiled, and His holy name (see notes on 1 Kings vi.) is profaned (Levit. xx. 1–5; xviii. 21). Human sacrifice stands in the most glaring contradiction to the revelation of God as the Holy One, in which character he was known in Israel alone; hence it was to be punished, without respite, by death (*cf. Symb. d. Mos. Kult.* ii. *s.* 333). From the preceding narrative we see how deep roots the detestation of human sacrifice had struck in the conscience of the people. Neither the cultus founded by Jeroboam, nor that of Baal, which Ahab had imported, with all its barbarism, had been able even to weaken this detestation. It was still so strong that a victorious army allowed itself to be led thereby to withdraw again from a land it had already subdued. Von Gerlach remarks, with justice: "This occurrence serves at the same time as a strong proof that Jephthah's sacrifice of his daughter (Judges xi.) cannot be understood literally." On the contrary, Ewald infers (*Gesch.* iii. p. 518, 3d ed. 558) from this very narrative that "Israel at that time yet, for a great part, in its views of the subject of sacrifice, did not reach above or beyond the heathen conceptions," for the ancient Canaanitic sacrifice still had the intended effect upon the people, "as if Jehovah himself were angry with the Israelites for having forced the king to this bold and horrible deed," so that "the army, impelled by dumb horror, abandoned the fortress and commenced a retreat." But, apart from the fact that the text does not in the least force us to take קֶצֶף of the wrath of God, this acceptation is opposed to the promise of the prophet, vers. 18 and 19. For, according to that, it was Jehovah himself who helped Israel to take possession of the whole country, and to pursue the king to his capital. How then could they come to the opinion that the same Jehovah was now full of hard bitterness against Israel, which, after all, had only done what He himself had caused His prophet to promise them as *His own act?* It was not the supposed exasperation of Jehovah at the great victory of Israel which incited the army to return, but the conviction that the conquest and possession of the city over which so heavy blood-guilt and, at the same time, so severe a curse, was hanging, could not be either good-fortune or blessing for Israel. As for the act of Mesha itself, it does not indeed belong to the "most memorable signs of what a king can dare for his people, which has only just won its freedom" (Ewald, *l. c.*); it is rather a sign of a barbarism which violated all feeling of humanity, which was more than brutal, and in the highest degree detestable, on the part of a king who is so cowardly that, instead of fighting to the last as a brave soldier, and risking his own life for the sake of his first-born son, the

future leader of his people, he puts him to death, rather than continue to pay as a tribute sheep and wool of rams (ver. 4) from his great wealth of flocks. In his case, the thing at stake was not so much the "freedom" of his people as his own freedom from a yearly tax, payable in kind. [See note under *Homilet. and Pract.* on vers. 21-25.]

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

Vers. 1-3. BERLEB. BIB.: He did that which was evil in the eyes of the Lord, and many thousands do that with him, who nevertheless sing: "God has pleasure in us. If we do not remain in the footsteps of our fathers and ancestors, yet we do not, at best, go far from them. If we perceive that a reformation or an improvement is necessary, then we are glad to let it rest at the first stage. We satisfy ourselves so easily, if we are only like father or mother, or a wicked elder brother, and do not disregard all scruples quite so much as others. Whether God is satisfied with that, however, or not, and whether He gives us the testimony of a good conscience in regard to it, about that we do not trouble ourselves. . . . If we do in truth tear down a statue of Baal or two, and adhere nevertheless to the sins of Jeroboam and to his calf-images, [*i. e.*] to those ordinances which, for political reasons, have been introduced and established in the Church, contrary to the will of the Lord, what will it help us?—J. LANGE: Those are also to be accounted godless rulers, who do indeed ordain something good here and there, or abolish something bad, and perceive still more which their duty would require them to remove, but cannot bring themselves to do it, from motives of policy which are not pure, or pleasing to God. He who, for himself, abstains from that which is opposed to God's word and commandment, but continues to tolerate it in those who are connected with him, or subject to him, shows thereby that he is not in earnest in his own obedience to God, and that his principles are deduced only from external considerations and relations.

Vers. 4-27. The War of Israel with the Moabites. (*a*) The cause of it, and the preparation for it; (*b*) the danger of perishing; (*c*) the result.—Ver. 4. CRAMER: When kings and lords fall away from God, then their subjects must fall away from them; and when the fathers are disobedient to God, the children and servants must also be disobedient to them, for their punishment, for with the froward, God shows himself froward [perverse]. (Ps. xviii. 26 [Hbr. 27]).—Ver. 5. It was not on account of poverty and need and oppressive subjection that Mesha threw off his obligations (he was very rich) and rebelled, but from avarice and arrogance. Those are still the ordinary motives to insurrection and rebellion in individual instances, or among entire nations. The very ones who have much are often most inclined to divest themselves of their obligations.—Vers. 6-8, *cf.* above, under *Hom. and Pract.* on 1 Kings xxii. 4. OSIANDER: When the unbelieving and wicked need the help of the pious, they tempt them with friendly words: secretly, however, they behave in a hostile manner towards them.—CRAMER: Covenants between believers and unbelievers are dangerous.—Ver. 8. "A man's heart deviseth his way; but the Lord directeth his steps" (Prov. xvi. 9). Therefore, "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths" (Prov. iii. 5 and 6; *cf.* James iv. 13-15).—By which way shall we go up? Only the narrow way leads upward, only upon this is the Lord with us (Matt. vii. 13, 14).

Vers. 9-12. KRUMMACHER: The Expedition against Moab. (*a*) The distress of the kings; (*b*) they seek refuge with the prophet.—Ver. 9. CRAMER: If God did not let us sometimes fall into necessity and want, we should not often think of His word and His servants (Ps. lxvii. 2 and 3 [Hbr. 3 and 4]).—Vers. 10 and 11. In need and distress the state of a man's heart is brought to light. Jehoram falls into despair, he does not know what counsel to take, nor how to help himself; instead of seeking the Lord and calling to Him for help, he accuses Him, and casts the reproach upon Him that He means to destroy three kings at once. In prosperity and in days of good fortune, resisting, and building upon human wisdom and power: in time of need, forthwith despairing and helpless—that is the disposition of the heart of the natural man who does not know the living God, or, at least, knows Him only by name. Jehoshaphat, who had always bent his heart to seek God (2 Chron. xix. 3), does not wring his hands in despair, but is quiet and composed. He thinks within himself: The Lord has neither now, nor ever, withdrawn himself from His people. Therefore he trusts, and asks: Is there no prophet of the Lord here? "He that dwelleth in the secret place," &c. (Ps. xci. 1 and 2).—KRUMMACHER: Jehoshaphat falls into the same calamity with Jehoram. He who goes hand in hand with the godless, and makes common cause with them, must be contented if he is cast to the earth at the same time with them, when the lightning strikes their house.—Servants often know more and better where and with whom God's word, consolation, and counsel are to be found than their masters, who, however, ought to inquire into this before all others.—Ver. 12. "The word of the Lord is with him." It is the right testimony and the best one, when it can be said of a servant of God: He does not preach himself, his own, or other men's wisdom; his words are not sounding brass nor tinkling cymbal, but a hammer which breaks rocks in pieces, and an ointment which heals wounds.—WÜRT. SUMM.: So long as men are free from distress and danger, they ask nothing about the poor ministers of the Gospel, they take no notice of them, they wish to have nothing to do with them, they throw their faithful warning to the winds; but when an accident or a death occurs, then they are glad to see the despised preacher, and they desire to make use of his services and of his prayers.—Three kings descend from their elevation and come humbly and with petitions to the man who once was a servant of Elijah, and poured water over his hands, of whom they had not even known so much as that he had joined the expedition. Him who is proud He can humble (Dan. iv. 34). He raiseth up the lowly from the dust, that He may seat him by the side of princes (1 Sam. ii. 4, 7). So now emperors and kings bow the knee before Him, who came to His own and His own received Him not, who did not have a place to lay His head, who was so despised that people covered their faces before Him, and they confess, to the glory of God, that He is the Lord.

Vers. 13-19. KRUMMACHER: The Miraculous Assistance. (*a*) Elisha's address to the three

Kings; (*b*) the minstrel; (*c*) the prophet's counsel.—Elisha before the three Kings as the one who stands in the Presence of the Lord. (*a*) His zeal for the Lord; (*b*) his independence and fearlessness; (*c*) his prophecy. (See *Historical*, § 3.)—Ver. 13. STARKE: Upright servants of God have an unterrified independence, and speak the truth distinctly to the face of the great as well as of the humble (1 Kings xviii. 18).—Elisha stood before the Lord, the living God; Jehoram before the calf-god. That was not only a difference in religious views and opinions, but also an entirely different stand-point in life. Where there is a life in God, there there can be no fellowship with those who have denied and abandoned the living God; the two ways diverge directly and decidedly (2 Cor. vi. 15). The relation in which a man stands to God is decisive for his relation to other men; it divides him from some by a separation which is just as wide as the communion into which it brings him with others is close.—The children of this world have their prophets, whom they gladly hear because they speak just what the ears of their hearers are itching to hear. These prophets are to be found not only in the priestly class, but also among civilians, among poets, and learned men, in professorial chairs, and on the lecturer's platform. It is true of them to-day: "Thy friends have set thee on and have prevailed against thee: thy feet are sunk in the mire, and they are turned away back" (Jerem. xxxviii. 22; Isai. iii. 12). When thy conscience awakes and thy sin torments thee, go to them and ask them, they have no consolation but that of the high-priest, Matt. xxvii. 4. When thy soul is saddened, even unto death, go and ask them; that which belongs to thy peace in time and in eternity they cannot give thee, for they themselves have not peace.—Ver. 14. He who has renounced God and His word can make no claim to esteem, even though he be a king; fidelity to God and holding fast to His word are what make a man truly estimable, even though he were the poorest and lowliest.—God does not let the righteous perish with the unrighteous and godless (Gen. xviii. 25); it rather comes to pass that, for the sake of a single righteous man, many godless persons are saved and preserved (Gen. xxxix. 5), in order that they may give up their habits and may turn to that God who is rich in compassion and grace, and who wishes, by kindness, to lead sinners to repentance.—Ver. 15. Since a prophet like Elisha called for harp-music, and was thereby brought into a state of mind which was fitted to receive divine revelations, therefore we may and ought to regard music as a gift of God, which is given to us that we may thereby elevate our hearts and bring them into a holy disposition. It is lack of understanding and lack of gratitude to exclude it from the Church. The Scriptures say: "Praise the Lord with harp," &c. (Ps. xxxiii. 2 and 3). Whoever sings and makes melody unto the Lord in his heart will do it also with his mouth and with his hands.—Like every other gift of God which is given us for our salvation and blessing, music also can be abused: "It is a dangerous art, this mover of souls, when it is employed in the service of the world, of vanity, and of sin" (Krummacher).—The world also often exclaims: "Bring me a minstrel!" not, however, in order to lift up the heart (*sursum corda*) and to soothe the soul, but rather to fan the fire of the smouldering passions into a flame, and to awaken the fleshly lusts that war against the soul.—Vers. 16–19. The great Promise of Elisha. (*a*) Its contents; (*b*) its aim and object.—The Lord gives beyond what we pray for, beyond what we understand; He not only saves from need and danger, but He also gives the victory besides, out of pure, undeserved grace. That is the fundamental feature of all divine promises. The Lord not only does not deal with us according to our sins, but He gives us, besides that, the victory, through Him in whom all promises are yea! and amen! (2 Cor. i. 20).—Vers. 21–25. The Fall of Moab a divine Vengeance upon fleshly Secureness and Pride, upon Avarice and Covetousness. This is written for the warning of individuals as well as of peoples. [This interpretation of the rebellion of Moab, as the result of avarice, or perhaps, more strictly speaking, of niggardliness, is not justified by the text, and could not fairly be presented in a homiletical treatment of the passage. We have not far to search for the cause of revolt. A nation which is tributary to another may well have other and nobler reasons for rebellion than to save the amount of the tribute. We have no reason for imputing any baser motives to the Moabites. They may have been influenced by baser ones, but, so long as that is not even hinted at in the text, it is not a legitimate subject for homiletical treatment. The inscription referred to in the *Exeg.* notes on ver. 4 is very valuable as giving a glimpse of the relations between Moab and Israel at this time "from the other side."—W. G. S.]—CRAMER: When God is about to punish any one He first causes him to become secure, proud, bold, and arrogant, then He takes away from him cunning, sense, and understanding, and strikes him with blindness.—Vers. 26 and 27. The disgraceful act of the king of Moab shows how low man can sink and fall when he does not know the living God. By the most abominable crime he thinks that he will do God a service and save himself (Rom. i. 28). Even yet human sacrifices occur among the heathen; how much we have to thank the Lord that He has saved us from the power of darkness, and has caused His holy word to enlighten us. Where this light shines, there the night of superstition flees, with all its abominations.—Men often offer the hardest outward sacrifice more willingly than they do the inner sacrifice, which alone God demands, and which pleases him (Ps. li. 17).—Ver. 27. WÜRT. SUMM.: When we see an abominable crime going on, or hear of it, we ought not to laugh at it, or to feel a pleasure in it, but we ought to loathe it, and turn away from it, that we may not be involved in the punishment, which will certainly come.—We must renounce an object or a possession which is stained by blood-guilt and curses, although ever so great temporal advantage may be connected with it. We must renounce it for the sake of God and conscience.

FOURTH SECTION.

ELISHA'S PROPHETICAL ACTS.

2 KINGS IV.-VIII. 15.

A.—*Elisha with the widow who was burdened with debt, with the Shunammite, and with the pupils of the prophets during the famine.*

CHAP. IV. 1-44.

1 Now there cried a certain woman of the wives of the sons of the
prophets [prophet-disciples] unto Elisha, saying, Thy servant my husband is
dead; and thou knowest that thy servant did fear the Lord: and the creditor is
2 come to take unto him my two sons to be bondmen. And Elisha said unto her,
What shall I do for thee? tell me, what hast thou in the house? And she said,
Thine handmaid hath not any thing in the house, save a pot of [*omit* a pot of] oil
3 [for anointing].[1] Then he said, Go, borrow thee vessels abroad of all thy neigh-
4 bors, *even* empty vessels; borrow not a few. And when thou art come in, thou
shalt shut the door upon thee and upon thy sons, and shalt pour out into all those
5 vessels, and thou shalt set aside that which is full. So she went from him, and
shut the door upon her and upon her sons, who brought *the vessels* to her, and she
6 poured out.[2] And it came to pass, when the vessels were full, that she said
unto her son, Bring me yet a vessel. And he said unto her, *There is* not a vessel
7 more. And the oil stayed. Then she came and told the man of God. And
he said, Go, sell the oil, and pay thy debt, and live thou[3] and thy children of
the rest.
8 And it fell on a day, that Elisha passed to Shunem, where *was* a great
woman; and she constrained him to eat bread. And *so* it was, *that*, as oft as he
9 passed by, he turned in thither to eat bread. And she said unto her husband,
Behold now, I perceive that this *is* a holy man of God, which passeth by us
10 continually. Let us make a little chamber, I pray thee, on the wall; and let us
set for him there a bed, and a table, and a stool, and a candlestick; and it
11 shall be, when he cometh to us, that he shall turn in thither. And it fell on a
12 day, that he came thither, and he turned into the chamber and lay there. And
he said to Gehazi his servant, Call this Shunammite. And when he had called her,
13 she stood before him [Gehazi]. And he said unto him, Say now unto her, Behold,
thou hast been careful for us with all this care; what *is* to be done for thee?
wouldest thou be spoken for to the king, or to the captain of the host? And
14 she answered, I dwell among mine own people. And he said, What then *is* to
be done for her? And Gehazi answered, Verily she hath no child [son], and her
15 husband is old. And he said, Call her. And when he had called her she stood
16 in the door. And he said, About this season, according to the time of life [of
the next year], thou shalt embrace a son. And she said, Nay, my lord, *thou* man
17 of God, do not lie unto [deceive] thine handmaid. And the woman conceived,
and bare a son at that season that Elisha had said unto her, according to the
time of life [in the following year].
18 And when the child was grown, it fell on a day, that he went out to his father
19 to the reapers. And he said unto his father, My head, my head! And he said
20 to a lad, Carry him to his mother. And when he had taken him, and brought him
21 to his mother, he sat on her knees till noon, and *then* died. And she went up,
and laid him on the bed of the man of God, and shut *the door* upon him, and went

22 out. And she called unto her husband, and said, Send me, I pray thee, one of the
young men, and one of the asses, that I may run to the man of God, and come
23 again. And he said, Wherefore wilt thou go to him to-day? *it is* neither new
24 moon, nor sabbath. And she said, *It shall be* well. Then she saddled an ass,
and said to her servant, Drive, and go forward; slack not *thy* riding for me,
25 except I bid thee. So she went and came unto the man of God to Mount
Carmel. And it came to pass, when the man of God saw her afar off [coming],
26 that he said to Gehazi his servant, Behold, *yonder is* that Shunammite: Run
now, I pray thee, to meet her, and say unto her, *Is it* well with thee? *is it* well
with thy husband? *is it* well with the child? And she answered, *It is* well.
27 And when she came to the man of God to the hill, she caught him by the feet:
but Gehazi came near to thrust her away. And the man of God said, Let her
alone; for her soul *is* vexed within her: and the Lord hath hid *it* from me, and
28 hath not told me. Then she said, Did I desire a son of my Lord? did I not say,
29 Do not deceive me? Then he said to Gehazi, Gird up thy loins, and take my
staff in thine hand, and go thy way: if thou meet any man salute him not; and
if any salute thee, answer him not again: and lay my staff upon the face of the
30 child. And the mother of the child said, *As* the Lord liveth, and *as* thy soul
31 liveth, I will not leave thee. And he arose and followed her. And Gehazi
passed on before them, and laid the staff upon the face of the child; but *there
was* neither voice, nor hearing. Wherefore he went again to meet him, and told
32 him, saying, The child is not awaked. And when Elisha was come into the
33 house, behold, the child was dead, *and* laid upon his bed. He went in there-
34 fore, and shut the door upon them twain, and prayed unto the Lord. And he
went up, and lay upon the child, and put his mouth upon his mouth, and his
eyes upon his eyes, and his hands upon his hands: and he stretched himself
35 upon the child; and the flesh of the child waxed warm. Then he returned, and
walked in the house to and fro; and went up, and stretched himself upon him:
36 and the child sneezed seven times, and the child opened his eyes. And he called
Gehazi, and said, Call this Shunammite. So he called her. And when she was
37 come in unto him, he said, Take up thy son. Then she went in, and fell at his
feet, and bowed herself to the ground, and took up her son and went out.
38 And Elisha came again to Gilgal: and *there was* a dearth in the land; and
the sons of the prophets *were* sitting before him: and he said unto his servant,
39 Set on the great pot, and seethe pottage for the sons of the prophets. And one
went out into the field to gather herbs, and found a wild vine, and gathered
thereof wild gourds his lap full, and came and shred *them* into the pot of pottage;
40 for they[4] knew *them* not. So they poured out for the men to eat. And it came
to pass, as they were eating of the pottage, that they cried out, and said, O *thou*
41 man of God, *there is* death in the pot. And they could not eat thereof. But
he said, Then bring meal. And he cast *it* into the pot; and he said, Pour out
for the people, that they may eat. And there was no harm in the pot.
42 And there came a man from Baal-shalisha, and brought the man of God
bread of the first-fruits, twenty loaves of barley, and full ears of corn in the husk
thereof [garden-corn in a sack].[5] And he said, Give unto the people, that they
43 may eat. And his servitor said, What, should I set this before a hundred men?
He said again, Give the people, that they may eat: for thus saith the Lord,
44 They shall eat, and shall leave *thereof*.[6] So he set *it* before them, and they did
eat, and left *thereof*, according to the word of the Lord.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

[1] Ver. 2.—*I. e.*, only so much as suffices for an anointing.—Bähr. [The chetib לְכִי is a late Aramaic form for the keri לָךְ, Ew. § 247, e. The same is true of the other fem. forms, ending in י in this chapter, all of which the keri changes.—W. G. S.]

[2] Ver. 5.—The keri מוצקת cannot be preferred to the chetib מְיַצֶּקֶת (piel).—Bähr.

[3] Ver. 7.—All the versions agree with the keri ובניך; if we desired to retain the chetib, it would be necessary to

change וְאַתְּ into וְאֵת: "And live with thy sons on the remainder," in which case, however, the contrast, which is expressed in אַתְּ, would be lost.—Bähr. [תְּחְיִי is sing. to agree with the principal subject. "If the text is here correct, it shows that even the ו may be omitted in such cases." Ew. § 339, c.—W. G. S.]

[4] Ver. 39.—Neither he nor the other sons of the prophets.—Bähr.

[5] Ver. 42.—[כַּרְמֶל, "Corn got from good, garden-like plantations, which is better than field-grain, and which is either eaten roasted, or pounded to groats" (Fürst). צִקְלֹן occurs only this once. The authorities agree that it means a "bag."

[6] Ver. 43.—[אכול והותר, Ew. § 328, a. The infin. as the simplest, most direct, and most comprehensive form.—W. G. S.]

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

Ver. 1. **A certain woman of the, &c.** It is clear from the passage, vers. 1–7, that the sons of the prophets were not exclusively young men, but were also often fathers of families, and so did not lead a cloister life. Perhaps there was an arrangement for a temporary life in common, or a person might join himself more or less closely to one of the principal communities of the prophets. According to Josephus and the rabbis, the woman was the widow of Obadiah (1 Kings xviii. 3 *sq.*), who, they think, had exhausted his fortune in the provision for persecuted prophets, and so had fallen into debt. This singular legend rests upon no foundation other than the fact that the woman says that her husband "feared the Lord," which is also stated in respect to Obadiah. By these words she does not mean to say that the fear of the Lord had in any way been the cause of his falling into poverty, but that he had not contracted debts through folly. What the creditor demanded in this case, he was justified in demanding according to the Law, *cf.* Levit. xxv. 39; Matt. xviii. 26 (Michaelis, *Mos. Recht*, iii. 148). From the forms of the suffix יכי, כי, vers. 2, 3, 7, and the form אתי for את vers. 16 and 23, which have been designated as Syriacisms, we cannot infer that a later author here interpolated a fragment of his own composition, as was shown by Keil in his edition of 1845. The ordinary translation of אָסוּךְ שָׁמֶן by "pot of oil" is not established by the necessary proofs; אָסוּךְ means *unctio*, not ointment-jar (Gesenius), so that the phrase means, word for word, "oil for anointing;" Böttcher: *quantum ad unctionem sufficit.* Anointing with oil is an essential part of bathing among Orientals, 2 Sam. xii. 20 (*cf.* Winer, *R.-W.-B.*, ii. *s.* 357 *sq.*). She was entirely destitute of the oil which was essential for the preparation of food—she had only oil for anointing. Vulg. *nisi parum olei quo ungar.* The locking of the door had no other object than to keep aloof every interruption from without. The action in question was not an ordinary, simply external, operation, but an act which was to be performed by the command of the Man of God, and with the heart directed towards God, that is, in faith, so that it was to be completed, not in the noise and distraction of every-day life, but in quietness and solitude.

Ver. 6. **And the oil stayed,** *i. e.*, it did not cease to flow until all the vessels which were on hand were full.

Ver. 7. **Of the rest.** Josephus: περισσότερον ἐκ τῆς τιμῆς τοῦ ἐλαίου. The woman would not make use of that which had come into her hands by the interference of the prophet, without asking directions from him. She does not regard it as her own unconditioned possession, but she leaves it to the prophet to decide in regard to the use to be made of it. He directs her, before all else, to discharge her debt, and then to make use of whatever may remain for their sustenance; he desires no pay or reward for himself.

Ver. 8. **And it fell on a day, &c.** The word הַיּוֹם causes the presumption that the narrative in its first division (vers. 8–17), follows the preceding chronologically, and it is not placed after it simply because it treats of a rich woman, in contrast with a poor one. From the 23d ver. compared with the 9th, we see that Elisha often betook himself from Samaria (ii. 25), to Carmel. As Gilgal, Bethel, and Jericho, where the schools of the prophets were (chap. ii.), were south of Samaria, we may suppose that Carmel, which lay in the middle of the northern part of the kingdom, was the place where the faithful worshippers of Jehovah, and the attached followers of Elijah and Elisha, who lived in the north, came together from time to time, and were strengthened in their faith, and instructed by the prophet, as is presupposed in ver. 23. The city of Shunem [see Robinson, ii. 325] was situated in the tribe of Issachar, on the slope of the so-called Little Hermon, so that it was not much farther from Samaria than Carmel, not, however, upon the road from Gilgal thitherward (Winer), for Shunem lay to the northeast of Samaria, and Gilgal to the southwest. Elisha had to go across the plain of Jezreel in order to come to Shunem, and then go on from there to Carmel.

Ver. 9. **And she said unto her husband, &c.** Many a one may have been called or called himself "Man of God," and "Prophet," at that time, who was not such in reality By the epithet "holy," the woman designates Elisha as a real and not a merely so-called Man of God. We have to understand by עֲלִיַּת־קִיר "a chamber built upon the flat roof of the house, with walls which would be a protection against every attack of the weather—not a lean-to or addition on the side of the house" (Thenius). In such a room Elisha would be protected from every interruption, such as it was hardly possible to avoid entirely in the house, and there he might pass his time in quietness (*cf.* 1 Kings xvii. 19).

Ver. 12. **He said to Gehazi, &c.** With regard to the origin and native place of Gehazi, who is here mentioned for the first time, we have no information whatever, neither do we know when or why Elisha chose him for his servant.—**She stood before him,** *i. e.*, before Gehazi, not before Elisha, as Thenius, among others, thinks, and he then assumes that, although she stood before him, Elisha spoke the words, ver. 13, to her through Gehazi, because he "would not communicate directly with her, lest he should compromise his dignity." However, he does this immediately after-

wards (ver. 16). Moreover, there is no instance at all of a prophet speaking to a person who stood before him through a third person. Ver. 13 is to be taken as a kind of parenthesis, in which the omission of that which Elisha said to Gehazi, when he told him to call the Shunammite, is filled up: וַיֹּאמֶר at the beginning of the verse is pluperfect. Elisha wished to make some return to his hostess, who had received him with Gehazi and entertained him so often, but he did not know what would be acceptable to her, a wealthy woman. In order to learn this, he does not address himself directly to her, but directs his servant to ask the necessary questions, that she may express herself with less embarrassment and less reserve. The question: **Wouldst thou be spoken for to the king or to the captain of the host?** presupposes that Elisha at that time stood in favor and respect at court, yet we cannot conclude from this with certainty that by "king" in this place is meant Jehu, whom Elisha caused to be anointed (Ewald). The commander of the army is named in connection with the king as the most powerful and most influential man, and not "because he might make demands in the way of oppressive requisitions" (Thenius). In the answer of the woman, the words: **Among mine own people,** are put first for the sake of the contrast: At the court, among the high and great of the land, I have nothing to ask for or to desire. In: **I dwell,** there lies, at the same time, a notion of a sure, undisturbed and contented life (1 Kings iv. 25; Ps. xv. 1; lxi. 4 [Hbr. 5]; Prov. ii. 21). Perhaps she wished to show, at the same time, that she had not entertained the prophet for the sake of the return, but for his own sake, and for the sake of God. When now Gehazi communicates this answer to his master, the latter feels all the more bound to do something for her, and he says to Gehazi (ver. 14): Hast thou then not observed in the interview, what other thing would be welcome to her? Dost thou not thyself know of anything? Gehazi answers: I could indeed conjecture something which would be her soul's desire, but neither we nor any other mortals could do that for her: **She hath no child [son].** To be barren was regarded as a disgrace (1 Sam. i. 11; Luke i. 25). Elisha now summons her to himself (ver. 15); she comes, but does not go into the room. Out of modesty and respect she only goes **to the door.** To the announcement of the prophet (ver. 16), which reminds one of Gen. xviii. 10, 14, the woman replies, surprised and humble, with the words: **Do not lie unto [deceive] thine handmaid!** *i. e.*, do not excite deceitful and vain hopes in me. [If it were not for the "Call her" in the 15th verse, one would think of the course of the details somewhat thus: She is called—Elisha gives to Gehazi the directions in ver. 13, which he carries out in an interview with her, upon which she replies, ver. 13 at the end. While she is standing by, perhaps before the door, the conference in ver. 14 takes place, when the prophet addresses her himself. The second direction to summon her, however, breaks up the consistency of this theory. The reason suggested above by Bähr, why Elisha commissions Gehazi to speak to her, is a good one; and the hypothesis which is simplest and most satisfactory is to suppose that he carried out this commission, and that he received the reply at the end of ver. 13. This he reports to Elisha, and they hold the conference in ver. 14. The only reason Elisha has for communicating with her through Gehazi is now removed, and he summons her to himself and addresses her directly.—W. G. S.]

Ver. 18. **And when the child was grown, &c.** The illness of which the boy complained, ver. 19, was probably a sun-stroke, which befell him as he was in the open field, at the hottest season of the year, among the reapers (*cf.* Judith viii. 2, 3; Ps. cxxi. 6). The mother carried the body into the upper chamber and shut the door upon it, hardly with the sole object that "nothing should happen to the corpse in the meantime" (Thenius), for she might have provided against that in other ways; on the contrary, she meant to keep the death of the child secret for a while. For this reason she did not make it known to her husband or to Gehazi (vers. 23 and 26). Evidently she had the secret hope that the man of God, who had promised her a son in the name of Jehovah, and had not deceived her, could help her to recover him. In that she carries the child to *the prophet's* chamber and lays him upon *his* bed, she already entrusts him in some degree to him, whom she prepares to bring to the spot without delay. This last she would not have done, however, if she had been given over to "the belief, which was so widespread in ancient times, that articles which had been touched or used by thaumaturgi, possessed miraculous efficacy in themselves" (Winer). She will not undertake the journey without the knowledge of her husband; the cause of it, however, she does not state to him, but answers to his questions only: שָׁלוֹם. She also limits her reply to Gehazi to the same short word (ver. 26), although in that case it is commonly interpreted somewhat differently. In the 23d verse it is said to mean: *pax tibi esto, i. e., vale!* or, do not be alarmed! or, let me have my will! In ver. 26, on the contrary, it is declared to be a simple affirmative reply to the question: Yes, it is well! It is impossible, however, that the same word, in the mouth of the same person, in two instances which follow each other directly, should have two different significations, and, what is more, it would contain an untruth in ver. 26, if it were thus understood. Clericus remarks correctly that it stands like the Latin *recte!* (*cf.* the German: *gut!*) when one does not wish to give a definite reply to a question, and yet wishes to pacify the inquirer (Keil). It follows from the remark of the man in ver. 23, that religious assemblies were held on the new moons and sabbaths, although the Law only speaks of a sacrifice on those days (Numb. xxviii. 9 and 11), and that, for want of legal priests and levites, they collected around men of God, *i. e.*, prophets, to hear the divine word.

Ver. 25. **So she went and came unto, &c.** On מִנֶּגֶד see chap. ii. 7, 15. Elisha showed, by sending his servant to meet her and to salute her, how highly he esteemed this woman. To the salutation of Gehazi she returns only the short, indefinite answer: "Well! in order not to be detained by further explanations" (Keil). She hastens to the prophet himself, and when she comes near to him, overcome by the grief which she had repressed until then, she clasps his feet, certainly not in silence, or without speaking a word, but beg-

ging for his assistance. In her conduct in clasping his feet, Gehazi sees, not so much something annoying to his master (Köster), as rather an offence against his dignity (John iv. 27); he, therefore, seeks to prevent it, but Elisha rebukes him. The words, ver. 27: **Let her alone, for . . . hath not told me,** do not mean, "We must first hear what she has to lament over" (Köster); they rather presuppose that she had declared the cause of her grief and of her prayer for help when she first embraced his feet. The words: **The Lord hath hid it from me,** contain the explanation and excuse for his not having come to Shunem to prevent the death of the child. [It is a better explanation, that the mother, in excess of grief, says nothing at first, and that Elisha commands Gehazi to allow her to collect herself and tell the trouble, which he as yet is ignorant of. The idea that the prophet ordinarily would know of an impending calamity and hasten to prevent it, is objectionable on many accounts. We must rather compare places like 2 Sam. vii. 3 *sq.*, which show the fallibility of the prophetic knowledge and judgment. See notes on ver. 29.—W. G. S.] The stricken mother then repeats to the prophet his own promise (ver. 16), meaning to say thereby, at the same time: I did not complain of my childlessness and did not demand a son; now, however, I am more unhappy than before, for it is better never to have a child than to have one and lose it.

Ver. 29. **Then he said to Gehazi, &c.** The grief and the lamentation of the woman moved the compassionate heart of the prophet so much, that he desired to bring her relief as soon as possible. He therefore commanded his servant to make himself ready for a journey (Luke xii. 35; Acts xii. 8; Jerem. i. 17), and said: **Take my staff in thine hand, and go thy way: and lay my staff upon the face of the child.** The staff of the prophet is not, of course, his travelling staff, but, like the staff (sceptre) of a king, the badge of the prophetical gift which he had received from God, *i. e.*, of might and strength. Moses, the prototype of all prophets, was instituted into his office as leader of the people of Jehovah with these words: "And thou shalt take this rod in thine hand, wherewith thou shalt do signs" (Ex. iv. 17). Moses himself therefore calls it: "The rod of God in mine hand" (Ex. xvii. 5, 9), or: "The rod from before the Lord" (Num. xx. 8, 9), *cf.* notes on chap. ii. 8. Elisha, in that he gives his prophet's staff into the hand of Gehazi, commissions him to execute a prophetical act in his stead; by means of the divine power, of which the staff was the symbol, he is to awaken the child out of the death-sleep. He is to lay it upon the face of the child, because death had fallen upon him through the head (ver. 19), and because life shows itself first of all in the face. The question why Elisha gave such a commission to his servant at all, is answered by the intervening clause in ver. 29: **If thou meet any man salute him not, &c.** These words are often understood to mean that Gehazi is to guard himself from all distraction, fix his thoughts only upon God and the commission which had been entrusted to him, and sink his soul in prayer. This sense, however, cannot by any means be established; and why should the prophet, if he wished to say this, not have expressed it distinctly, and not in a roundabout way? To refrain from saluting is by no means the same thing as to lose one's self in prayer. It is well known that salutations are far more ceremonious in the Orient than with us, and that, *e. g.*, inferiors always remain standing until persons of higher rank pass by (*cf.* Luke x. 4, and Lightfoot on the passage; Winer, *R.-W.-B.*, i. s. 501), whereby delay was often occasioned. Elisha commands his servant, in the first place, to start without delay, and then not to tarry at all by the way. This command to hasten can scarcely have had any other ground than that he hoped, in spite of the declaration of the woman, that life had not yet entirely left the child, and that utter decease might yet be prevented by swift interference. Because he did not believe that he himself with the Shunammite could accomplish the whole journey (six hours) so quickly as appeared necessary, he despatched his servant, or at least sent him on before, and gave him his prophet's staff, not in the belief that the staff, as such, had any magical miraculous power, but on the assumption that, in such an urgent case, he might commit the prophetical gift, of which the staff was the insigne and symbol, to his servant, and so make him his representative. In this, however, he was mistaken, however good his intention was. Peter Martyr remarks: *Videtur Elisæus non recte fecisse, qui facultatem edendi miracula alteri delegare voluit, quod ipsi non est datum.* A similar case, where a prophet falls into error, is found 2 Sam. vii. 3 *sq.* The importunity of the woman, that Elisha himself should come (ver. 30), proceeded from the conviction that the boy was already completely dead, and that now not Gehazi, but only the prophet himself, who had promised her the son, could help. To this deep confidence he responds. Every other acceptation of the passage is entangled in great difficulties. Almost all the expositors proceed from the assumption that Elisha knew very well that Gehazi could not accomplish any miracle, although he had his staff in his hand. They state variously the reason why he, nevertheless, gave him this commission. According to Köster, Elisha wished to show himself as the only miracle-worker, and magnify his own importance. According to Keil, he did it in order "to show to the Shunammite and her connections, and to Gehazi himself, that the power to perform miracles did not appertain, in any magical way, to himself or to his staff, but rather that miracles, as works of divine omnipotence, could only be executed by faith and prayer." According to Krummacher, Elisha acted thus in "a pedagogical intention," in order to prepare shame and confusion for the "vain and pert youth," who would gladly have thrown about himself "the grandeur and glory of his master." In every one of these interpretations, however, the prophet appears in a very ambiguous light, for he would have given, according to any one of them, a formal commission, in regard to which he knew beforehand that it could not be executed. The sending of Gehazi, and the entrusting to him of the prophet's staff, took place, in that case, only for appearances; nay, he would have deceived not only his servant, but also the mother who was so burdened by sorrow, and who already felt herself deceived (ver. 28); and this time he would have done it knowingly and intentionally, an hypothesis which is not consistent, under any circumstances, with a sincere and ingenuous character, and especially is unworthy of a "holy Man of God" (ver. 9). Such a deception would be the less to be forgiven, be-

cause the command of the greatest possible haste is added. In fact, this last command is not consistent with any one of the proposed interpretations; it would be, at the very least, utterly superfluous and objectless. As for Keil's view in particular, we cannot see why the prophet should have intended to give a general instruction in regard to the performance of miracles, just on this special occasion, where haste was of such great importance.

Ver. 31. **And Gehazi passed on before them, &c.** In order to explain why Gehazi could not awake the boy, the rabbis assert that he was disobedient to the command not to salute any one by the way, but to make all the haste possible. This is contradicted decidedly by the fact that, before Elisha arrived with the mother of the boy at Shunem, Gehazi had already discharged his commission, although in vain, and was on the way back again when he met the prophet. He must, therefore, have made great haste. Theodoret supposes another reason, viz., that Elisha knew that Gehazi was *φιλότιμος καὶ κενόδοξος*, so that he would boast of his commission to those whom he met by the way: *ἡ δὲ κενοδοξία τὴν θαυματουργίαν κωλύει.* This acceptation has been the general one. Krummacher stated it in the strongest terms. He knows exactly how Gehazi conducted himself in his vanity: "What a ceremonious mien the silly youth puts on, with what pompous gravity he strides into the house of death," &c. Others think that he could not accomplish the work because the mother of the child had not given him her confidence (Seb. Smith), or because the faith which is necessary to such a work was wanting in him (Grotius). All these attempts, however, which find the cause of Gehazi's want of success in any blamable conduct of his, are contradicted by the utter silence of the text. Even though Gehazi, at a later time, showed himself fond of money (chap. v. 20 *sq.*), yet it does not follow that he was fond of honor. In the other case he was severely punished; here, however, where the life of an only son is at stake, the grave transgression which is attributed to him is not rebuked with a single word of reproof or warning, wherefore we must conclude that he did not deserve any correction, but had executed everything which was entrusted to him, as the text distinctly narrates. That he was not able, in spite of this, to awake the boy, was not his fault, inasmuch as Elisha, although he had given him, it is true, the external symbol of his prophetical might and power (the רוּחַ, spirit of Jehovah), yet had not considered that this might and power was a special gift of God, which he might not freely delegate according to his own will—which he therefore could not communicate or transfer to his servant without further consideration. Starke justly remarks that Elisha "gave this command (ver. 29) from some overhaste, without having a divine incentive to it."

Ver. 32. **And when Elisha was come into the house, &c.** The want of success of Gehazi's commission spurred on the prophet all the more to do what he could in order to restore the boy to life. In the main he proceeds, as his father and master Elijah had once done (see 1 Kings xvii., *Exeg.* on ver. 20 *sq.* and *Hist.* § 6). He calls upon Jehovah and stretches himself upon the body of the boy. This latter gesture is described more in detail here (ver. 34) than in the other passage: on the contrary, the words of the prayer are given there, which are wanting here. Whereas Elijah there stretched himself three times upon the boy (ver. 21), Elisha does so only twice, but walks up and down in the house in the meantime. The conclusion has often been drawn, as it has been last of all by Keil, that the difference in the events consisted in this, that in the case of Elijah, the child, at his prayer, "straightway" came to life again, while in the case of Elisha, on the other hand, "the resuscitation took place by degrees," from which we may perceive "that Elisha did not possess a double measure of the spirit of Elijah." This notion does not, however, seem to us to be completely justified by the text. Why should Elisha, upon whom the spirit of Elijah rested (chap. ii. 15), and of whom more miracles are narrated to us than of Elijah, have been able to perform only gradually and by stages what Elijah accomplished at once? That Elisha, after the first attempt at resuscitation, walked up and down in the house (ver. 35), did not take place certainly, *quia illa corporis incubatione nimium laboravit* (Peter Martyr), or: *ut ambulando excitaret majorem calorem, quem puero communicaret* (Cornel. a Lapide, Seb. Smith); it was probably an involuntary result of the great emotion with which he looked and waited for the fulfilment of his prayer. After he had stretched himself once more, with prayer, upon the child, the latter gave signs, by repeated sneezing, of a restored respiration, and then opened his eyes. "Headache was the beginning of his illness, and this is wont to be relieved by sneezing, as Pliny writes (*Hist. Nat.* xxviii. 6), *Sternutamenta capitis gravedinem emendant*" (Dereser).

Ver. 38. **And Elisha came again to Gilgal, &c.** Not directly after the act at Shunem, but once, at some other time. The two following narratives are not chronologically connected with the preceding.—In regard to Gilgal, see notes on chap. ii.—יֹשְׁבִים לְפָנָיו does not mean they lived before him (Luther, Vulgata), but they sat before him, as pupils before a teacher (*cf.* the passage from the Talmud in Schöttgen on Acts xxii. 3). Similarly chap. vi. 1. We have not, therefore, to understand a residence together under Elisha's superintendence, but a coming together and sitting down before him, in order to hear his word (*cf.* Ezek. viii. 1; xiv. 1; xxxiii. 31; Zach. iii. 8).—אֹרֹת, ver. 39, has the general signification which the Chaldee gives: יַרוֹקִין; *i. e.*, green herbs, which may be cooked and eaten; what we call "greens." The particular kind which the seeker found follows with the expression גֶּפֶן שָׂדֶה, according to the Vulgata, *quasi vitis sylvestris*, wild vines like grape-vines, not wild grape-vines. The פַּקֻּעֹת שָׂדֶה are wild cucumbers or gourds (*cucumeres agrestes*, or, *asinini*), also called bursting-cucumbers. They have the form of an egg, and a bitter taste. When they are ripe they burst in pieces if pressed on the stem, whence their name (פקע *fidit, rupit*). When eaten they cause colic and violent purging. The young man took these wild gourds for ordinary ones, which were very much prized as food (Num. xi. 5). The Sept. and Vulg. translate by *colocynth.* Keil also prefers this, because this fruit does not burst

when touched, and so could be easily carried home in the garment and cut up; but the root פקע is too distinctly in favor of the bursting-gourd, which did not burst in this instance simply because the specimens collected were not entirely ripe (*cf.* Winer, *R.-W.-B.*, i. *s.* 447 *sq.*). However, the *cucumis colocynthi L.*, or the poisonous colocynth, also has a remarkably bitter taste—a vine which creeps upon the earth, and has light green leaves (*cf. l. c.*, *s.* 427).

Ver. 40. **There is death in the pot,** *i. e.*, there is something in the pot which causes death. As well on account of the bitter taste (the Persians call wild gourds the gall of the earth) as on account of the effect, which followed swiftly upon the eating, they considered the food poisonous and fatal. Bitterness and death were cognate ideas among the Hebrews (Eccl. vii. 26; Sirach xli. 1). In ver. 41 the ו before קחו is not superfluous, but is in the use which denotes the connection of thought (Ewald, *Lehrbuch*, § 348, a). The meal which Elisha cast into the pot, has just the same significance as the salt which he threw into the unhealthy fountain at Jericho (chap. ii. 20). "The meal, as the natural and healthy means of nourishment, was the symbol of which he made use in order to give to the sons of the prophets the assurance that the injurious property had been taken from the food by him" (Keil, 1845).

42. **And there came a man from Baal-shalisha,** *i. e.*, some place in the district of Shalisha (1 Sam. ix. 4), no doubt the same one which Jerome and Eusebius call Beth-shalisha, fifteen miles north of Diospolis (Lydda), quite near to Gilgal (chap. ii. 1), where we have to think of the prophet as being at this time. According to the Law, all first-fruits of grain were to be offered to Jehovah, who relinquished them to his servants, priests and levites (Num. xviii. 13; Deut. xviii. 4). Since now there were no more legitimate priests and levites in the kingdom of Israel (1 Kings xii. 31), this man, who was a faithful worshipper of Jehovah, brought his first-fruits to the "Man of God," the head of the prophets. כַּרְמֶל (Levit. xxiii. 14), or, in the fuller form, גֶּרֶשׂ כַּרְמֶל (Levit ii. 14), is *spica recens tenera, quæ tosta super ignem comedi solent* (Münster), fresh wheat or barley grits (Keil). According to Hess, a hundred sons of the prophets visited Elisha in a company, and he had nothing more to set before them than what the man had brought him from Shalisha; but this can hardly be correct.

Ver. 43. **Give the people that they may eat.** As the servant, upon the first command (ver. 42), expressed some misgivings, Elisha repeated the order with a statement of the reason: **For thus saith the Lord,** *i. e.*, He has revealed it to me, and He will have it so, therefore, abandon thy misgivings and do as I bid thee. From the words: **They shall eat and shall leave thereof,** we must not infer a miraculous increase of the food. That the bread was not exhausted under Gehazi's hands—that each one received as much as he desired, and that, when no one desired any more, then there lay still "abundance of bread upon the table," to the astonishment of Gehazi (Krummacher); of all that, there is not a syllable in the text. The miraculous part of it consists rather in the fact that, by means of the divine blessing, the hundred men were satisfied with the little which each received at the distribution, and even had some to spare.

HISTORICAL AND ETHICAL.

1. That which is narrated of *Elisha* in the preceding and in the next following chapters, as far as viii. 15, is not a consecutive and connected description of his life, but *a simple collection of the principal acts, by which he vindicated his position as Man of God and prophet*, in different relations, as well private as public, throughout his long career. According to Keil, all these acts "belong to the reign of Jehoram, King of Israel;" but Jehoram reigned only twelve years (chap. iii. 1), and Elisha did not die until some time during the reign of Joash (chap. xiii. 14), so that he lived after Jehoram's death at least forty-five years, viz., twenty-eight under Jehu (chap. x. 36), and seventeen under Jehoahaz (chap. xiii. 1). Moreover, the name of Jehoram does not occur in any of the narratives from chap. iv. to chap. viii. 15. The "King of Israel" is mentioned indefinitely, without his name (chap. iv. 13; v. 5, 6, 7, 8; vi. 9, 11, 12, 21, 26 *sq.*; vii. 6, 9 *sq.*; viii. 3). Why Elisha should have performed all his miraculous works under Jehoram, and not have performed any others during the succeeding forty-five years, we cannot see; on the contrary, it is quite incredible. If all the prophetical acts are collected on the same principle mentioned above [namely, to collect loosely those acts which served as the credentials of his prophetical calling], the chronological order has, of course, to be given up, and acts have to be inserted here which occurred at a much later time. It is also acknowledged that the separate acts are narrated in a connection, which, as Keil admits, follows "the relation of their subject-matter to the preceding or following, and not the sequence of time at which they took place." It is a striking fact that the acts which affect private persons, especially the sons of the prophets, come first, and then that those which affect the political fortunes of the people follow. Whether all the incidents which presuppose that Elisha stands in high favor with the king, are to be assigned to the time of Jehu, as Ewald thinks, is a question which cannot be definitely answered in the affirmative; certainly what is narrated chap. iii. 17–25, did not remain without influence upon Jehoram, and upon Elisha's relation to him; and it is generally true that the relation of the kings to the prophets was not so hostile after the death of Ahab. Ewald further adopts the opinion that the collection of incidents is arrayed according to the round and significant number twelve; he reaches this number, however, only by adding to the acts recorded in chap. iv. and following chapters, the two in chap. ii. 19–25, although they are separated by the third chapter, while, on the other hand, he leaves out the first of all, chap. ii. 14, and the very important one, chap. iii. 16 *sq.*, which stands between those which are counted, because these, he thinks, come from a different source. The theory that these narratives "were recorded in a special work, before they were incorporated into our present Book of Kings," is more probable. The collection into an unbroken line has, no doubt, contributed much to the assertion which has been made by many parties that, in the life of Elisha, "the sacred documents (2

Kings ii.–xiii.) present us with a far greater multiplication of miracles, than in the life of his predecessor, Elijah" (Kurz in Herzog's *Real-Encyc.* iii. *s.* 766; *cf.* Winer, *R.-W.-B.* i. *s.* 321). If we consider, however, that the collected prophetical acts belong not to the brief reign of Jehoram alone, but are spread over the entire time of Elisha's public career under four kings, that is to say, over a period of fifty-five or fifty-seven years, then the appearance of "multiplication of miracles" falls away; all the more as the time of Elijah's activity was much shorter. The number of miracles recorded as having been performed by Elijah, when accurately estimated, was not much less, and relatively was even greater. (On the "multiplication of the miraculous" see 1 Kings xvii. *Prelim. Rem.* § *a.*) Finally, we must remember that the acts of Elisha, which are collected in this passage, were accomplished through the רוּחַ or Spirit of Jehovah, and are prophetical; that they are, therefore, not merely pieces of display of a great thaumaturge, but "signs," which serve to make known and to glorify the one living God, the God of Israel, and on this account have a more or less ideal significance. They are doctrines, presented in and by acts, *i. e.*, symbolical representations of religious truths. To show this in detail is our task in what follows.

2. *The first narrative* in this chapter (vers. 1–7) is meant to show how Elisha helps a widow and her children out of debt and distress. The miraculous increase of the oil, in itself, is not the core and object of the prophet's act (as the common acceptation is), but only the means to an end; relief from distress is the main point, and thereby the act becomes a prophetical one. This first narrative, now, together with the one immediately following (vers. 8–37), is ordinarily designated particularly as having "an extraordinary resemblance" to the one, 1 Kings xvii. 7–16 (Winer, *l. c.*; Knobel, *Der Prophet.* ii. *s.* 96), and as one whose similarity causes it to appear as a merely slightly modified copy of the other (Kurz, *l. c.*). On a more careful comparison, however, the resemblance is seen to be limited to the one general point, that here, as there, help is given to a widow and her children by the prophet, in their need and distress; all the rest is utterly different. In the former case it is a foreigner, a woman who lives in heathen territory (Luke iv. 26), to whom the prophet is directed, and who is to nourish him; in the latter, it is the wife of one of the sons of the prophets who seeks the prophet, and calls upon him for aid. There it was a question of subsistence in time of scarcity, here, of the deliverance of two children from the slavery which threatened them. There the two indispensable means of sustenance, meal and oil, never fail, although they are consumed; here, once for all, the oil "sufficient for anointing" is increased and then sold to pay the debt. The fact that Elijah and Elisha both help and relieve a widow and her children has its ground in the character and calling of the two men as "Men of God," as they are designated both here and there (ver. 7, and 1 Kings xvii. 18). It is a well-known feature of the Old Testament Law, one which is distinctly prominent, that it often and urgently commands to succor the widows and the fatherless and to care for them (Exod. xxii. 22–24; Deut. xiv. 29; xxiv. 17, 19; xxvi. 12; xxvii. 19). They are mentioned as representatives of the forsaken, the oppressed, and the necessitous as a class (Isai. x. 2; Jer. vii. 6; xxii. 3; Zach. vii. 10; Mal. iii. 5; Baruch vi. 37). It is especially emphasized and praised in Jehovah that he is the father and judge (*i. e.*, protector of the rights) of the widows and the fatherless (Deut. x. 18; Ps. lxviii. 5; cxlvi. 9; Isai. ix. 17; Sirach xxxv. 17 *sq.*). Neglect and contempt of them are counted among the heaviest offences (Ps. xciv. 6; Job xxii. 9; Ezek. xxii. 7;) just as on the other hand compassion and care for them is a sign of the true fear of God and of true piety (Job xxix. 12; xxxi. 16; Tobit i. 7; James i. 27). So, then, if anything is essential to the idea of a Man of God, *this* is, that he shall be a counsellor and helper of the widows and orphans, and shall show himself such by his actions. Elijah and Elisha were, in the fullest sense of the word, Men of God, whom Jehovah had armed with His Spirit for extraordinary and marvellous works. It would be remarkable, therefore, if, among the acts of the two genuine prophets of action (*cf.* above, *Prelim. Rem.* after 1 Kings xvii. § *a*), there were none by which they showed themselves to be counsellors and helpers of widows and orphans, and none by which they testified that the living God, the God of Israel, before whom they stood (1 Kings xvii. 1; 2 Kings iii. 14), was a father and judge of the widows and fatherless. Without this, an essential point in the prophetical calling of each would be wanting. The prophet, in the case of both widows, takes up and uses naturally and significantly the last and most necessary thing which there was in the house, and thereby directs attention all the more distinctly to Him who out of little can make much, and out of small can make great. "The naturalistic interpreters of miracles suppose that an advantageous retail transaction in oil took place here, or that there was an increase of the oil by the intermixture of other substances, for instance, of potash!" (Winer, *R.-W.-B.* i. *s.* 322. *Cf.* Knobel, *Der Prophet.* ii. *s.* 96.) These insipid absurdities do not deserve refutation.

3. *The second narrative* (vers. 8–37), which, as has been said already, many modern expositors have considered startlingly like to the one in 1 Kings xvii. 17–24, likewise appears, upon closer examination, to be utterly different from it. The entire situation is different. In the first place, we must observe that the narrative is divided into two parts, the first of which (vers. 8–17) forms a complete whole in itself. It narrates the reception which the prophet met with at the house of the Shunammite woman on his journey to Carmel, what he promised her, and how this promise was fulfilled. The narrative might cease there. The second part narrates what occurred afterwards, after a number of years, namely, that the promised son fell victim to an illness and was restored to life by the prophet. The fact of the resuscitation, therefore, has the fact of the promise for its premise, and rests upon it. The Shunammite appeals (ver. 28) to the promise of the prophet, ver. 16, and founds her prayer upon it. He then also does all in his power to preserve the son of promise to his mother, in order that the promise may remain truth and not become deceit. The second fact, therefore, stands in an inseparable connection with the first. In the case of the son of the widow of Zarephath, this is all wanting. He was no son of promise, and there is no question there of anything

but a restoration to life. Then, as for the act itself, it takes place there directly through Elijah himself, whereas Elisha here commits it in the first place to his servant. For the entire interlude, vers. 29–31, which is narrated so circumstantially, and is so worthy of attention, the parallel is entirely wanting. The similarity, then, which is asserted to exist, is limited to the method of resuscitation referred to in ver. 34 (*cf.* 1 Kings xvii. 21), and even this is not altogether the same. That Elisha followed a similar method was a consequence, in the first place, of the nature of the case—he breathed life once more into him from whom life had departed (see above, 1 Kings xvii. *Hist.* § 6)—and furthermore, it was almost a matter of course for him that he should imitate the example of his great master in a similar case. It is impossible, therefore, to conclude from this circumstance alone that the entire narrative is simply imitated. Ewald, who adopts the opinion that "the passages about Elijah, 1 Kings xvii. 19; 2 Kings ii. 1–18 were written later than those about Elisha" (in which case the contrary would rather be true, that 1 Kings xvii. 17 *sq.* was imitated from this narrative), asserts, on the other hand: "The description, 2 Kings iv. 14–17, is clearly borrowed from Gen. xviii. 9–14;" but in the latter place, also, the connection and the entire situation are utterly different, and that which they have in common amounts only to this, that there, as here, the birth of a son is foretold. This takes place, however, also in Judges xiii. 3; 1 Sam. i. 17; Isai. vii. 14; Matt. i. 23; Luke i. 13 and 31. What would become of history, especially of Biblical history, if every incident which resembles another more or less should be considered an imitation of it, and therefore unhistorical? If any story is free from the appearance of being manufactured, and has unmistakable signs of historical truth, then this one is such, with its numerous details and peculiar characteristic features.

4. *The religious point* of the narrative, and there is scarcely a story in the Old Testament which has a more beautiful one, is utterly lost when we seek it in the resuscitation of the boy by the prophet. We have before us here the total of a continuous, complete, and finished story, which is narrated with unusual care and explicitness down to the details, and not simply the record of a single prophetical act, as in the first and third narratives. The course and conclusion of the whole are indeed conditioned upon the miraculous act of the prophet, yet in fact it is rather a history of the Shunammite than an event in the life of Elisha. The object and significance of the story are not, therefore, to be sought in any single feature of the narrative, as if all the rest were merely incidental; it is rather the whole which here comes into account. Three principal points in it come out into especial prominence: A son is given to a pious, God-fearing woman, who had received the prophet at her house, and thereby a blessing and fortune falls to her lot, which she had no longer dared to hope for; soon, however, a great trial intervenes; she is to lose her only son, she holds firmly to the word of promise, however, and sustains the trial; the son is given back to her again by the prophet, and now for the first time she experiences aright that the word of the Lord is true, and that He crowns at last with grace and compassion those who hope and hold fast their faith in Him. This development of the history presents the course by which, as a general rule, God is wont to lead his children. Thus it was with Abraham, the father and prototype of all the faithful in Israel (Gen. xvii. and xxii.; Heb. xi. 17 *sq.*), thus also with Job (Job i. 2–42), and thus also with many other pious men of the old covenant down to Him who was the beginning and end of faith (Heb. v. 5–9; xii. 2). This story, therefore, is a practical enunciation of the truth which extends throughout the entire Scriptures, and is a fundamental law of the divine economy of salvation: the Lord "hath set apart him that is godly for himself" (Ps. iv. 3). It is He who killeth and maketh alive, that bringeth down to the grave and bringeth up (1 Sam. ii. 6). They who please God are preserved through the fire of adversity (Sir. ii. 5). "All the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth unto such as keep His covenant and His testimonies" (Ps. xxv. 10). The glory of God is the end and aim of the entire story, and the work of the prophet serves, here as ever, only to reach this end.

5. *The resuscitation of the boy* must remain under all circumstances, however we may conceive of it, extraordinary, marvellous, produced by the Spirit (רוּחַ) of Jehovah. Starke, following Clericus, says: "The spirit of natural life was not warmed into life by the warmth of the prophet, but by an extraordinary power and energy of God; and the touch of the prophet, in itself, was as little able to bring back warmth and life as the touch of the staff." No one will adopt now-a-days the marvellous explanations which Knobel (*Der Prophet.* ii. *s.* 96) proposes: "The prophet gave a powder to the boy and thus removed the headache; or, the child had perhaps eaten of some poisonous plant, and the prophet relieved him of the poison by an emetic." The opinion also, which is advanced here, on account of ver. 34, still more confidently, even, than on 1 Kings xvii. 20, that the boy was restored to life by the application of animal magnetism, and that Gehazi was not able to accomplish this on account of the antipathy between him and the mother (Ennemoser and Passavant), must be decidedly contradicted. The prophets of the Old Testament were no mesmerizers, but servants of Jehovah, who "stood before Him," and whose business it was to bear witness of Him in word and deed. All the great and marvellous works which they performed were a result of earnest prayer, and followed upon their most hearty petitions (see above, 1 Kings xvii. *Hist.* § 6). We are not willing, therefore, to adopt, with Von Gerlach, the opinion that "a genuine life-energy was imparted to the boy from the body of Elisha, which was filled with the Spirit of God," for the Spirit of God wrought through the prophets; but that it filled their bodies is an idea foreign to the Scriptures. The question whether the boy was utterly dead, and every sign of life had departed from him, is a very different one. He is certainly referred to as dead, vers. 20 and 32. We cannot, however, overlook the fact that, if he had been dead, decomposition must have set in long before Elisha's arrival at Shunem. If he died at noon (ver. 20), and his mother set out at once, she must have spent six hours in the journey. If we suppose besides that Gehazi went all the way from Carmel to Shunem on foot, and that he returned from there again and met the prophet and the mother on the way, so that these two did not arrive until still later, then certainly more than

twelve hours had passed since the decease of the child. In the Orient, however, decomposition commences much sooner than among us, especially in the warm harvest-season (ver. 18). With reference to the law, Numb. xix. 11, according to which the touching a corpse makes unclean, the Talmudists, as Philippson observes, raised the question: "Did the son of the Shunammite render unclean? and the answer is: מת מטמא ואינו מטמא חי (a corpse makes unclean, but not a living body)." So much at least is clear from this, that they did not consider the boy a real corpse, although they did not deny the miracle. That the act of Elisha cannot in any wise be compared with the restoration to life of the son of the widow of Nain, or of Lazarus, hardly needs to be mentioned.

6. *Gehazi's mission to Shunem*, since it was unsuccessful and had no effect whatever upon the development of the story, might have been left unmentioned. That it is narrated, however, in detail, is all the more a proof of the historical truth of the entire story, inasmuch as it cannot serve the glory of the prophet on account of its entire want of success. It is, in fact, not omitted, because it teaches practically that the gift of the Spirit with which God arms His servants, the prophets, for extraordinary deeds, cannot be transferred by these to others, and that it pertains still less to the external symbol of the prophetical calling, so that not every one in whose hand the symbol may be is thereby put in a position to execute such acts. It was not so much the mother of the boy who was to learn this, for she did not desire that Gehazi should be sent, nor Gehazi, for he did not offer to go, but was called upon by the prophet to do so, as it was Elisha himself. The gift of the רוּחַ or Spirit is not an habitual, permanent one, but one which is given specially for each occasion, and which the prophet cannot dispose of according to his own good-will and pleasure. As it had not been made known to Elisha by Jehovah that the boy was dead or would die, so the command had not been given to him by God that he should give Gehazi a commission for the deed, and intrust his staff to him. Out of anxiety, lest the prophet's credit might suffer if the cause of the failure of this mission was sought in him, it was very early thought necessary to have recourse to an allegorical interpretation. The dead boy was said to signify the human race, which had fallen under death on account of sin; the staff with which Gehazi thought that he could awake the dead boy, represented the Law of Moses, which could not save from sin and death; Elisha, finally, who afterwards brought the dead to life, was a type of the Son of God, who, by his incarnation, put himself in connection with our flesh (ver. 34), and imparted new life to humanity. This interpretation is found from the time of Origen on, in all centuries, and even in the most modern times it has been adopted by Cassel (*Elisa*, *s.* 42 *sq.*). However imaginative and edifying it may be, it has no foundation in the text.

7. *The third and fourth narratives* (vers. 38–44) belong together, because both concern the circle of sons of the prophets. Whereas in the first two narratives it is individual faithful servants of Jehovah, who experience, through the prophet, His marvellous, protecting, helping, and saving might, here it is the entire community of sons of the prophets, that is to say, of those who, in the time of apostasy, form the core of the covenant-people, and represent the true Israel. The two narratives are not, therefore, inserted here accidentally and without connection, but they join on very fitly to the two preceding. They have not the object, however, any more than those have, to present Elisha to us as a thaumaturge and to glorify him: on the contrary they are intended to strengthen faith in Him whose instrument and servant the prophet is. They teach and attest practically the truth of the Psalmist's words (Ps. xxxiii. 18, 19), which we might even place over them as a title, "Behold the eye of the Lord is upon them that fear Him; upon them that hope in His mercy; to deliver their soul from death (vers. 38–41), and to keep them alive in famine" (vers. 42–44). At the same time both narratives afford us an insight into the schools of the prophets. In the same place where the sons of the prophets "sat before him," *i. e.*, received instruction, there they also ate together, *i. e.*, they led a life of close fellowship and communion (*cf.* Luke xv. 2; 1 Cor. v. 11 *sq.*). It follows that this life in common was anything but luxurious, on the contrary that it was a life of sacrifice. How straitened the circumstances were in which they lived we may see from the fact that Elisha had to send one of their number into the field to collect wild herbs before the mid-day meal could be prepared, and also that, later, the little which one man brought had to suffice for a hundred men. From this it follows either that the pupils of the prophets were poor by birth, or that they had decided to live a life of sacrifice and self-denial. Nevertheless, their number was large, and the fact that even bitter want could not separate them from one another and break up the community, is a beautiful sign of the purity of their motives and of their faithful zeal.

8. *Both prophetical acts of Elisha in the circle of the pupils of the prophets* have been referred to quite ordinary incidents. In the first it has been said that Elisha showed himself a "remarkable student of nature for the time in which he lived" (Knobel, *l. c.*, *s.* 95), just as in chap. ii. 20 *sq.* and iii. 16 *sq.* If he had been such, however, he would certainly have known that no one can make a pot full of bitter and poisonous herbs uninjurious by simply adding a handful of meal. Hence the *Exeget. Handbuch des Alt. Test.* believes that the prophet may have added something else, does not tell, however, what this something else was, nor whence he got it. Theodoret observes that it was not ἡ τοῦ ἀλεύρου φύσις, but ἡ τοῦ προφητικοῦ πνεύματος δύναμις, which weakened or destroyed the action of the poison. The meal was here only a natural and appropriate sign of healthful nourishment. The truth underlying the second story is thought to be "that the sons of the prophets were protected by Elisha's wise precaution during that time of famine" (Knobel, *s.* 97). In that case Elisha must have sent orders to the man of Beth-Shalisha beforehand, and his precaution, since the man only brought twenty barley-loaves, which were not enough for so many, would have been insufficient and not by any means wise. Neither does the narrative contain "the moral, that the believer can satisfy his earthly needs even with scanty means" (Köster, *Die Prophet.* *s.* 88), for the prophet does not mean to give an example of the way in which we ought to behave, but he states what Jehovah will do. It is not he who brings about the satis-

faction of their hunger, but Jehovah; he only foretells it and announces it. Jehovah ordered it so that a strange man, uncalled and unexpected, should bring to the prophet in a time of famine the first-fruits, which belong to Jehovah according to the Law (Numb. xv. 19, 20; Deut. xxvi. 2 *sq.*), and He blessed this gift so that it sufficed to satisfy the entire community of the prophets. Hence it follows that this feeding cannot be regarded as a type of the miraculous feedings in the New Testament, and that we cannot say: "Jesus taught on a grand scale what Elijah taught on a small scale" (Dereser); still less can the New Testament incidents be regarded as imitations and mythical developments of this. The Lord Himself, at the feeding of the five thousand, makes reference, not to this narrative, but to the feeding of the people with manna in the wilderness (Ex. xvi. 15 *sq.*), and He gives to His miracle an express object and significance (John vi. 32 *sq.*), such as we cannot at all think of in this case. Besides that, however, the historical connection, the occasion, the persons, all are utterly different, and the asserted similarity is reduced finally simply to this, that through the divine influence a little suffices for many: an altogether ordinary truth which pierces through many other incidents in the history of redemption, which are entirely different from this one.

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

Vers. 1–7. KRUMMACHER: The Story of the poor Widow. (*a*) Her distress; (*b*) she seeks refuge in the prophet, and (*c*) finds it.—Help in Need. (*a*) The woman who receives assistance. (Widow of a God-fearing man, burdened by debt, and without resources; mother of two children, who are to be taken from her; her faith and trust; her gratitude. Such are always helped.) (*b*) The prophet who assists her. (As a genuine prophet of God he does not stop his ears to the cry of the poor, like the creditor, Prov. xxi. 13. He knows that he who has compassion on the widows and fatherless thereby serves God, James i. 27. Gold and silver he has not, but he employs the gift which he has received, and does not stop with words. Go and do likewise, 1 Peter iv. 10; James ii. 14–17.)—WÜRT. SUMM.: Our Lord and God allows it to come to pass that widows and orphans are often distressed and harshly treated in order to try their faith and patience; if they show themselves upright, trust in God, have patience and pray diligently, then God helps them marvellously, blesses a little to them, that they may have all necessary maintenance, and may find it sufficient, and He saves them, at the proper time, from the hands of their oppressors. With this reflection all widows and orphans, when they are poor, abandoned, and oppressed, must console themselves, if their nourishment is scanty, and they are besides unkindly regarded by the world.—Ver. 1. STARKE: A good reputation after death. He feared God! See to it that thou, also, after thy departure, mayest with justice have this name, for all, all must depart, but he who doeth the will of God abideth forever (1 John ii. 17).—He who fears God will not make debts thoughtlessly; but for him who falls into debt innocently God will find means of payment in time.—*Summum jus, summa injuria.* We may be entirely in the right and act perfectly according to the law, in the eyes of men, while we are in the wrong and are sinning against the highest law before God. See James ii. 13.—Ver. 2. STARKE: As God readily hears the cry of the poor and suffering (Ps. cxlv. 18, 19), so do also His servants and children.—Vers. 3–5. CRAMER: In temporal affairs experience must precede and faith follow; in spiritual affairs faith must precede, and then experience follows, for we do not find out the truth unless belief in God's Word has preceded (John vii. 17).—Ver. 5. Whatever a man does in the obedience of faith, whether it appears foolish or vain in the eyes of the world, is nevertheless blessed by God, and redounds to his soul's health.—Ver. 6. HALL: The goodness of God gives grace according to the measure of those who receive it; if He ceases to pour it into our hearts, it is because there is no more room there to receive it. If we could receive more He would give more.—Ver. 7. If means are given thee to satisfy thy creditor, let it be thy first duty to pay him before thou carest for thyself! He who can pay his debts, but will not, takes what does not belong to him and sins against the eighth commandment.—VON GERLACH: When the Lord gives there is always something left over and above; He never merely takes away distress, He gives a blessing besides. He desires, however, that the obligation to our neighbor should first be satisfied before we begin to enjoy His blessing.

Vers. 8–37. God's Ways with His Children. See *Historical*, § 3.—BENDER: Elisha in Shunem. (*a*) The kind reception which he there met with; (*b*) the great deeds by which he there glorified the name of his God.—KRUMMACHER: The Story of the Shunammite. (*a*) The shelter at Shunem; (*b*) the grateful guest; (*c*) the dying boy; (*d*) Gehazi with Elisha's staff; (*e*) the resuscitation of the dead.—The Shunammite, a woman after God's own heart. WÜRT. SUMM.: She loved God's word and His servant, the prophet Elisha, and she did him much good out of her fortune; she led a quiet, modest life, so that she had no affairs at the royal court or at law; she held her husband in honor, and did not wish to undertake any journey without his permission; she was able to strike a middle course, and she knew how to conduct herself so that she did not anger God, nor give offence to her neighbors.

Vers 8–17. The house at Shunem, a tabernacle of God amongst men, for there dwelt faith and love (vers. 8–11), and therefore, also, peace and blessing (vers. 12–17).—Ver. 8. There are always, among those whose lot it is to have wealth, some who do not attach their hearts to it (Ps. lxii. 10), and do not trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God (1 Tim. vi. 17, 18); who have not become satiated and indifferent in their hearts, but hunger and thirst after righteousness, and have an earnest desire for the bread of life. The servants of the Word ought not to withdraw themselves from these, but advance to meet them in every way.—BERLEB. BIBEL: God always gives to His children pious hearts, so that they open their houses and shelter strangers. Though the Gadarenes beg Him to depart (Luke viii. 37), though there are Samaritans who will not receive Christ (Luke ix. 52 *sq.*), yet there is always a good soul which is glad to take the Lord Jesus and receive Him to itself.—BENDER: He who, like the Shunammite, honors and loves the Lord, and is anxious to lead a life in God, honors and loves also the servants of the

Lord, and seeks their society. He does not seek them, however, as pleasant companions, or merely in order to claim their help in bodily need, but he seeks them as shepherds, as soul-physicians, as guardians of God's mysteries, and as messengers in Christ's stead.—Vers. 8–11. The Shunammite urges the holy man of God to stay at her house and to be her guest; she prepares him a dwelling in her house. He who is more than a prophet desires to take up his residence with us. He stands before the door and knocks, and if any man, &c., Rev. iii. 20. Let us prepare the dwelling for Him, and pray every day: Come, Lord Jesus, be our guest! and: Remain with us, for the evening is drawing on. *O! selig Haus wo man Dich aufgenommen, &c.* (hymn of Spitta), Matt. xxv. 35, 40.—Be hospitable! for the sake of the Lord, and with joy, without murmuring (Rom. xii. 13; Heb. xiii. 2; 1 Peter iv. 9).—Vers. 9–10. How beautiful it is when one spouse incites the other to holy works of love, and both are in accord therein; when husband and wife understand each other well, and go on uninterruptedly in a bond of pure fidelity (Gerhardt's hymn: *Wie schön ist's doch, &c.*).—STARKE: Husbands should not restrain their wives from kind actions toward the children and servants of God.—Ver. 10. J. LANGE: God gives, in this earthly life, not only what is absolutely necessary, but also what belongs to easiness of circumstances: a fact which we ought also to recognize with thanksgiving.—Ver. 11. HALL: Solitude is most advantageous for teachers and students (Matt. xiv. 23).—Vers. 12–17. What the Lord says, Matt. x. 40–42, is fulfilled already here, under the old covenant; how much more will it be fulfilled under the new covenant.—The Conversation of Elisha with the Shunammite. (*a*) The question of Elisha. (A question inspired by gratitude, although the woman had far more reason to thank him than he her, for *cf.* 1 Cor. ix. 11.—STARKE: A noble heart does not like to receive a favor and make no return, but recognizes its obligation to return it. It is, however, also a test-question, to see if the Shunammite had received him in the name of a prophet and not for the sake of a reward, or for any temporal gain. The question as to thy wishes is a question as to the disposition of thy heart.) (*b*) The answer of the Shunammite. ("I dwell," &c. She asks no recompense for the good she has done, she wishes to have nothing to do with the court of the king, and the great ones of this world, she has no desire "for high things, but," &c. Rom. xii. 16—a sign of great humility and modesty. Although she lacked that which was essential to the honor and happiness of an Israelitish wife, viz., a son, yet she was contented, and no word of complaint passed her lips—a sign of great contentment. He who is godly is also contented, 1 Tim. vi. 6, and says: Howsoever he may conduct my affairs, I am contented and silent.)—He who is at peace with God in his heart, lives in, and pursues, peace with men (Rom. xii. 18; Heb. xii. 14). —Vers. 14–17. The Lord, according to His grace and truth, remembers even the wishes which we cherish in silence and do not express before men, and He often gives to those who yield to His holy will without murmurs or complaints just that which they no longer dared to hope for.—It makes a great difference whether we doubt of the divine promises from unbelief, or from humility or want of confidence in ourselves because we consider the promises too great and glorious, and ourselves unworthy of them (Gen. xviii. 13 *sq.*; John xi. 23 *sq.*).

Vers. 18-21. Happiness and unhappiness, joy and sorrow, stand, here upon earth, ever side by side. There is no unalloyed happiness. We are not in the world simply in order to have happy days; God sets the day of adversity over-against the day of prosperity (Eccl. vii. 14).—Man, in his life, is like the grass (Ps. ciii. 15, 16). The death of loved children comes often suddenly, like the lightning from a clear sky, and destroys our joy and our hopes. Therefore we should possess these gifts also, as not possessing them, and learn to believe that God's ways, &c. (Isai. lv. 8, 9). The Lord will not abandon, in days of adversity, him who trusts in Him in days of prosperity. He who in the latter has learned sobriety, and maintained his faith, will not be without wisdom and consolation in the former, but will be composed in all adversity.—Ver. 22. STARKE: A pious woman does nothing without her husband's knowledge, and does not willingly call his attention to anything by which he may be saddened.—Ver. 23. Husbands ought not to put any hindrance in the way of their wives when they wish to go there where they hope to find food for their souls, and counsel and consolation from God. Sundays and feast-days are not instituted merely that we may rest from labor, but that we may hear the Word of God, and be edified thereby. This word is not, indeed, bound to any definite time, it is a well of living water, from which we may and ought to take at any time, and satisfy our thirst for knowledge, consolation, and peace. How many there are, however, of those who do not do this even on Sundays and feast-days!—Vers. 25–28. The arrival of the Shunammite at Carmel. (*a*) She receives a kind welcome (OSIANDER: Pious people have hearty love for each other, and each shares in the other's joy and sorrow, Rom. xii. 15), but she conceals from Gehazi that which troubles her heart. (Do not make known at once to every one you meet that which distresses you, but keep it to yourself until you find one who understands you, and whose heart you have tested, Sirach xxi. 28.) (*b*) She is thrust away by Gehazi (Beware lest thou treat harshly sad souls, who are overcome by grief, and who seek help and consolation, and lest thou thrust them away or judge them hastily. Sir. iv. 3: Do not cause still more grief to a bruised heart.—BERLEB. BIBEL: There are many servants who wish to hinder others from familiarity because it appears to them too bold. . . Magdalens are thrust away from the feet of Jesus Christ, and the Pharisees are scandalized at them, Luke vii. 38. Elisha receives this woman in a friendly manner and listens with sympathy. Sir. vii. 38 "Leave not those who mourn without consolation, but sorrow with the sorrowing." Come, in thy sorrow, to Him who calls the sorrowful and the heavy-laden to himself, and who has said: "Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out," John vi. 37.)—Vers. 29–31. Gehazi's Mission to Shunem. (*a*) Elisha's intention in sending him; (*b*) the failure of his mission (see above, the *Exeget. and Critical* and the *Historical* notes). The especial gift which God has given, out of free grace, to one man, cannot be transferred by him to another. Let every one serve the other with *that* gift which he has received (1 Peter iv. 10), for we are not masters of the gifts of God, but only stewards. The

staff of the prophet is of no use if the spirit and power of the prophet are wanting. Do not mistake the sign for the thing signified. It is God alone who can help, and His help is not dependent on external instruments and signs.—O! that we might all say, as this woman did to Elisha, to Him who is more than a prophet, with firm faith and confidence, from the bottom of the heart: "I will not leave thee!" (*Meinen Jesum lass ich nicht*, &c.) Then would He also go with us in all need and trial.—Vers. 32-37. The Resuscitation of the Boy. (*a*) The preparation therefor (ver. 33; *cf.* Acts ix. 40; Matt. vi. 6). Elisha first humbles himself before the Lord, for he knows that it is He alone who can kill and make alive. (*b*) The means of which he makes use (vers. 34 and 35). He does not weary, but continues and struggles in prayer. The Lord does not allow great deeds to be accomplished without battles and struggles, labor and perseverance. (*c*) The successful accomplishment (vers. 35 and 36). Elisha's prayer and conflict are crowned with success. He may say: There, take thy son! and the mother falls on her knees, and may cry: "Oh! death, where is thy sting? Oh! grave, where is thy victory?"—What Elisha did after long struggle and prayer, He, who is himself the resurrection and the life, did with a single word (Luke vii. 14; John xi. 43), that we may believe that "The hour is coming," &c. (John v. 25; xi. 26).—Ver. 37. Genuine gratitude and thanksgiving, when God has done great things for us, consists in this, that we bow ourselves humbly, and fall down upon our knees and say: "Lord, I am not worthy," &c. (Gen. xxxii. 10).

Vers. 38-44. The high Significance of both the Acts which Elisha performed among the Pupils of the Prophets. (*a*) He makes the poisonous food healthful (vers. 38-41); (*b*) he feeds many with a little (vers. 42-44); (see *Historical*).—The sons of the prophets in time of scarcity. They had to struggle with want and distress, but no want could hinder them from entering the community, or could induce them to separate. Life in common, in faith, in prayer, in the praise of God, was dearer to them than pleasant days, and enjoying the pleasures of sin in this world (Heb. xi. 25). Hence they experienced also the truth of the words: "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee" (Heb. xiii. 5; *cf.* Ps. xxxiii. 18 and 19).—Ver. 38. Where unity of spirit and true love call people together to a common meal, there is no need of great preparations and expensive dishes; they are readily satisfied with the simplest food (Prov. xv. 17; xvii. 1).—Ver. 39. CALWER BIBEL: The poor are here, as they so often are, in great distress; the most necessary means of subsistence often fail them.—Ver. 40. Death in the pot! Fear of death; means of rescue from it.—It is often with spiritual food as it is with bodily food; it looks as if it were healthful and nourishing, *i. e.*, the words are beautiful and attractive, and yet there is soul-poison in it, which is destructive, if we are not on our guard against receiving it.—Vers. 42-44. KRUMMACHER: The man with the loaves, Elisha's command, Gehazi's confusion.—Ver. 42. By accident a strange man comes and brings what is needed. How many times that has occurred! The Lord sent him and opened his heart, for, when God has found us faithful, and perceived no hypocrisy in us, He comes before we know it, and causes great good fortune to befall us.—Ver. 43. "Give the people, that they may eat." The Lord gives in order that we may give, and it is more blessed to give than to receive (Heb. xiii. 16; Acts xx. 35).—Ver. 44. What the Lord said: "They shall eat, and shall leave thereof," holds true still, to day; all depends upon His blessing. Ps. cxxvii. 1.—KYBURZ: God can bless a little and increase it, so that we shall find ourselves as well provided for, nay, even have as much to spare, as many who have much and yet are not satisfied, because there is no blessing upon it (Matt. iv. 4).

B.—*The healing of Naaman, punishment of Gehazi, and recovery of a lost axe.*

CHAP. V.-VI. 7.

1 Now Naaman, captain of the host of the king of Syria, was a great man with
his master, and honorable [honored], because by him the Lord had given
deliverance unto Syria: he was also a mighty man in valor, *but he was* a leper.
2 And the Syrians had gone out by companies [in marauding bands], and had
brought away captive out of the land of Israel a little maid; and she waited on
3 Naaman's wife. And she said unto her mistress, Would God my lord *were* with
4 the prophet that *is* in Samaria! for he would recover him of his leprosy. And
one [he, *i. e.*, Naaman] went in, and told his lord, saying, Thus and thus said
5 the maid that *is* of the land of Israel. And the king of Syria said, Go to, go,
and I will send a letter unto the king of Israel. And he departed, and took
with him ten talents of silver, and six thousand *pieces* of gold, and ten changes
6 of raiment. [,] And he brought the letter [*omit* the letter] to the king of
Israel [the letter], saying [*which was* to this effect]: Now when this letter is
come unto thee, behold, I have *therewith* sent Naaman my servant to thee, that
7 thou mayest recover him of his leprosy. And it came to pass, when the king
of Israel had read the letter, that he rent his clothes, and said, *Am* I God, to

kill and to make alive, that this man doth send unto me to recover a man of his
leprosy? Wherefore, [Nay! only] consider, I pray you, and see how he seeketh
a quarrel against me.
8 And it was *so*, when Elisha the man of God had heard that the king of Israel
had rent his clothes, that he sent to the king, saying, Wherefore hast thou rent
thy clothes? let him come now to me, and he shall know [learn] that there is a
9 prophet in Israel. So Naaman came with his horses and with his chariot, and
10 stood at the door of the house of Elisha. And Elisha sent a messenger unto him,
saying, Go and wash in Jordan seven times, and thy flesh shall come again to
11 thee, and thou shalt be clean. But Naaman was wroth, and went away, and
said, Behold, I thought, he will surely come out to me, and stand, and call on
the name of the Lord his God, and strike his hand over the place, and recover
12 the leper [heal the leprosy]. *Are* not Abana[1] and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus,
better than all the waters of Israel? may I not wash in them, and be clean? So
13 he turned and went away in a rage. And his servants came near, and spake
unto him, and said, My father, *if* the prophet had bid thee *do some* great thing,
wouldst thou not have done *it?* how much rather then, when he saith to thee,
14 Wash, and be clean? Then he went down, and dipped himself seven times in
Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God: and his flesh came again
like unto the flesh of a little child, and he was clean.
15 And he returned to the man of God, he and all his company, and came, and
stood before him: and he said, Behold, now I know that *there is* no God in all
the earth, but in Israel: now therefore, I pray thee, take a blessing [token of
16 gratitude from—*omit* of] of thy servant. But he said, *As* the Lord liveth, before
whom I stand, I will receive none. And he urged him to take *it;* but he
17 refused. And Naaman said, Shall there not then [If not, then let there], I pray
thee, be given to thy servant two mules' burden of earth? [,] for thy servant
will henceforth offer neither burnt-offering nor sacrifice unto other gods, but
18 unto the Lord.[2] In this thing the Lord pardon thy servant, [;] *that* [*omit*
that] when my master goeth into the house of Rimmon to worship there, and
he leaneth on my hand, and I bow myself in the house of Rimmon: [;] when
I bow down myself[3] in the house of Rimmon, the Lord pardon thy servant in
19 this thing. And he said unto him, Go in peace. So he departed from him a
little way [some distance].
20 But Gehazi, the servant of Elisha the man of God, said, Behold, my master
hath spared Naaman this Syrian, in not receiving at his hands that which he
brought: but, *as* the Lord liveth, I will run after him, and take somewhat of
21 him. So Gehazi followed after Naaman. And when Naaman saw *him* running
after him, he lighted down from the chariot to meet him, and said, *Is* all well?
22 And he said, All *is* well. My master hath sent me, saying, Behold, even [just]
now there be come to me from mount Ephraim two young men of the sons of the
prophets: give them, I pray thee, a talent of silver, and two changes of gar-
23 ments. And Naaman said, Be content, [pleased to—*omit*,] take two talents. And
he urged him, and bound two talents of silver in two bags, with two changes of
garments, and laid *them* upon two of his servants; and they bare *them* before
24 him. And when he came to the tower [hill] he took *them* from their hand, and
25 bestowed *them* in the house: and he let the men go, and they departed. But
he went in and stood before his master. And Elisha said unto him, Whence
26 *comest thou*, Gehazi? And he said, Thy servant went no whither. And he said
unto him, Went not mine heart *with thee,* when the man turned again from his
chariot to meet thee? *Is it* a time to receive money, and to receive garments,
and oliveyards, and vineyards, and sheep, and oxen, and men-servants, and maid
27 servants? The leprosy therefore of Naaman shall cleave unto thee, and unto
thy seed forever. And he went from his presence a leper *as white* as snow.
CHAP. VI. 1. And the sons of the prophets said unto Elisha, Behold now,
2 the place where we dwell with thee is too strait for us. Let us go, we pray
thee, unto Jordan, and take thence every man a beam, and let us make us a
3 place there, where we may dwell. And he answered, Go ye. And one said,

4 Be content [pleased], I pray thee, and [to] go with thy servants. And he
5 answered, I will go. So he went with them. And when they came to Jordan,
they cut down wood. But as one was felling a beam, the axe-head fell into the
6 water: and he cried, and said, Alas, master! for it was borrowed. And the
man of God said, Where fell it? And he cut down a stick, and cast *it* in
7 thither; and [made] the iron did [to—*omit* did] swim. Therefore said he, Take
it up to thee. And he put out his hand, and took it.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

[1] Ver. 12.—[Keri, Amana. See *Exeget*.

[2] Ver. 17.—[The Sept. join the first two words of the next verse with this one, *τῷ ῥήματι τούτῳ*, because of this thing.—W. G. S.]

[3] Ver. 18.—Thenius proposes to change the last י in בְּהִשְׁתַּחֲוָיָתִי to ו, and it certainly does seem better to do so. This is the reading of the Sept. (*ἐν τῷ προσκυνεῖν αὐτόν*), and of the Vulg. (*adorante eo*).—Bähr.

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

Ver. 1. **Now Naaman captain of the host, &c.** The וְ with which the narrative begins, is used as in 1 Kings i. 1, and does not mark the incident as having occurred immediately after the preceding. We cannot decide certainly whether it belongs to the time of Jehoram or to that of the house of Jehu. In any case it refers to a time when the relations between Syria and Israel were not hostile. That Naaman was the man who fatally wounded Ahab is a mere guess of the rabbis, and it is not strengthened at all by the statement of Josephus: *παῖς δέ τις βασιλικὸς τοῦ Ἀδάδου, Ἄμανος ὄνομα*. Naaman is called a great man in so far as he occupied a high position in the service of the king. The statement: **by him the Lord had given deliverance unto Syria,** *i. e.*, victory, does not compel us to translate גִּבּוֹר חַיִל as Thenius does, by "a man of great physical strength;" the expression marks his military ability. Keil takes it as second predicate: "The man was a general though a leper," meaning that, although in Israel lepers were excluded from all human society, in Syria a leper could fill even a high civil office. This is certainly unfounded, for lepers were everywhere physically incapable of performing important duties. מְצֹרָע is evidently used by contrast, whether the omission of the וְ connective sharpens the contrast (Thenius) or not. He was a mighty military chief, but, on account of his disease, he could not fulfill his duties. "It is significant that he who had helped to gain the victory over Israel, is represented as a leper, who must seek help in Israel, and who finds it there" (Thenius). [**By whom the Lord had given deliverance.** In consistency with the standing conception of the Hebrews that Jehovah was the God of all the earth, it is represented as a dispensation of *His* providence that Naaman had won victories for Syria, *cf.* chap. xix. 25 and 26.—W. G. S.] אַחֲלַי ver. 3, as in Ps. cxix. 5, *utinam*. The word אָסַף *i. e.*, collect, take up, receive, designates the reception into the society of men which followed upon deliverance from leprosy (Numb. xii. 14).

Ver. 5. **And the king of Syria said,** &c. We see, from the king's readiness, how anxious he was for the restoration of Naaman. The treasures which the latter took with him were very valuable; we cannot, however, estimate their value accurately. According to Keil 10 talents of silver are about 25,000 thalers ($18,000), and 6000 shekels of gold (= 2 talents) are about 50,000 thalers ($36,000); according to Thenius the value would be 20,000 thalers and 60,000 thalers ($14,400 and $43,200). On the ten changes of raiment, *cf.* *εἵματα ἐξημοιβά* (Odyss. viii. 249). Winer: "An Oriental is still fond of frequent changes of apparel (Gen. xli. 14; 1 Sam. xxviii. 8; 2 Sam. xii. 20), especially of grand dresses at marriages and other celebrations (Niebuhr, *Reise*, i. 182)." The royal letter is abbreviated in ver. 6, for it could not begin with "Now when." Only the main passage is given here. The letter was simply a note of introduction, and we cannot infer from the words: **That thou mayest recover him of his leprosy,** that the king of Israel was then in a relation of dependence to the Syrian king. The king "probably thought of the prophet, of whom he had heard so great things, as the chief of a sort of magi . . . or as the Israelitish high-priest, who could probably be induced to undertake, on behalf of a foreigner, those ceremonies and functions of his office from which so great results were to be expected, only by the intercession of the king" (Menken). The king of Israel, however, so far misunderstood the intention of the letter as to suppose that he himself was expected to perform the cure; he thought that this demand was only a pretext, in order to bring about a quarrel with him. He was thereby so frightened and saddened that he rent his clothes (chap. ii. 12; 1 Kings xxi. 27). The meaning of the words in ver. 7 is: he demands of me something which God alone can do, so that it is clear that he is only seeking a quarrel. To kill and to make alive is the province of that Divinity alone who is elevated far above the world (Deut. xxxii. 39; 1 Sam. ii. 6); leprosy was regarded as the equivalent of death (Numb. xii. 12); to deliver from it was to make alive. It is not probable that the king spoke the words: **Wherefore, consider,** in the solemn audience in which the letter was delivered to him (Thenius): he uttered this suspicion only in the circle of his most intimate attendants.

Ver. 8. **And it was so when Elisha the man of God,** &c. If the arrival of the celebrated Syrian with his retinue caused a sensation, still more did the fact that the king rent his clothes; the news of it came speedily to the prophet, who was then in Samaria (ver. 3), and not in Jericho

(Krummacher). The king, in his fright, either did not think of Elisha, or he did not believe at all that there was any one who could help in such a case. Elisha therefore sends to him to remind him that **there is a prophet in Israel,** *i. e.*, that the God who can kill and make alive, the God of Israel, in spite of the apostasy of king and people, yet makes Himself known, in His saving might, through His servants the prophets.—**The house of Elisha,** before the door of which Naaman stood (ver. 9), was certainly not a palace, but rather a poor hovel, so that the "great man" did not go in, but waited for the prophet to come out to him, and receive him in a manner befitting his rank. This, however, the prophet did not do, but sent a message to him to instruct him what he should do. The idea that he did this before Naaman reached his house (Köster) contradicts the words of the text. The reason why Elisha did not come out was not that he was wanting in politeness, or that he was influenced by priestly pride, or that he feared the leprosy, or avoided intercourse with a leper in obedience to the Law (Knobel), but: "He wanted to show to Naaman once for all that this princely magnificence, this splendor of earthly honor and wealth, did not affect him at all, and that there was not the least cause in all this why Naaman should be helped. Furthermore, he wished to prevent the foreigner from thinking that the help came from the prophet, and that he had the healing power in himself, and also to prevent him or any other from ascribing the cure to the application of any external means: for the Syrians knew as well as the Israelites that the Jordan could not heal leprosy. . . . Naaman was to understand that he was healed by the grace and power of Almighty God, at the prayer of the prophet" (Menken).—**Thy flesh shall come again to thee, &c.** In leprosy raw flesh appears and running sores are formed, so that the diseased person dies at last of emaciation and dropsy (Winer, *R.-W.-B.* i. *s.* 115); the cure, therefore, consists in the restoration of flesh.

Ver. 11. **But Naaman was wroth, &c.** "Not because he did not meet with becoming honor and attention, but because none of the religious ceremonies which he had expected were performed" (Menken). He himself tells what he had expected: Elisha's brief answer sounds to him like scorn. The river *Abana* (ver. 12), or, as the keri has it, Amana, is the Χρυσοῤῥόας of the Greeks, now called Barada or Barady. It rises in Antilebanon, and flows through Damascus itself in seven arms (Winer, *R.-W.-B.* ii. *s.* 194). *Pharpar*, *i. e.*, the swift, is hardly the little river Fidscheh, which flows into the Barada, but the larger, independent stream Avadsch, south of Damascus (see Thenius and Keil on the passage). Both rivers, as mountain streams, have clean fresh water, and Damascus is celebrated to-day for its pure and healthy water; "whereas the Jordan is 'a deep, sluggish, discolored stream' (Robinson, ii. 255, ed. of 1841), so that we understand how Naaman could consider the rivers of his native country better" (Keil). The address: **My father** (ver. 13), is at once familiar and respectful, as in chap. vi. 21, and 1 Sam. xxiv. 11; the attendants addressed him with mild words and sought to soothe him. Thenius' conjecture that אָבִי is corrupted from אִם, *if*, is utterly unnecessary. דָּבָר . . . דִּבֶּר is a conditional sentence without אִם and the object precedes for emphasis (Keil).—אַף כִּי as in 2 Sam. iv. 11.—וַיֵּרֶד ver. 14, means he journeyed down, *i. e.*, from Samaria to the valley of the Jordan.

Ver. 15. **And he returned to, &c.** That which Elisha had aimed at by his direction in ver. 10, namely, not merely the cure of the leprosy, but Naaman's conversion by means of it to the one true God, the God of Israel, was gained, as Naaman himself acknowledges: **Behold, now I know, &c.** At the same time he desires to show his gratitude to the man of whom God had made use, and he begs him earnestly to accept a gift (בְּרָכָה as in Gen. xxxiii. 11; 1 Sam. xxv. 27; xxx. 26). Although Elisha on other occasions accepted gifts for himself, or at least for the body of prophet-disciples (*cf.* chap. iv. 42), yet in this case he steadily refused (ver. 16), not certainly from haughty self-assertion in his dealings with the great Syrian, but to show him that the prophet of the God of Israel observed a different conduct from the heathen priests, who allowed themselves to be richly rewarded for their deceitful services; especially, however, in order to establish in the mind of the healed man the conviction that the God of Israel alone, out of free grace and pity, had helped him, and that he owed to that God sincere and lasting gratitude. The refusal of Elisha must have made a deep impression not only upon Naaman, but also upon his entire retinue. As Theodoret observes, there lay at the bottom of this refusal the feeling that our Lord demanded of His disciples: "Freely ye have received, freely give."

Ver. 17. **And Naaman said: If not, let there, then, &c.** וְלֹא = καὶ εἰ μή, as the Sept. have, not: *ut vis* (Vulg.), nor: "And oh!" (Ewald). It was not Naaman's object, in his request that he might take a load of earth with him, to "sacrifice to Jehovah on this outspread earth, as it were in the Holy Land itself" (Thenius), but he wished to build an altar of it. Altars were often made of earth; the altar of burnt-offering even, according to the Mosaic Law, was to be of earth (Ex. xx. 24; *Symbol. des Mos. Kult.* i. *s.* 491). It is almost universally supposed that Naaman was subject to the "polytheistic superstition," that each country had its own deity, who could be worshipped properly only in it, or on an altar built of its soil (so the latest commentators: Thenius, Keil, Von Gerlach, &c.). But if Naaman had cherished the delusion that every land had its own God, that is to say, that there were other gods by the side of and besides the God of Israel, even though they were not so mighty as He, he would have been in contradiction with his own words in ver. 15: **I know that there is no God in all the earth but in Israel,** and he would not yet have grasped the main point, nor recognized that truth which forms the distinction of the Israelitish religion from all others, viz., that Jehovah alone is God, and that there is no other beside Him (Deut. iv. 35; xxxii. 39, &c.). Moreover, the prophet could have passed over *this* delusion least of all without combating it, not to say anything of his replying to it: "Go in peace." He must, at the very least, have called the Syrian's attention to this error. Peter Martyr explains the desire to take away a load of earth quite correctly: *hoc signo suam contestatur fidem erga deum Israelis,*

et ed terrâ, tanquam symbolo, voluit ejus admoneri. Not because he ascribed to this earth an especial magical power, but because Israel was the land in which the only true God had revealed and vindicated himself to His people, and now finally to him, did he wish to erect an altar of this earth, which should be, in the midst of a heathen country, a sign and monument of the God of Israel, and a memorial of the prophet of that God. This was why he did not take the load of earth, as he might have done, from any indifferent spot, but begged it of the man through whom he had been brought to a knowledge of the one true God. His request was, therefore, the result of a strong and joyful faith rather than of a heathen delusion. If, in a similar manner, according to the narrative of Benjamin of Tudela, cited by Thenius on this passage, the synagogue at Nahardea in Persia was built only of earth and stone which had been brought from Jerusalem, it was so built by the strict monotheistic Jews, certainly not from "polytheistic superstition," but for the same reasons for which Naaman wished to build his altar of sacrifice out of Israelitish earth. [See bracketed note at the end of *Histor.* § 1.]

Ver. 18. **In this thing the Lord pardon,** &c. Rimmon is doubtless a designation of the highest Syrian divinity, abbreviated from Hadad-Rimmon (Movers). See above, *Exeg.* on 1 Kings xv. 18. It is of little importance for us whether the name is derived from רָמַם (רוּם) *i. e., to be high,* so that it is equivalent to עֶלְיוֹן (Ps. ix. 2; xxi. 7), or from רִמּוֹן pomegranate (the well-known symbol of the reproductive power).—The expression: **And he leaneth on my hand,** designates a service, which appertained to a high official (adjutant) of the king, on occasions when the latter bowed down or arose, or performed any similar ceremony. This service was also executed at the court of the Israelitish kings (chap. vii. 2, 17). The urgency of the request is marked by the repetition of the words: **when I bow down.** The meaning of the request is: when I, in the execution of any duty, accompany my king to the temple of Rimmon, and bow down when he bows down, then may that be pardoned me, and may I not be regarded as worshipping that divinity. I will not serve, from this time on, any God but Jehovah. Theodoret: *εἰσιὼν ἐγὼ τὸν ἀληθινὸν προσκυνήσω θεόν· συγγνώμης τυχεῖν ἱκετεύων, ὅτι δὴ διὰ τὴν βασιλικὴν ἀνάγκην εἰςελθεῖν πρὸς τὸν ψευδώνυμον θεὸν ἀναγκάζομαι.* The word הִשְׁתַּחֲוָה, which is used of prostration before men as well as before God, and so in itself does not signify a purely religious act, cannot here be understood of an act of worship, for, if it could, Naaman would say in ver. 18 the very opposite of what he had promised in ver. 17, and Elisha could not have responded to the request that he might worship Rimmon besides Jehovah with the blessing: "Go in peace." Some have very unjustly found, in the request that he might take away a load of earth, and also in the prayer that he might be forgiven for prostration in the house of Rimmon, signs that his faith was still wavering, undecided, and weak. It rather shows that he had a tender conscience, which desired to avoid an appearance of denying Jehovah, and which was forced to speak out its scruples and have them quieted. Such scruples would not have occurred to one who was wavering between service of God and service of the gods.—According to Keil, Elisha meant by the words: **Go in peace,** ver. 19, to wish for the Syrian, on his departure, the blessing of God, "without approving or disapproving the religious conviction which he had expressed:" or, according to Von Gerlach, "without entering into the special questions involved." But the prophet could not return a reply to a request which proceeded from conscientious scruples, such as the new convert here presented, nor give a reply which was at once yes and no, or neither the one nor the other. Naaman was to proceed on his journey "in peace," not in doubt or restless uncertainty. If his request had been incompatible with a knowledge of the true God, the prophet would have been forced to show him that it was so; he could not have dismissed him with an ordinary, indifferent "formula of farewell." That he omitted the correction and dismissed him in peace, shows beyond question that he acceded to the request.

Ver. 19 *sq.* **So he departed from him a little way,** &c. Literally: a length of country, as in Gen. xxxv. 16, without definite measure. It cannot have been very far (a parasang, according to the Syrian Version, or three and a half English miles, according to Michaelis). If it had been so far Gehazi could not have overtaken the horses (ver. 9).—**This Syrian,** ver. 20, Vulg.: *Syro isti, i. e.,* this foreigner, from whom he would have had a double right to take some reward. The oath: **As the Lord liveth,** stands in contrast with that of Elisha, ver. 16. Blinded by his avarice, Gehazi considers it right before God to take pay, just as Elisha, in his fidelity, considers it right before God to accept nothing.—Descent from a vehicle (ver. 21) is, in the East, a sign of respect from the inferior to the superior (Winer. *R.-W.-B.* i. *s.* 501); Naaman honored the prophet in his servant. "From Gehazi's hasty pursuit he infers that something unfortunate for the prophet has occurred" (Thenius), and asks, therefore, *Rectene sunt omnia?* (Vulg.) In reply to Gehazi's assertion (ver. 22), he urges him to accept two talents, one for each prophet-disciple, and he causes the money to be borne before Gehazi in two sacks, as a mark of his eager willingness. Whether חֲרִטִים means open-worked, basket-like sacks, with handles (Thenius), or not, can hardly be determined from the word.—הָעֹפֶל (ver. 24) is not a proper name (Luther), but the hill which stood before the house of Elisha, not before the house of anybody else, an acquaintance, for instance (Clericus).

Ver. 25 and 26. **And Elisha said unto him,** &c. The words of Elisha: לֹא־לִבִּי הָלַךְ, stand in evident contrast with the words of Gehazi: לֹא־הָלַךְ עַבְדְּךָ, and mean: Thou sayest that thou didst not go anywhither; neither did I go away anywhither, *i. e.,* I was not absent when Naaman descended from the chariot to come to meet thee. Instead of "I," the prophet says לִבִּי, my heart (1 Sam. xvi. 7; 1 Kings viii. 39; Jerem. xvii. 10, &c.), because he was not present there, as Gehazi was, bodily and visibly, but in spirit, invisibly (1 Cor. v. 3). Vulgata: *Nonne cor meum in præsenti erat quando, &c.* Thenius: "Did I not go hence in spirit, and was I not present there?" It

is not necessary to take it as a question, however, as is usually done. The question begins with הָעֵת. Ewald takes "my heart" to mean "my favorite, so that Elisha here rather refers with a severe pleasantry to his most intimate follower, who could so far transgress against his master, although he was his favorite pupil." It is incredible that the prophet could have introduced the hard punishment of Gehazi (ver. 27) with a jesting, scornful question. [This rendering of Ewald: "Had not my dear pupil gone forth when some one (*i. e.*, Naaman) turned back from his chariot to meet thee," makes better sense than any other. It is not so much a jest as it is a sarcastic stripping bare of the falsehood, and it is not at all inconsistent with the revulsion of indignation and severity which prompts the condemnation which follows. Against this explanation, however, is the fact that this meaning for לִבִּי cannot be proved. Ewald refers to the Song of Solomon to justify the explanation, but without citing particular passages, and the context is so different in the two cases that the usage could not be established by its occurrence in that book.—W. G. S.] The explanation of Böttcher is equally inadmissible: "I, according to my convictions, could not have prevailed upon my heart . . . to go." After ver. 16 Elisha no longer needed to assert this. It was already clear. Maurer's explanation: *Non abierat, i. e., evanuerat* (Ps. lxxviii. 39), *animus meus, h. e., vis divinandi me nequaquam defecerat*, falls, because הָלַךְ would have to be taken in a very different sense from what it has in ver. 25, and because the clear reference to Gehazi's words would then be lost. [The explanation of Thenius, practically that of the E. V., is the best. The strain put upon the words to make them mean, "I did not go away from the interview between thee and Naaman," *i. e.*, "I was present at it," is apparent.—W. G. S.]—**Is it a time,** &c., *i. e.*, "In any other case better than in this, mightest thou have yielded to thy desire for gold and goods" (Thenius). Gehazi had not received olive-trees, &c., but he meant to buy them with the money. [The form in which the Vulgate translates the verse is not literally faithful to the original, but it brings out with great distinctness the antithesis between the objects Gehazi had in view, and which, indeed, he had gained, and the other results which must follow: "Thou hast indeed received money wherewith thou mayest buy garments, and oliveyards, and vineyards, and sheep and oxen, and men-servants, and maid-servants; *but*, also, the leprosy of Naaman shall cleave unto thee and unto thy seed forever."] **A leper as white as snow** (ver. 27), *cf.* the same expression, Ex. iv. 6; Numb. xii. 10, where a similar sudden attack of this disease takes place. According to Michaelis this takes place often under great terror or great affliction. The skin around the diseased spots is chalk-white (Winer, *R.-W.-B.*, i. *s.* 114). Upon the words: **Unto thee and unto thy seed** (posterity) **forever,** Menken says: "It is the full, strong expression of excited, deep, yet holy and just feeling, which dare not and will not lay its words upon delicate scales, and which, to express the fulness of its abhorrence or its admiration, of its curse or its blessing, seizes upon a formula of the vulgar dialects of the country, even though it may not apply, in syllable and letter, to the case in hand."

Chap. vi. 1. **And the sons of the prophets said,** &c. This story is to be connected with the two in chap. iv. 38–44, and is a supplement to them. Thenius supposes that it stands here "in order to show that what is said here in ver. 1 did not take place until long after." The connection into which Cassel brings it with chap. v. is very forced, viz.: that the needy community of the prophets forms a contrast to the rich and mighty military commander; or, that, in spite of Gehazi's fall, the number of prophet-disciples had increased so much, that a new house was necessary for them. Theodoret's connection is at least more natural: He (Gehazi) sought riches and became a leper; the company of prophet-disciples, on the contrary, loved the greatest poverty. It is hardly possible that the place which had become too small was in Gilgal (chap. ii. 1; iv. 38), for this lay at a considerable distance from the valley of the Jordan; the same is true of Bethel. It is more likely to have been Jericho. The words: **Where we dwell with thee** (see on chap. iv. 38), show that the need was of a larger place of assembly, since the number of prophet-disciples had increased, and amounted at this time to certainly over a hundred (chap. iv. 43). There is no reason to find a reference to dwellings which were to be built for all, as has been done in the interest of monasteries. They wished to go to the Jordan (ver. 2), because "its bank is thickly grown with bushes and trees" (willows, poplars, and tamarisks. Hitzig on Jerem. xii. 5), so that the building material was conveniently at hand. By the following words they mean: if each one cuts a beam, the work will soon be accomplished. They beg the prophet to go with them, not that he may direct the work—he was no architect—but because they wish to have him in their midst, and promise themselves, from his presence, blessing and success for their labor.

Ver. 5. **But as one was felling a beam, &c.** It has been inferred from הָאֶחָד, which also occurs in the 3d verse, that it was the same one who is there referred to, but without reason. According to Hitzig and Thenius the אֶת before הַבַּרְזֶל introduces the new, definite subject. According to Keil, it serves to subordinate the noun to the sentence: "As for the iron, it fell into the water." In the lament lies also a request for help, which is strengthened by וְהוּא שָׁאוּל. The person in question had "begged" for the axe, probably because he was too poor to buy one; hence the loss grieved him more than it would have done if it had come into his possession by gift. Luther's translation [and that of the E. V.], "borrowed," is correct in sense, though not exactly the corresponding word. The Vulgate has: *et hoc ipsum mutuo acceperam.*—The words וַיָּצֶף הַבַּרְזֶל are translated by Luther, following the Sept.: "The iron swam," and hence the story, vers. 1–6, is commonly entitled "The swimming iron." Thenius and Keil translate: "And he caused the iron to swim." But צוּף does not mean "swim," like שָׂחָה (Isai. xxv. 11), but: overflow (Lament. iii. 54): "Waters flowed over mine head;" in the hifil: to cause to overflow;

Deut. xi. 4: "He made the water of the Red Sea to overflow them." The word does not occur out of these two places, in which it is impossible to translate it by swim and cause to swim. *Cf.* also צוּף, honeycomb (Ps. xix. 10), from the idea of overflowing. Just as Jehovah brought the water over the horses and chariots, so that they were under it, Elisha here brought the axe over the water, so that it was no longer concealed by it. The Sept. translate: *καὶ ἐπεπόλασε τὸ σίδηρον*, *i. e.*, and the iron arose—appeared upon the surface. Hesychius explains *ἐπιπολάσαντες* by *ἐπάνω τοῦ ὕδατος περιφερόμενοι*. If *ἐπιπολάζειν* meant swim, it could not, at the same time, have the meaning: to be haughty, to exalt one's self impudently (Plut. *Symp.* ii. 1, 12). Hence Theodoret, on the passage, says correctly: *ὁ προφήτης ἀνήγαγε τὸ σιδήριον. ξύλον γὰρ ἐμβαλών, παρεσκεύασεν ἐπιπολάσαι τὸ σιδήριον.* [The translation "swim," meaning simply "float," is perfectly allowable for either the Hebrew word or the Greek one, by which the Sept. render it.—W. G. S.] The miracle was not, therefore, "that the wood which was thrown in sank, while the iron swam upon the surface" (Philippson), but, that the prophet, by throwing in the wood, caused the iron to come to the surface, where the young man could get it. Following many of the rabbis, Vatablus and others, including Thenius, have adopted the opinion that Elisha pierced the hole in the axe with the stick, and so raised it out of the water. Of this the text says nothing, it only states that he did bring up the axe, not, however, how he did it; wherefore, it can only be regarded as a guess when Von Gerlach says: "He thrust the stick into the water, so that it passed beneath the iron and raised it to the surface."

HISTORICAL AND ETHICAL.

1. *The first of the two preceding narratives*, which fills the whole 5th chapter, is one of the most important in the life and prophetical labor of Elisha, and this is marked, in fact, by the fulness of detail with which it is narrated. Menken, in his excellent homilies upon this chapter (see his *Schriften* v. *s.* 77–117), says of it with justice: "This is a charming testimony to the living God!—a worthy part of the history of those revelations and manifestations of the living God, which, in their connection and continuation through many centuries, and in their tendency toward one goal and object, were designed to plant upon earth the knowledge and the worship of the true God! But it offers besides to our consideration a rich store of reflections, in which neither heart nor understanding can refuse a willing participation." There is hardly a single Old Testament story in which the character of the Old Testament economy of salvation is mirrored in any such way; it is a truly prophetical story, that is, an historical prophecy. On the one side it shows the wonderful providence and mode of salvation of God, His saving power and grace, as well as His holy severity, and His retributive justice; on the other, closely interwoven with this, it shows human thought and desire, suffering and action, as well in good as in evil: it is the scheme of salvation epitomized. However, when Krummacher says: "We should rather expect to find it upon a page of the Gospel than seek it in an Old Testament book," and affirms: "The baptism of the New Testament meets us here already in a type which is full of life," he confounds the economies of the two Testaments. In spite of all its typical force, the story is specifically an Old Testament one. The main point, the proof of the whole, and therefore the thing which is not to be lost sight of, is, that a foreigner, a heathen, who, moreover, belongs to the people by which Israel at that time was most threatened; a mighty commander, by whose instrumentality Jehovah had given victory to the Syrians, finds help from the "prophet in Israel" (ver. 8), and comes to a knowledge of the one true God, the God of Israel. This is the point, too, which our Lord lays stress upon (Luke iv. 25–27) when He, in order to shame and warn His countrymen who were scoffing at Him, refers to the widow of Sarepta, the foreigner, to whom Elijah was sent, and then to Naaman the Syrian, whom Elisha healed. The conjunction of the two is by no means accidental: both these great prophets of action testified, during the time of apostasy in Israel, each of them by an act of assistance towards a foreigner, that Jehovah, with His might and grace, was not confined to Israel; that He takes pity upon the heathen also, and leads them to knowledge, that His great name may be praised among all nations. What the later prophets preached by word, Elijah and Elisha prophesied by acts. As "widows and orphans" were succored by both (see above on chap. iv. 1 *sq.*), so foreigners are helped by both. The story of Naaman, therefore, occupies an essential place in the history of the prophetical work of Elisha; without it one of the chief points of the prophetical calling would be wanting in this work.

[We must endeavor to analyze this story more closely, and to gain a more definite conception of the course of the incidents. Naaman undoubtedly had the religious ideas which were universal throughout ancient heathendom. He regarded the gods of Syria, which he had been educated to worship, as *real* gods. None of them, or of their priests or prophets, had or could cure him of leprosy. He heard by chance the fame of Elisha, as one who wrought wonders in the name of the God of Israel. No heathen would maintain that *his* national divinities were the *only* true gods. Sennacherib declared that he was conquering Judah by the command of Jehovah, whom he recognized as the god of that country. The heathen colonists whom the king of Syria brought to populate Samaria, attributed the ravages of the wild beasts to the fact that the worship of the god of the country was not provided for. It was the notion of the heathen that each country had its god, so that Syrians worshipped Syrian gods, and Hebrews the Hebrew god. To the heathen this seemed perfectly natural and correct. On the other hand, the Hebrews declared that Jehovah was the one only true God of all the earth, and that the gods of the heathen were nullities (vanity, E. V.) Naaman did not violate the principles of his religious education when he went to Elisha; Ahaziah, when he sent to Ekron (chap. i.), did. Naaman came with a letter from the king of Syria to the king of Israel, and he came with gifts, and in pomp—all according to heathen ideas of the means of inducing the thaumaturge to exercise his power. He was to be armed with the influence of authority and rank; he was to appear as a great man, for whom it was well worth while for the wonder-worker to do what-

ever he possibly could, and he brought the material means which his experience among wizards, diviners, soothsayers, and priests, had taught him to regard as indispensable. The king of Israel was terrified at the demand; but the prophet intervened. We are surprised at this feature. If Naaman's errand was really to *Elisha*, the literal words of the letter would not have been a demand that *the king* should heal him (ver. 6), but that he should command his subject, the prophet, to exercise his powers on the Syrian's behalf. Thus the king would have simply referred Naaman to Elisha for the latter to do what he could. The story is evidently so much abbreviated at this point that its smoothness is impaired. Naaman comes in all his pomp to the door of Elisha. He receives the prophet's command, and his words in vers. 11 and 12 bear witness again to wide and deep heathen conceptions. In ver. 11 he describes graphically the mode of performance of the heathen thaumaturge. "I thought, he will stand" (take up a ceremonious and solemn attitude) "and call upon the name of his God" (repeat a formula of incantation), "and strike his hand upon the place" (with a solemn gesture) "and remove the leprosy." Had he come all that journey to be told to bathe? Could water cure leprosy? If it could, was there not the pure water of Abana and Pharpar, better far than the sluggish and muddy water of Jordan? His pomp and state were thrown away: the man of God did not even come to look at them. His high credentials were wasted; the means of cure prescribed for him might have been prescribed for the poorest outcast in Israel. The deep and permanent truth of this feature, and also of the prophet's refusal to accept money, is apparent. The difference between the Jehovah-religion and the heathen religions is sharply portrayed by the contrast in each point, between Naaman's expectations on the one hand, and the prophet's words and actions on the other. The Syrian's servants suggested to him the sensible reflection that he ought not to despise the prophet's command. He went, bathed, and was cleansed. He then returned to reward the prophet, but found that the prophet did not give his help as a thing to be paid for. The Syrian was not to think that the prophet had used a power which was his own, and which might be paid for, whereby the obligation would be discharged. The service came from God; it was a free act of grace; a special blessing upon this one, and he a foreigner, while many Israelitish lepers remained uncleansed (Luke iv. 27). The prophet and his God were not at the service of any one who came and could pay a certain price; they wrought only where and when there was good reason, and, when they did so, the recipient of grace lay under an obligation which he never could discharge. In regard to Naaman's words: "Now I know that there is no God in all the earth but in Israel," a careful scrutiny shows that the proposition is not strictly accurate, for the God of Israel is and was not only in Israel, but in all the earth. The true proposition would be: The God of Israel is the only true God, and He reigns over all the earth. In the very form of his confession Naaman shows that his mind was still under the bias of the heathen idea of local deities, so that he says that there is no God anywhere else in the world but in Israel. No other had been able to heal him; but Jehovah had done so by apparently very insignificant means, hence he esteemed Jehovah true, and esteemed the others very lightly or not at all. It should be noticed also that the conception which he seems to have reached was that which was held by very many of the Jews, viz.: that Israel alone had any God, and that the rest of the world was godless; their own gods were nullities, and Jehovah did not care for them, so that they had no God at all. He determined to devote himself to the worship of Jehovah for the rest of his days. He therefore very naturally, in accordance with the same idea of local or territorial divinities, asked for earth from Palestine to build an altar for the worship of Jehovah. He also made one further request. His duty at his master's court (although it is difficult to understand how *a leper* could have had that office) was to attend his master, and support him when he went to worship in the temple of the Syrian God, Rimmon. The idea that Naaman was "converted" to the worship of Jehovah in such a sense that he went over to the Hebrew idea of the other gods, is without foundation. It is a modern idea, which has no place in this connection. Naaman did not feel bound at all to keep away from the temple of Rimmon, as an early Christian would have kept away from an idol-temple. His last request to the prophet is, that, when he goes into this temple in the course of his official duty, it shall not be regarded as a violation of his vow to pay all *his* worship, for the future, to Jehovah, to the neglect of all other gods. To this the prophet answers: "Go in peace," *i. e.*, your sincere performance of your vow shall be recognized, and this conduct shall not be interpreted as a violation of it.—W. G. S.]

2. *The healing of Naaman* did not take place at a mere word, but was like all miraculous deeds of the prophet, attached to some corresponding external means, but to such an one that to it, in itself, no healing power could be ascribed. This power must first be conferred upon it by the prophet, so that the cure must necessarily be recognized as an act of God, whose instrument and minister the prophet was. The external means, a sevenfold bath in Jordan, was a very significant one. Evidently the prophet had in mind what the Law prescribed for the purification of a leper. Such an one was to "bathe himself in water" (Levit. xiv. 8, 9), and throughout the entire ceremony of purification, "sevenfoldness" is the rule (Levit. xiv. 7, 16, 27; *cf.* 51; *Symbol. des Mos. Kult.*, i. *s.* 196, and ii. *s.* 508, 518). The conduct of Elisha was, therefore, in general analogous to the ordinance in the Law, and, in so far, it referred back to the God of Israel, who had given the Law. Naaman had to bathe in the Jordan because that is the chief river of the promised land, which flows through the long and narrow country, so that it is called simply the land of the Jordan (Ps. xlii. 6). As Canaan was the land of Israel, so the Jordan was the river of Israel. Moreover, it had great importance for the history of Israel. From the "passage of the chosen people" through this water, which is compared directly with the passage through the Red Sea (Ps. cxiv. 3, 5), "dated the existence of the theocracy in Palestine" (Winer, *R.-W.-B.* i. *s.* 620). The Jordan was witness, and, in a certain degree, pledge and warrant of the might and grace of God, which were revealed in Israel. It was the water, in and at which Jehovah had manifested himself as the almighty, helping,

and saving God of Israel. The fact of being healed and purified by bathing in this water, was designed to draw the mind of the heathen to the truth, that it is the God of Israel who alone can help and save, and that He it was who had helped him; that he therefore owed gratitude to this God alone, and not to the prophet who was only His servant. We have, then, in this case another proof that the miracles of the prophet were symbolic acts, and it is remarkable that the immediate significance of Elisha's transaction with Naaman, although it lies upon its face and is so easily to be recognized, has been hitherto almost entirely overlooked. The naturalistic method of explanation is at a loss to account for this miracle. According to Knobel (*Prophet.* ii. p. 92–97): "Elisha had the reputation of a good physician among the Syrians as well as among the Israelites. . . The bath, taken in obedience to the command of a man of God, was blessed with an extraordinary efficacy. That this, however, was not the entire curative process employed by Elisha is certain (?), though it is not possible to find out what else he did to Naaman." To relegate the entire story to the domain of myth or legend, on account of the miracle, is the least admissible course to pursue. This story bears in itself the impress of historical genuineness, if ever one did, by virtue of its simplicity, its moderate statements, its numerous characteristic details, and its purely objective representation. To invent such a story is impossible; and it can occur to no one who understands the matter that Naaman is a mythical person. The remark of Köster (*Die Prophet. s.* 89): "The whole story is meant to show that miracles were always intended to extend the worship of Jehovah," is unsatisfactory, because this was evidently not the case in many miracles, and especially in all the rest which are recorded of Elisha (*cf.* chap. iv.). [The most important and most instructive feature of the story seems to be overlooked by our author. It was not the *water* either of Jordan or of Abana which could heal, it was the *obedience* of this haughty general to a mandate which seemed to him frivolous and absurd. In the gospels *faith* is the first requisite in similar cases of healing, and so it was here also—faith and obedience. Naaman came with his mind all made up as to *how* he was to be healed, and he turned away in anger and disgust from the course which the prophet prescribed. Yet, when he turned back, even with a lame and half-doubting faith, and a half-unwilling obedience, he was healed. This is the permanent truth which is involved in the story. Naaman was a type of the rationalist whose philosophy provides him with *a priori* dogmas by which he measures everything which is proposed to his faith. He turns away in contempt where faith would heal him. That is the truth which the story serves to enforce.—W. G. S.]

3. *In the acknowledgment with which Naaman* returns to the prophet after being healed, the story reaches its climax: all the ways in which God led this man tended to this end. With the words: "Behold, now I know that there is no God in all the earth, but in Israel," he renounces *the fundamental error of* heathenism on the one hand, viz.: that every nation had its own god, and on the other hand he acknowledges that there is only one God on earth, and that He reveals himself in Israel. He does not, therefore, exchange one national god for another, but declares that Jehovah is the first and the last, and that there is no God beside Him (Isai. xliv. 6), that the whole earth belongs to Him (Ex. xix, 5), and that this God has chosen the people of Israel for the salvation of all nations, and revealed himself to them. This is the kernel of Naaman's confession, that he does not merely turn from Polytheism to Monotheism, but recognizes the God who has revealed himself to Israel as the one living God. Therefore, also, this land, which God promised and gave to his people, is for him a holy land (*cf.* Dan. xi. 16, 41; Ps. xxxvii. 9, 29; Prov. ii. 21 *sq.*). Therefore he wishes to take earth from this country that he may sacrifice thereon to its God. Such a confession from the mouth of a heathen would be incomprehensible, especially from one who had the disposition which Naaman showed before he was healed (vers. 11 and 12), if something extraordinary and miraculous had not taken place. For unfaithful, wavering Israel, which had had a far wider experience of the might and glory of its God than Naaman, this confession was a source of shame, of warning, and of reproof.

4. *Naaman's request* (ver. 18) *and Elisha's reply* (ver. 19) have been made the text of extended theological treatises (*cf.* Buddeus' *Hist. Eccles.* ii. p. 360 *sq.*). For instance: it has been inferred that, under certain circumstances, it is permitted to participate in the ceremonies of a religion one recognizes as erroneous. Among Roman Catholics the passage has been used to justify the conduct of missionaries who permitted the newly-converted heathen to continue to observe pagan ceremonies; among Protestants, as Starke says, "Some have drawn the conclusion that an attendant of a prince or king might accompany him to Mass, and do him service there, if he was in the service of the prince before the latter was converted to a false worship of God. Such a case was that of John of Saxony, whom the Emperor Charles V. asked to carry the sword in procession as Grand Marshal of the empire, when the emperor went in solemn state to Mass." The passage does not, however, give a general rule for all times and all places, because the case of Naaman belongs entirely to the Old Testament, and could not now occur. If Naaman ought not to have continued to exercise his office about the person of his king any longer, then he must have given up, not only his influential position, but also his fatherland and his nationality, and must have become an Israelite, and that too at a time when there was so much apostasy in Israel itself. The entire object of his being healed, viz., that he, in the midst of a heathen nation, which was hostile to Israel, might be a witness and an actual confessor of the God of Israel, and might carry His name into another country, would have been frustrated. Elisha, who had this object before all else in view, does not, therefore, raise any objections to his request: he invokes upon him "peace" at his departure; and, "since he perceives that Naaman's purposes are pure, he leaves him to the direction of God, as the one who will guide his conscience" (Jo. Lange). Cassel (*Elisha, s.* 89) not improperly draws attention here to the difference between the conduct of Naaman and that of Themistocles in a similar case. The latter found it necessary to appear before the Persian king, and there prostrate himself before him, according to the Persian custom. As he,

however, considered this unworthy of a Greek, he had recourse to the stratagem of allowing his ring to fall, and then, as he picked it up, he bowed before the throne, and so thought that he had given satisfaction both to his conscience and to the king. "Naaman did not wish to act thus. He was not willing to deceive or act the hypocrite, for he knew that his God could see through the stratagem, and would not permit himself to be deceived, although men might think that they had concealed their hearts." [There is no reason whatever to suppose that Naaman knew all that; and the heinousness of this stratagem of Themistocles was very different from that of an hypocritical act of worship. Why should we imagine that Naaman, after he was cleansed of leprosy, had the clear conceptions, the pure piety, and the delicate conscience of a modern Christian? Furthermore, it seems that, if the words of the author above are pressed, he will be made to say that any one may engage in hypocritical acts of worship, if he can, by so doing, remain in a position where *he can make proselytes!* The object of the miracle was not to make a proselyte of Naaman (see above, bracketed note at the end of § 1). The Israelites, at this period, made no effort whatever to gain proselytes. The opportunity offered to glorify the God of Israel before a heathen of rank, and it was done. He naturally turned, as a consequence, to the worship of Jehovah, as superior to all other gods. In the addition to § 1, it is stated what Naaman meant by this request, and what the significance of the prophet's answer was.—W. G. S.]

5. *Gehazi's transgression and its punishment* are to be estimated principally from the historical-theocratical, and not alone from the moral standpoint. His act was not a product of mere vulgar avarice, which shrinks back from no falsehood. By it he made his master, all of whose intercourse with him ought to have exercised a purifying influence upon him, a liar, and his oath (ver. 16) an empty phrase. He did not leave Naaman with the undimmed conviction that all the grace he had experienced had come to him gratis, and that "there was a prophet in Israel." He did not fear to stain the work which God had done upon a heathen for the glory of His name, and thereby he denied the Holy One, whose might he had just seen manifested upon Naaman. The words which Peter used of Ananias were true of him: "Thou hast not lied unto men but unto God" (Acts v. 4). His act was a betrayal of the prophet, of Naaman, and of Jehovah. "A thousand deceits and dishonesties might have been committed, by all of which not one of the dear and holy interests would have been injured, which in this case were in danger, and which, by this act, were criminally and faithlessly betrayed" (Menken). Hence it incurred so severe a punishment, which was not arbitrarily or indifferently chosen, but which proceeded out of the transgression, and corresponded to it. The leprosy of Naaman (ver. 27) became the leprosy of Gehazi; as Naaman was a living monument of the saving might and grace of Jehovah, so Gehazi was a monument of the retributive justice of the Holy One in Israel; a living warning and threat for the entire people. By his conversion Naaman was taken up into God's community of redemption in Israel; by his unfaithfulness and denial of this God, Gehazi brings down upon himself the punishment which excludes him from the society of the prophet-disciples, and of the entire covenant people. Finally, as Naaman's cure and conversion was a physical prophecy that God will have pity upon the heathen also, and will receive them into His covenant of grace, so Gehazi's leprosy prophesied the rejection of the people of Israel who should abandon the covenant of grace, and persevere in apostasy (Matt. viii. 11, 12; xxi. 43).

6. *The second narrative* (chap. vi. 1–7) relates the last of the acts of Elisha which concern individuals. It is distinguished from the two mentioned above, which likewise took place in the circle of the prophet-disciples (chap. iv. 38–44), by the circumstance that here help is given in need to one person, not, as there, to the entire society. The number of the prophet-disciples had become so great, that the construction of another building had become necessary. Here now was to be shown how each separate individual of the company might be consoled by the help of Jehovah even in the slightest need. The loss of the axe, even though it had been "begged for," was very slight in itself; but for a poor man, who did not even possess the necessary implements for cutting wood, a greater one than it would be for a rich man, if all his treasures should fall into the water. As before God there is no respect of persons, prince or beggar being all one, so there is also before Him no independent value in things; what is small and insignificant for one person, being great and important for another. The lilies of the field, which bloom to-day and to-morrow are cast into the oven, are as glorious before God as Solomon in all his glory (Matt. vi. 28–30). His might and goodness are revealed in the smallest detail as well as in the greatest combination. He helps in what are apparently the smallest interests of the individual, as well as in the greatest affairs of entire nations, and He rules with His grace especially over those who keep His covenant, and turn to him in all the necessities of life. That is the great truth which this little story proclaims, and just for the sake of this truth, it was "thought worthy to be inserted in the history of the theocracy" (Hess). The restoration of the axe, whereby aid was given to the prophet-disciple in his need, strengthened all the others in the faith that the God in whose honor they were erecting the building was with them, and would accompany their work with His blessing; they worked now only the more zealously and gladly.

7. *The swimming iron*, which is the title ordinarily given to this narrative, is an entirely incorrect designation of it. It has the literal meaning of the text against it, and it misleads to the opinion that the only point of the story is, that Elisha also made iron swim upon water like wood. What significance, however, would such a miracle have under these circumstances? It would not have any proper force, either for the prophet-disciple himself, or for the construction of the building, and would be nothing more than a feat of the divine omnipotence, without either moral or religious foundation, and at most only a thing to excite astonishment. This object has indeed been suggested: "the prophet-disciples were to learn here, that God had not only made the forces which have sway in nature, but, also, that He directs them continually; that He makes that easy which is hard, when we only pray him to do

so in a just cause" (Von Schlüsser). In that case, however, every connection with the building of the house would be wanting, and one does not see why so general a truth should be made known to the prophet-disciples precisely on the occasion of the loss of an axe, which its owner had begged for or borrowed. The same objection applies with still more force to the opinion that the miracle of the floating iron proclaimed the following: "A light thing raises a heavy thing from the deep . . . The world's history shows that in the miraculous providence of God, that which is heavy is raised by that which is light. . . . Iron is the symbol of sin; wood, however, serves for peace, reconciliation, sacrifice. . . . He who died upon the wood made all sin powerless; raised it up out of the deep where it lay buried, in history and in the individual man" (Cassel, *Elisa*, *s.* 100–106). This allegorical explanation, which is, to begin with, arbitrary and unfounded, overlooks, from the outset, the fact that it is not a question here of a piece of heavy metal, iron in general, but rather of a definite implement, which was necessary for cutting timber, of an axe which had been lost, and of the poor man who had lost it, after begging for it, and for whom it was to be recovered. In this misfortune the prophet helped him, and this is the main point; not the fact that the iron floated. According to the naturalistic explanation Elisha "pierced the hole in the axe with the pointed stick, and so lifted it up" (Knobel, *Der Proph.* ii. *s.* 98); and Köster (*Die Proph. s.* 90) says: "It was very correctly asserted, even by the Jewish expositors, that this was no miracle. (Buddeus, p. 364, opposes, and maintains the miracle, but cannot tell what was the use of the sharpened stick.) The axe had flown from the handle; Elisha pierced a stick into the aperture of it, and brought it up. The edifying application of it was, that presence of mind becomes a prophet, and is valuable even in the slight affairs of every-day life." But the text says nothing about what would here be the main point, viz.: the sharpening of the stick. קָצַב (ver 6) does not mean to point, to sharpen, but only to chop off (Gesenius). Besides, it is clear that the narrative is not intended to tell of some ordinary incident, which any one could do in every-day life without especial "presence of mind," but of an act which only a prophet, by virtue of the spirit of Jehovah, could do. That he made use for this purpose of an external physical means is true not only here, but also in the case of all his miraculous deeds (*cf.* 1 Kings xvii., *Hist.* § 5).

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

Vers. 1–19. The Story of Naaman. (*a*) His Illness (vers. 1–8); (*b*) his cure (vers. 9–14); (*c*) his conversion (vers. 15–19).—Vers. 1–8. BENDER: Naaman; a consideration (*a*) of the discipline of suffering under which he was; (*b*) of the star of hope which arose for him in his misfortune; (*c*) of the path in which he was led by this hope.—Ver. 1. MENKEN: Everywhere where there is, or seems to be, something great and fortunate, there is also a slight discordant "but," which, like a false note in a melody, mars the perfectness of the good-fortune. A worm gnaws at everything pertaining to this world; and everything here below carries the germs of death in itself. . . . We ought to consider all human suffering and misery worthy of consideration, wherever we find it. It is found everywhere; it dwells in the palace and in the hovel; it is interwoven with the life of prince and beggar; and it is inseparable from all worldly happiness. This is to the end that we may perceive and be convinced that there is nothing earthly with which a man should be contented, and in which he can find true rest and the ever-enduring peace of the soul, and therefore that the poor and lowly have no reason to envy the rich and great. That which makes us happy in truth and for eternity does not depend upon rank or upon wealth.—CALWER BIBEL: God treated this heathen in the way in which He is accustomed to treat His children. Just as He is wont to give to them, together with everything joyful which He grants them, also something incidental to restrain their pride, that they may remain humble, and may learn to seek God, so that He may still further glorify himself in them, so He visited this great military chief, whom He had so magnified in other respects, with a disease, which should make him humble, and teach him to seek further grace. That which seems to us and to all the world to be the greatest misfortune, and which is mourned as such, is often, according to God's wise counsel, the way to our highest good-fortune and welfare. The Lord says: "What I do thou knowest not now" &c. (John xiii. 7; Heb. xii. 11).

Vers. 2 and 3. KRUMMACHER: The Foreign Slave-Girl. (*a*) The momentous purchase; (*b*) the development of the seed of true religion in a heathen land; (*c*) the earnest ray of hope in the dark night of sorrow. The Little Girl from the Land of Israel. (*a*) Her heavy lot (such an one as that of Joseph and Daniel.—MENKEN: Torn from her friends, led away from her people and her fatherland, sold in a foreign country, slave of a heathen, she was a stranger to the joys of youth and the pleasure of life, and sadness and sorrow overclouded her life. How often may she, seized by yearning for the land of her childhood and youth, by longing for father and mother, have cried out to God. She could endure all this because she had learned in early youth to know the God whose eye overlooks all countries, and who holds His hand over all who heartily depend on Him. How necessary it is that parents should early make their children acquainted with the living God and His holy Word, that they may learn to yield themselves to His ways, and may have a light and staff in the dark valley); (*b*) her good advice. (It came from a heart which was full of sympathy for the trouble of her master, and which did not, like so many, serve with mere eye-service to please men. It was like a sun arising in a dark night, and it was the first movement towards Naaman's salvation in body and soul, and towards the glorification of the living God among the heathen. How great things the little maid brought about without knowing it. God often makes use of the most insignificant instruments (1 Cor. i. 28) for building up His kingdom and for spreading abroad His name. The least important person in the household becomes a living proof of the all-controlling, loving care and providence of God, and of the declaration, Isai. lv. 9.)—Ver. 4. CRAMER: One ought not to despise the counsel of even insignificant persons, for God can accomplish great things even by means of these.—CASSEL: When the

great and mighty are so bowed down that they do not know where else to get help, they listen even to a child. Nay: such are we all. When the waves reach to our heads we begin to listen to *anything;* no advice is too contemptible for us; no person too insignificant for us to be willing to listen.—Ver. 4–7. Naaman's Journey to Samaria. (*a*) The equipment for it. (The king gives him a letter of introduction: he departs with great pomp, with horses and chariots, and he takes with him rich treasures for gifts. Provided with all this, he has a firm hope of attaining his object. Rank, might, and wealth, those are the things in which a man hopes who has not yet learned to know the living God; but the Scripture says: "Put not your trust," &c., Ps. cxlvi. 3, 5; cxviii. 9; and: "A horse is a vain thing," &c., Ps. xxxiii. 17; and: "We brought nothing into," &c., 1 Tim. vi. 7.) (*b*) The Reception in Samaria. (The king is terrified because he has a bad conscience, Job xv. 21; Wisdom xvii. 11. Such a man always finds more in a letter than it says. Those who do not trust God do not trust one another. In his terror he is at a loss what to do. The king of Israel does not know what the little maid knew (ver. 3). In matters of the kingdom of God the humble and lowly have often more experience than the great, Matt. xi. 25; 1 Cor. i. 27, 28. Naaman was to be made to feel this, Sirach li. 10; Ps. lxxxviii. 5, in order that he might come to Him from whom alone help can come, Ps. iii. 8; lxviii. 20).—Ver. 6. Great men, who are accustomed to find every one ready to do their will, often believe, in their blindness, that they can command that to be done which only God can do.—Ver. 7. What good does it do to believe in a God who can kill and make alive, if one does not fear Him and bow before Him; does not seek Him, and therefore does not find Him? (James ii. 19).

Vers. 8–14. The Healing of Naaman. (*a*) The conduct of the prophet (vers. 8, 10, 14); (*b*) Naaman's behavior under it (vers. 9, 11–13).—Ver. 8. CRAMER: When faithful servants of God see that the unbelief of the godless redounds to God's dishonor, they hasten to oppose it. God spoke and made known His mercy by the prophets in Israel many times and in many ways. Last of all, He revealed Himself by His Son, who is the "brightness of His glory, and the express image of His person" (Heb. i. 1–3). He speaks to all who have to console the sorrowing or counsel the despairing: Let them come to me that they may learn that a Saviour has come into the world, who restores the sorrowful and heavy-laden, and in whom they can find rest for their souls.—CASSEL: In Israel a prophet is never wanting; He lives who goes ever with us; He lives who has washed all wounds in His blood; though all the world should fall in ruins, my Saviour and my prophet lives.—Vers. 9, 10. Horses and chariots, external grandeur and display, must often be employed to conceal internal misery from the eyes of the world, and to impose upon it. A genuine man of God does not, however, allow himself to be deceived, or to be bribed by pomp and display, but he speaks out whatever God commands, whether it pleases the world or not. In human affairs the word of the Apostle applies: "Be kindly affectioned one to another," &c., Rom. xii. 10. In divine matters, however, when the recognition of truth, and the honor of God, and the glory of His name, are at stake, a servant of God ought not to be governed by the rules of worldly politeness, but only to be guided by that which will contribute to the salvation of souls. It often requires far more self-denial to resist the great than to yield to them; not all is priestly pride which seems to the world to be such. That which Naaman believed to be contempt and rudeness really proceeded, in the case of Elisha, from genuine love to him, and humility and obedience to God.—Ver. 11 *sq.* MENKEN: This man, convinced of the inadequacy of all human and earthly means to relieve his misfortune, seeks divine help, and when he finds it, and it is before him, so that he only needs to reach out his hands and take it, he is dissatisfied, and complains of the divine help, on account of its peculiar form and character; he turns away from it with anger as from something worthless. And why? Simply on account of his prejudice; because he had made up his mind that what was divine must take place in another way, that its form of acting and helping must be different. He did not stop and ask himself whether he had reason and right for his expectation, nor whether the peculiarity of speech, action, and relief, which displeased him, was unbecoming to what was divine. Trusting to his prejudice without scruple or investigation as to its justice, as it were to an oracle, *i. e.*, trusting to himself as possessing an infallible insight, he departs. How faithful and true the old picture is! How fresh and new it is, as if men of to-day had sat for it! Ask thousands, who are devoted to human pursuits with enthusiasm and zeal, and who leave what is holy and divine in contemptuous neglect, why they do so, and they will be able to give but this one answer: I thought that the divine must speak, and act, and will, and work, in a different way from this; I cannot reconcile it with my opinion; if I should accept this I should have to throw away my opinion, and that of the public and the time.—Observe this now well, and do not think it of little importance. This "I thought!" is the most mighty of all mighty things on earth, and even if it is not the most ruinous of all ruinous things, it is yet certainly the most unfortunate of all unfortunate ones. This "I thought" brought sin and misery and death into the world, and it prevents redemption from sin and death in the case of thousands. These thousands, if they perish in their opinion, will begin the next life with "I thought!"—CALWER BIBEL: How common it is for men to prescribe to God the ways of His providence and the modes of His assistance! Just in order to break this self-will, and to awaken and test our faith and our patience, God must act contrary to our prejudice.—RICHTER: How many a one asks in unbelief: how can water do so great things? Water does not indeed do it, but the word of God, which is in and with the water.—The Means by which Naaman was made whole. (*a*) Their apparent insignificance; (*b*) their real significance (see *Histor.* §§ 1 and 2).—MENKEN: Blessed is he who is not offended because of me, said once He, in whom and through whom the divine appeared to men in its purest and most glorious form, and in its deepest and directest sense. Thereby He showed conclusively that the divine has a peculiarity on account of which it is and must be opposed to the perverse sense of sinful men. Therefore we call that man blessed who can believe the divine, and to whom the humble form in which it appears here below is no cause

of mistake, and whom the simplicity in which it is dressed for the sake of truth, and the humility with which it is clad for the sake of love, offends so little that he admires and honors and loves it all the more exactly on this account.—*Cf.* 1 Cor. i. 20–29.—Naaman became angry on account of the message which the prophet sent to him. So now also the message of salvation is received with anger because it opposes the opinion and the pride of the natural man, who is not willing to admit that he is a poor sinner, and diseased, and in need of salvation (James i. 21). That which is offered as a means of life and peace, becomes thus all the greater cause of destruction.—LUTHER: The world wants to earn heaven from God, although He proclaims through the world: I will be your God; I will give it to you out of free grace, and I will make you blessed without a price. [Naaman as a Type of the Rationalist. The *a priori* notions which men form, which become prejudices in their minds, and by which they measure things. They invent a God in their own minds and go to the Bible to see if they find the same God there; if not, they reject Him. They form *a priori* notions of Christ, of the Bible, of religion, and the way in which religion ought to be presented to them, of prayer, of Providence, of the sacraments, &c. If these are not satisfied they turn away angry. If the diseases of their souls cannot be healed as they have made up their minds that they ought to be healed, then they will not have them healed at all. See *Histor.* 1 and 3, with translator's additions.—W. G. S.]—Ver. 13. "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation;" "it is not in word but in power" (Luke xvii. 20; 1 Cor. iv. 20).—MENKEN: Thousands, who are sad and heavy-laden under the consciousness of the spiritual misery of sin and death . . . would be glad if the Word would order them to the utmost end of the earth, and would command them to make the pilgrimage without shoes under their feet, or covering upon their heads, and to give all their goods to the poor, and to brand and torture their bodies with chastisements, because that would correspond to their sensual feeling, and to their preconceived opinion; but they cannot reconcile themselves to the gospel of the grace of God, that He sent His Son into the world as a propitiation for sin (1 John iv. 10).—Servants and subordinates cannot better prove their love and fidelity to their masters than by dissuading them from angry and violent steps by friendly and humble words—not by falling in with and encouraging their temper. (Prov. xv. 1).—Ver. 14. KRUMMACHER: It is a great thing, when a man is willing from his heart to submit himself to the ordinances which God has established for his salvation.—BENDER: The divine means of grace of the Church are for us what the Jordan was for Naaman. We are called to profit by them by the Holy Ghost, who will therein enlighten us by His gifts, and sanctify and strengthen us in the faith. As Naaman was healed gratis of his leprosy, which threatened him with death, so that his flesh became like that of a little child, so are we, through the compassion of God, which was revealed in Christ, purified from sin and saved through the "washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost," so that we may be first-fruits of His creatures, and, as such, heirs of eternal life (Titus iii. 5 *sq.*; James i. 18).

Vers. 14–19. BENDER: The Healing of Naaman. (*a*) The act of God; (*b*) Naaman's confession; (*c*) his gratitude; (*d*) his especial request.—Ver. 15. He who has come to faith in the living God, who revealed himself to Israel by His prophets, and to us by His Son, feels an impulsion to confess this faith with joy before men. Without faith there is no confession, and without confession there is no faith (Ps. cxvi. 10; Rom. x. 10).—J. LANGE: That knowledge of God which is won by experience of the purification of the heart, and which is enjoyed in the sweet and quiet peace of the soul, is the only real, genuine, and saving knowledge.—STARKE: Nothing is impossible for faith. It can make of a proud and boastful soldier a pious and humble servant of God (Mark ix. 23). Naaman gave with joy, and God loveth a cheerful giver. He gave not only because he had been healed, but because he had come to a knowledge of the true God. After God we owe gratitude to none so much as to those who have brought us to a knowledge of God and a recognition of the truth.—Ver. 16. MENKEN: Godly and holy men, who have devoted their lives to the service and witness of the divine truth among men, have always had two peculiarities, which bad men have never been able to imitate: freedom from all love of gain, and, in neglect of the praise and honor of the world, a pure looking-up to the Father, "who seeth in secret" (Acts viii. 18–20).—STARKE: True Godliness knows when to open the hand and when to close it (Sir. iv. 36).—A servant of God must always firmly ward off whatever might cast the least evil appearance upon the purity and fidelity of his service to his master.—Vers. 17–19. Naaman's Two Requests, as testimonies to his firm and decided faith (see *Historical*, §§ 1, 4). (*a*) The altar built of the soil of Israel in a foreign land was an indicator of the way to Israel and to Israel's God; a physical confession which required strong courage, for it might call down persecution, disgrace, and death. So now it is an act of faith when a messenger of the faith sets up the cross in the midst of a mighty heathen people. How deeply does Naaman shame the Christians who, even among Christians and in Christian countries, do not dare to confess Christ by word and deed. (*b*) The prayer for indulgence came from a fine and tender conscience, which makes an earnest thing of its faith; to which all hypocrisy is loathsome; which is not willing to lean both ways, but demands confidence and certainty as to whether what it does and what it leaves undone are right in the sight of God, and whether it is maintaining the grace it has won. How rare are those in our times who, in matters of religion, are equally scrupulous!—Ver. 17. CASSEL: As Naaman was the type of the converted heathen world, and he carried the soil of Palestine to Aram, so did the heathen carry over into their own lands, together with Christianity, the doctrine, life, disposition, and spirit, which had flourished in the Holy Land, and thereby they established for themselves a new home. . . . When we hear here and there in Christian lands the names Bethany, Bethlehem, Zion, &c., what are they but holy places transferred, in their spirit, from their original location into our life and thought and feeling. In thy religious observances the main point is not the correctness and truth of thy knowledge, or of the doctrine which thou professest, but the truth and purity of thine own character. What one may do under his circumstances without violating his conscience, the conscience of another, under other cir-

cumstances, will forbid him to do. We have no right to judge him: to the Lord each one stands or falls (Rom. xiv. 1–7).—MENKEN: The higher a man stands in the world, and the more important he has made his position, the more is he bound.—Ver. 19. When a man has been heartily converted, and earnestly strives to enter in at the straight gate, we ought not to make harder for him what is already hard, and we ought not to make demands of him which, according to the circumstances in which God has placed him, he cannot fulfill, but look to the main point and not the incidental or external things, leaving him with prayer to the gracious guidance of God, who will complete the work of grace which He has begun in him. God makes the sincere to succeed.—MENKEN: One does not know what to admire most in Elisha's mild and simple answer, the clear and correct insight into a genuine heart experience, which, whatever may surround and obscure the main point, still seizes this quickly and clearly; or the holy moderation which, even in the case where it is its prerogative to urge, limit, bind, loose, or burden, still restrains itself; or the pure humanity of disposition, which can so thoroughly sympathize, so completely put itself in the position and at the stand-point of the other. The knowledge of the living God, and the experience of His saving grace, is the fountain of all peace, with which alone a man can go gladly on his way.

Vers. 19–27 (*cf. Histor.* § 5). BENDER: Gehazi, the False Prophet-Disciple. (*a*) His disposition; (*b*) his procedure; (*c*) his punishment.—KRUMMACHER: Gehazi. (*a*) Gehazi's heart; (*b*) Gehazi's crime; (*c*) the judgment which fell upon him.—Ver. 20. Let not desire overcome thee. How mighty are the evil inborn lusts of the human heart! Even in the case of those who have for years enjoyed the society of the noblest and most pious men, who have heard and read the word of God daily, and who have had the example of holy conduct daily before their eyes, lusts arise, take possession of them, and carry them captive (James i. 13–15; Matt. xv. 19). Therefore, "Be sober, be vigilant," &c. (1 Peter v. 8).—The avaricious and covetous are always envious; they are discontented when others neglect chances to become rich, or renounce that which they would be glad to have. —CALWER BIBEL: Gehazi speaks contemptuously of Naaman because he is a Syrian and not an Israelite, although he was far better than Gehazi. So also now-a-days, unwise Christians and Jews contemn one another. . . . It is plain from his unnecessary oath what kind of a man Gehazi was. Those who swear unnecessarily judge themselves. Covetousness is the root of all evil: where there is covetousness and avarice there is also falsehood and deceit, vulgarity and rudeness, and cunning theft and bold theft.—Ver. 22. BENDER: Gehazi was Elisha's servant. Ye servants, how do you conduct yourselves toward your masters? Are ye open, sincere, honest, obedient, as the apostle says Eph. vi. 5, 6? Is the property and good name of your masters as dear to you as your own property and your own honor, or do ye take advantage of them where ye can? "My master has sent me" —so says many an unfaithful servant, who cares for silver and gold, raiment, fields, vineyards, and gardens, but not for the honor of his master—who cares more for the wool than for the sheep. Hypocrites do more harm to the cause of God than the godless (2 Tim. iii. 5).—Ver. 23. He who himself thinketh no evil and is sincere, does not suspect cunning and deceit in others. Good-hearted, noble men, to whom it is more blessed to give than to receive, are easily deceived, and they follow the inclination of their hearts, instead of examining carefully to whom they are giving their benefactions.—Ver. 24. That which we must conceal brings no blessing.—Ver. 25. "Whence comest thou, Gehazi?" Happy are they of whom there is no need to ask this question; who can give an account without falsehood of all the paths in which they have walked, and of all the places in which they have been.—MENKEN: This question should have been to Gehazi like the wind-gusts before a storm, which warn the traveler to seek a refuge where the coming storms and floods cannot reach him.—This is the curse which rests upon a lie, that the man seeks to escape from it by new lies, and so involves himself more and more in the net of him of whom the master says: "When he speaketh a lie he speaketh of his own" (John viii. 44).—Ver. 26. If God himself arms His prophets with the gift to be witnesses of hidden sin, and to bring it to the light, how much more will He, before whose judgment-seat we shall all have to appear, bring that to light which now lies hidden in darkness, and reveal the secret counsels of the heart? —Ver. 27. MENKEN: How did the raiment of Damascus appear to the leper, or the pieces of silver to the wretched outcast? How often must he have desired to buy back again with all his treasures one day of his healthful poverty? Then, too, the lost peace of God. Alas! Most incomprehensible, most depraved, most indestructible and terrible of all deceits, deceit of riches, who fears thee, as we all should fear thee? God have pity upon us all, and help us all, that no one may set his hopes upon uncertain riches, but upon the living God, who gives us all richly to enjoy all His blessings. And yet again: "They that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare" (1 Tim. vi. 9–12).—The story of Naaman and Gehazi is a prophecy of the salvation of the heathen who seek help and grace, and of the rejection of Israel, if it destroys and rejects salvation (Isai. v. 25 *sq.*). [The leprosy of riches. Gold is tainted—strength required to use it aright; right pursuit of wealth; absorbing pursuit of it; curse which cleaves to it when it is ill-gotten or ill-used; this curse crops out most frequently in the children. A father absorbed in pursuit of wealth, and mother absorbed in fashion, will bring up corrupt and neglected children. Parents love gold, and fashion, and display, children will hold these the chief things in life. Thou hast gotten thee gold, but leprosy shall cleave to thee and to thy seed forever.—W. G. S.]

Chap. vi. 1–7 (*cf. Histor.* § 6 and 7). (*a*) Sketch of the Community-life of the Prophet-disciples. (*a*) Their number does not diminish in spite of all contempt and persecution, but increases (ver. 1); (*b*) they undertake nothing without their master (vers. 2 and 3); (*c*) they help and encourage one another in their work (ver. 4); (*d*) they experience the divine help and blessing (vers. 5–7).—Ver. 1. It is a good state of things when a community can say: "Behold! the place," &c. How many Churches have room and to spare, and might accommodate twice as many hearers, while the room in the buildings devoted to the lusts of the eye and the flesh, and to the pride of life, is too small.—Ver. 2. PFAFF. BIBEL: Each one should contribute his

share to multiply churches and schools as the population increases.—Ver. 5. STARKE: Pious people are more careful of what is borrowed than of their own property.—Vers. 5–7. WÜRT. SUMM.: We have here an instance where God is touched by even the least misfortune which visits his children. He will not let himself be hindered by natural laws from helping his servants in their need, . . that they may not despair in adversity, but trust in God, and be only the more diligent in prayer.—KRUMMACHER: It often happens that the Lord takes from us some possession, or appears to do so, only with the purpose of returning it after a longer or shorter time in some unexpected way, that it may thus come to us as a gift of divine love, and a pledge of His grace.

C.—*Elisha's conduct during the Syrian invasion and the siege of Samaria.*

CHAP. VI. 8–VII. 20.

8 Then the king of Syria warred against [was at war with[1]] Israel, and took
counsel with his servants, saying, In such and such a place *shall be* my camp.
9 And the man of God sent unto the king of Israel, saying, Beware that thou
10 pass not such a place; for thither the Syrians are come down.[2] And the king
of Israel sent to the place which the man of God [had] told him and warned
him of, and saved [protected [3]] himself there, not once nor twice [i. e., a great many
11 times]. Therefore the heart of the king of Syria was sore troubled for this thing;
and he called his servants, and said unto them, Will ye not show me which of
12 us [4] *is* for the king of Israel? And one of his servants said, None, my lord, O
king; but Elisha, the prophet that *is* in Israel, telleth the king of Israel the
words that thou speakest in thy bedchamber.
13 And he said, Go and spy where he *is*, that I may send and fetch him. And
14 it was told him, saying, Behold, *he is* in Dothan. Therefore sent he thither
horses, and chariots, and a great host: and they came by night, and compassed
15 the city about. And when the servant of the man of God was risen early, and
gone forth, behold, a host compassed the city both with horses and chariots.
16 And his servant said unto him, Alas, my master, how shall we do? And he
answered, Fear not: for they that *be* with us *are* more than they that *be* with
17 them. And Elisha prayed, and said, Lord, I pray thee, open his eyes, that he
may see. And the Lord opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw: and
behold, the mountain *was* full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha.
18 And when they came down to him, [i. e., the Syrian, for, the Syrian army—Bähr] Elisha
prayed unto the Lord, and said, Smite this people, I pray thee, with blindness.
And he smote them with blindness according to the word of Elisha.
19 And Elisha said unto them, This *is* not the way, neither *is* this the city:
follow me, and I will bring you to the man whom ye seek. But [And] he led
20 them to Samaria. And it came to pass, when they were come into Samaria,
that Elisha said, Lord, open the eyes of these *men*, that they may see. And the
Lord opened their eyes, and they saw; and behold, *they were* in the midst of
21 Samaria. And the king of Israel said unto Elisha, when he saw them, My
22 father, shall I smite *them?* shall I smite *them?* And he answered, Thou shalt
not smite *them:* wouldst thou smite [*if thou shouldst do that*, wouldst thou be
smiting] those whom thou hast taken captive with thy sword and with thy bow?
set bread and water before them, that they may eat and drink, and go to their
23 master. And he prepared great provision for them: and when they had eaten
and drunk, he sent them away, and they went to their master. So the [marauding] bands of Syria came no more into the land of Israel.
24 And it came to pass after this, that Ben-hadad king of Syria gathered all
25 his host, and went up, and besieged Samaria. And there was a great famine
in Samaria: and, behold, they besieged it, until an ass's head was *sold* for
[worth] fourscore *pieces* of silver, and the fourth part of a cab of dove's dung
26 [was worth—*omit* for] for five *pieces* of silver. And as the king of Israel was
passing by upon the wall, there cried a woman unto him, saying, Help, my lord,
27 O king. And he said, If the Lord do not help thee, whence shall I help thee?
28 out of the barnfloor, or out of the winepress? And the king said unto her,

What aileth thee? And she answered, This woman said unto me, Give thy son,
29 that we may eat him to-day, and we will eat my son to-morrow. So we boiled
my son and did eat him: and I said unto her on the next day, Give thy son,
that we may eat him: and she hath hid her son.
30 And it came to pass, when the king heard the words of the woman, that he
rent his clothes; and he passed by upon the wall, and the people looked, and,
31 behold, *he had* sackcloth within upon his flesh. Then he said, God do so and
more also to me, if the head of Elisha the son of Shaphat shall stand on him
32 this day. (But Elisha sat [was sitting] in his house, and the elders sat [were
sitting] with him; [.]) And *the king* sent a man from before him: but ere the
messenger came to him, he [Elisha] said to the elders, See ye how this son of a
murderer hath sent to take away mine head? look, when the messenger cometh,
shut the door, and hold him fast at [hold him back by means of] the door: *is*
33 not the sound of his master's feet behind him? And while he yet talked with
them, behold, the messenger came down unto him: and he said, Behold, this evil
is of the Lord; what should I wait for the Lord any longer [what hope shall I
still place in the Lord]?
CHAP. VII. 1. Then Elisha said, Hear ye the word of the Lord; Thus saith
the Lord,To-morrow about this time *shall* a measure of fine flour *be sold* for [be
worth] a shekel, and two measures of barley for [be worth] a shekel, in the
2 gate of Samaria. Then a lord [an officer, or adjutant] on whose hand the king leaned
answered the man of God, and said, Behold, *if* the Lord would make windows
in heaven might this thing be? [Verily! Jehovah is going to make windows
in heaven! *even then* could this come to pass?] And he said, Behold, thou shalt
see *it* with thine eyes, but shalt not eat thereof.
3 And there were four leprous men at the entering in of the gate: and they
4 said one to another, Why sit we here until we die? If we say, We will enter
into the city, then the famine *is* in the city, and we shall die there: and if we
sit still here we die also. Now therefore come, and let us fall [away] unto the
host of the Syrians: if they save us alive, we shall live; and if they kill us, we
5 shall but die. And they rose up in the twilight, to go unto the camp of the
Syrians: and when they were come to the uttermost part [outskirts, viz., those
6 nearest the city] of the camp of Syria, behold, *there was* no man there. For the Lord
had made the host of the Syrians to hear a noise of chariots, and a noise of horses,
even the noise of a great host: and they said one to another, Lo, the king of Israel
7 hath hired against us the kings of the Hittites, and the kings of the Egyptians,
to come upon us. Wherefore they arose and fled in the twilight, and left their
tents, and their horses, and their asses, even the camp as it *was*, and fled for their
8 life. And when these lepers came to the uttermost part of the camp, they went
into one tent, and did eat and drink, and carried thence silver, and gold, and
raiment, and went and hid *it;* and came again, and entered into another tent,
9 and carried thence *also*, and went and hid *it*. Then they said one to another,
We do not well: this day *is* a day of good tidings, and we hold our peace: if
we tarry till the morning light, some mischief [penalty] will come [fall] upon
10 us: now therefore come, that we may go and tell the king's household. So they
came and called unto the porter [guard] of the city: and they told them, saying,
We came to the camp of the Syrians, and, behold, *there was* no man there,
neither voice [sound] of man [a human being], but horses tied, and asses tied,
11 and the tents as they *were*. And he [one] called the porters [guards]; and they
told *it* to the king's house within [reported it inside of the king's house].
12 And the king arose in the night, and said unto his servants, I will now shew
you what the Syrians have done to us. They know that we *be* hungry; therefore
are they gone out of the camp to hide themselves in the field,* saying, When
13 they come out of the city, we shall catch them alive, and get into the city. And
one of his servants answered and said, Let *some* take, I pray thee, five of the
horses that remain, which are left in the city, (behold, they *are* as all the multitude
of Israel that are left in it: behold, *I say*, they *are* even as all the multitude
of the Israelites that are consumed [dead*];) and let us send and see.

14 They took therefore two chariot horses [two chariot-equipages]; and the king
sent after the host of the Syrians [towards the Syrian camp], saying, Go and see.
15 And they went after them unto Jordan: and, lo, all the way *was* full of garments and vessels [utensils], which the Syrians had cast away in their haste
16 [hasty flight[7]]. And the messengers returned, and told the king. And the
people went out, and spoiled the tents of the Syrians. So a measure of fine
flour was *sold* for [became worth] a shekel, and two measures of barley for [*omit*
for] a shekel, according to the word of the Lord.
17 And the king appointed the lord on whose hand he leaned to have the charge
of the gate: and the people trode upon him in the gate, and he died, as the man
18 of God had said, who spake [as he said] when the king came down to him. And
it came to pass as the man of God had spoken to the king, saying, Two measures of barley for a shekel, and a measure of fine flour for a shekel, shall be
19 to-morrow about this time in the gate of Samaria: And that lord answered the
man of God, and said, Now, behold, *if* the Lord should make windows in
heaven, might such a thing be? And he said, Behold, thou shalt see it with
20 thine eyes, but shalt not eat thereof. And so it fell out unto him: for the people
trode upon him in the gate, and he died.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

[1] Ver. 8.—[The first clause expresses a circumstance of the main action, best rendered by the absolute participial construction. The king of Syria, being at war with Israel, held a council of his officers, and decided, in such and such, &c. —Ew. *Lehrb.* § 161, a, explains תַּחֲנֹתִי as a noun in the form of the infinitive, *das Sich lagern.* Hence the form of the suff.

[2] Ver. 9.—[On נְחִתִּים Ges. *Thes. s. v.* says: "Whoever gave this word its punctuation seems to have derived it from the root חתת (*cf.* Job xxi. 18), but the force of *descent, going down*, is necessary and indubitable." Sept. κέκρυπται; Vulg. *in insidiis sunt.* The *H.-W.-B.* makes it an adj. from נחת, but Ew. casts doubt upon the form, and says it could as well be a part. niphal from חַת, § 187, 6.

[3] Ver. 10.—["He protected himself," *i. e.*, he occupied the threatened point, and so frustrated the attack. Every time that the Syrians came they found that the Israelites had anticipated them at the point where they proposed to attack.

[4] Ver 11.—[Ewald, *Lehrb.* § 181, b, and note 2, rejects the form מִשֶּׁלָּנוּ as an incorrect reading. He takes מִכֻּלָּנוּ (as in chap. ix. 5) to be the true reading. It is clear, however, that in ix. 5 Jehu includes himself among those, one of whom the answer is to designate, while the king of Syria asks, "Who of those who belong to us?" naturally enough excluding himself from the number of those who fall under suspicion of treachery. The meaning of the two forms is quite distinct, and each belongs to the place in which it is used. Ewald's theory of the use of the abbreviated form of אשׁר must bend to this instance; the instance cannot be thus done away with, in the interest of the theory.

[5] Chap. vii. ver. 12.—[The ה in the chetib is that of the article, which, in the later books, is sometimes found even after a preposition. Ew. § 244, a.

[6] Ver. 13.—[That is to say: They go to the fate which has already befallen all the people who are gone, and which sooner or later, awaits all who remain.—W. G. S.] We agree with Thenius that the keri הָמוֹן is to be preferred, because the word occurs immediately afterward without the article.—Bähr. [Ew. explains the article in the chetib as retained in the later or less accurate usage, especially where the article has emphatic force. § 290, d.—W. G. S.]

[7] Ver. 15.—Keil: The chetib בְּהֵחָפְזָם is the only possible correct form, for חפז has the meaning, *to flee with haste*, only in the niphal. *Cf.* 1 Sam. xxiii. 26; Ps. xlviii. 5.—Bähr.

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

Ver. 8. **Then the king of Syria**, &c. According to Ewald, the story (vers. 8–23) belongs to the time of Jehoahaz (chap xiii. 1–9). However, the passage immediately following begins, ver. 24, with the words, "And it came to pass after this," so that *it* also would fall in a later time; but, by the words in ver. 26, "king of Israel," and by Elisha's epithet "son of a murderer," ver. 32, as Ewald himself admits, we must understand Jehoram, and not either Jehoahaz or any other king of the house of Jehu.—אֶל is used as in 2 Chron. xx. 21: He brought to them the deliberation [*i. e.*, made them parties to it]. פְּלֹנִי as in Ruth iv. 1; 1 Sam. xxi. 3. "My encamping," *i. e.*, the encampment of my army. The word תַּחֲנֹת, occurs only here. It is a derivative from חָנָה, to sit down, to encamp (Gen. xxvi. 17; Ex. xiii. 20; xvii. 1). Ewald proposes to read תֵּחָבְאוּ, and to translate: "shall ye form an ambuscade," because ver. 9 says: "for there the Syrians are נְחִתִּים; but נָחַת nowhere has the meaning "to lay an ambuscade," or "to lie in wait," but: "to go down" or "sink down" (see Gesen. *s. v.*), so that it coincides very well with the meaning of חָנָה. The conjecture is therefore unnecessary. The proposal of Thenius to change תַּחֲנֹתִי into תֵּחָבְאוּ, and to translate: "Ye shall conceal yourselves at such and such a place," is still less admissible. The Vulgate has in ver. 8: *ponamus insidias*, and in ver. 9, *quia ibi Syri in insidiis sunt.* The Sept. have in ver. 8: παρεμβαλῶ; ver. 9: ὅτι ἐκεῖ Συρία ἐνεδρεύουσι. This is correct, however, rather according to the sense than the words, inasmuch as the army, which had encamped behind the mountains, might certainly be said to

be lying in ambush. In ver. 9, Clericus, DeWette, and Keil translate the words of Elisha: "Beware lest thou neglect this place," *i. e.*, leave it unoccupied, "for there it is the wish of the Syrians to make an incursion;" but עָבַר, which means *to pass over*, never has the meaning *to neglect;* certainly not that of: *to leave unoccupied.* Moreover, this signification does not fit well with הִזְהִירוֹ ver. 10, to which Keil incorrectly denies the meaning: *to warn* (*cf.* Ezek. xxxiii. 3; iv. 5; Ecclesiastes iv. 13). At a time when the Syrians were intending to encamp at a particular spot, and to attack the Israelites when they should pass by, the prophet gave warning to the king: the latter anticipated them, stationed troops in the threatened position, and so frustrated their plan.

Ver. 11. **Therefore the heart of the king of Syria was sore troubled,** &c. סָעַר means more than: to lose courage (Luther). It is used of the tossing, stormy sea (Jonah i. 11). Clericus wants to read מַלְשִׁנוּ (*Cf.* Prov. xxx. 10) instead of מִשֶּׁלָּנוּ, because the Vulg. translates: *quis proditor mei sit apud regem Israel*, and the Sept.: *προδίδωσί με.* It may be, however, that both only translated according to the sense. At any rate it is not necessary to alter the text. From ver. 12 we see that Elisha's reputation at that time extended even to Syria. The old expositors thought indeed that the servant who answered the king was Naaman, or one of his companions. The king learned the dwelling of Elisha by spies. Dothan (Gen. xxxvii. 17) lay five or six hours' journey north of Samaria, upon a hill (ver. 17), at a narrow pass in the mountains (Judges iv. 5; vii. 3; viii. 3), in the district of the present Jinin (Van de Velde, *Reise*, i. *s.* 273).—The king of Syria wished to get Elisha into his power, not "that he might hold him," and find out through him "what the king of Israel and other princes were plotting against him in their secret councils" (Cassel), but in order that, for the future, his military plans against Israel might not become known to the king of Israel through Elisha. The phrase חַיִל כָּבֵד, ver. 14, cannot here be translated: "a great army" (De Wette, and others), as is clear from vers. 22 and 23, but it is used exactly as in 1 Kings x. 2. The horses and chariots were accompanied by a large body of infantry.

Ver. 15. **The servant of the man of God,** &c. Not Gehazi, who would be mentioned by name, as in all other places (chap. iv. 12, 25; v. 20; viii. 4); moreover, the expression מְשָׁרֵת is never used of him. Perhaps it was one of the prophet-disciples who had accompanied Elisha to Dothan. That which Elisha says in ver. 16 is essentially the same as is read Numb. xiv. 9; 2 Chron. xxxii. 7; Ps. iii. 6; xxvii. 3. He saw already the divine, protecting power, and begged God to allow his attendant also to see it, that he might undertake the journey back to Samaria with him, through the hostile army, fearless and consoled. "The opening of the eyes signifies elevation into an ecstatic state in which the soul sees things which the bodily eye never can see" (Keil, ed. of 1845), Numb. xxii. 31. The horses and chariots which Elisha and the servant see (ver. 17), stand over-against the horses and chariots of the Syrians (ver. 15), and they are designated by אֵשׁ, the form of appearance of Jehovah (see above, p. 14), as from God, so that they are symbols of the might of Jehovah, which surpasses all human, earthly might, and is unconquerable. We have not to think of literal chariots and horses of fire here, any more than in chap. ii. 11. Usually, Gen. xxxii. 2 is compared, but there express mention is made of angels, who are not to be identified directly with the horses and chariots of a vision.—The Syrians are usually understood as subject of וַיֵּרְדוּ אֵלָיו in ver. 18, but in that case we must suppose that they were on a hill from which they descended when they saw Elisha and his companion go out from the city. Keil adopts this supposition, for he says: "Dothan stands upon a hill, which stands by itself on the plain, but it is surrounded or shut in on the east side by a ridge which runs out into the plain (*cf.* Van de Velde, *l. c.*, *s.* 273). The Syrians who had been sent out against Elisha had taken up a position on this ridge, and from there they marched down against the city of Dothan, which lay upon the hill, while Elisha, by going out of the city, escaped from them." This idea is contradicted, however, by the assertion, in ver. 14, that the Syrians "surrounded the city" in the night. They enclosed it, therefore, and did not simply take up a position on the east side upon a hill, which was, besides, separated from it by the plain. Furthermore, according to ver. 17, it was not the ridge upon which the Syrians are said to have stood, but the hill upon which Dothan was, which was full of horses and chariots of fire, round about Elisha, under whose mighty protection he and his servant went out of the city and down the hill. The Syrian army surrounded the hill at its base, so that escape seemed impossible; the heavenly army, however, surrounded the city at the top of the hill, and so stood opposed to the Syrian. This is clearly the meaning of the passage. In the immediately following words (ver. 18): "and they went down," the reference can only be to Elisha and his companion, who are the subjects of the words immediately preceding. If the words are not taken as referring to them, then there is no statement that they left the city, and there is a gap in the narrative. Accordingly אֵלָיו must be taken as referring to the Syrian army. The Syriac version and Josephus take it so (Ἐλισσαῖος . . . παρελθὼν εἰς μέσους τοὺς ἐχθρούς). There is no need of assuming that אֱלֹהִים stood in the text originally in the place of אֵלָיו, as Thenius does, for אֲרָם is often used in the singular for the Syrian army (ver. 9; 1 Kings xxii. 35), and is construed with the verb in the singular (1 Sam. x. 14, 15; Isai. vii. 2).—**And he smote them with blindness,** *i. e.*, they were put into a state in which, although they had their sight, yet they did not see him (Elisha), *i. e.*, did not recognize him. JARCHI: They saw, but did not know (ידעו) what they saw. *Cf.* Gen. xix. 11 (Luke xxiv. 16; Isai. vi. 10).—On ver. 19 Keil says: "Elisha's untrue declaration: 'This is not the way,' must be judged like every other military stratagem, by means of which the enemy are deceived;" but, as Thenius well replies: "There is

no untruth in the words of Elisha; for his home was not in Dothan, where he was only residing temporarily, but in Samaria; and the words 'to the man' may well mean: to his house." Josephus understood the passage correctly; he says: "Elisha asked them whom they had come to seek. When they answered: "The prophet Elisha," παραδώσειν ὑπέσχετο, εἰ πρὸς τὴν πόλιν, ἐν ᾗ τυγχάνει ὢν (i. e., where he is to be found), ἀκολουθήσειαν αὐτῷ. He certainly used a form of speech which the Syrians might understand otherwise than as he meant it, but he did not pretend in the least to be anything else than what he was. That they did not know him was a divine dispensation, not the result of an untruth uttered by him. How could the "man of God," after repeated prayers to Jehovah, straightway permit himself a falsehood, and try, by this means, to save himself from danger? If he saw, as his companion did, horses and chariots of fire round about him, and if he was thus assured of the divine protection, then he needed for his deliverance neither a falsehood nor a stratagem. The Syrians wanted to take *him* captive; instead of that he, by the help of God, captured them all; not, however, as is usually the case in such a ruse, to their harm or ruin, but, after he has shown them that they could not capture him, "the prophet in Israel" (ver. 12), he takes them under his protection, repays evil with good (ver. 22), and shows them by this very means the man whom they are seeking.

Ver. 21. **And the king of Israel . . . . when he saw them,** &c. The address: "My father," does not presuppose any filial relationship, but is rather a mere title (Clericus: *sic honoris causa dicitur*). Even Benhadad is called "thy (Elisha's) son," by Hazael (chap. viii. 9). The prophet-disciples called their master "father," and this because it was the ordinary title of the chief of the prophets, somewhat as the same word is occasionally used now-a-days. The repetition of אַכֶּה expresses the eager desire to smite them. Elisha's words (ver. 22): האשר &c., are taken by many expositors as a question [as in the E. V.], the idea being: if thou dost not even put to death those whom thou hast captured with bow and spear, how canst thou slay these? (Thenius, Keil). Such a question, however, would be very extraordinary; for if Jehoram was not accustomed to put to death even those who had been made captive in battle, why should he ask whether he should kill *these*, who had fallen into his hands without a combat? It seems more probable, on the contrary, that he was accustomed to put captives to death, in accordance with the prevalent war-usage of the time (Deut. xx. 13), and he raises the question, in the present extraordinary case, only out of consideration for the prophet, and because he does not trust his own judgment in the unprecedented circumstances. The Vulgate gives the sense correctly: *non percuties; neque enim cepisti eos gladio et arcu tuo, ut percutias.* The objection that ה, the article, could not have patach before א cannot be held to be decisive against this interpretation; the Massoretes themselves took ה as the article (Gesen. Lex. *s. v.* ה; De Wette). [I take ה to be the interrogative (Ewald, § 104, b), but agree with the above interpretation. "If thou shouldst put these to death, would it be a case of slaying prisoners of war?" *i. e.*, couldst thou justify it by Deut. xx. 13?—W. G. S.] No one doubts that כָּרָה כֵרָה, in ver. 23, signifies the preparation of a meal. The only disagreement is as to the connection of this signification with the fundamental meaning of the root. According to Thenius the root is כּוּר, which, with its derivatives, always refers to something round; hence, כֵּרָה the circle of guests. According to Keil, כָּרָה, to dig, gradually acquired the meaning: to prepare, make ready, so that it ought here to be rendered: *paravit apparatum magnum.* According to Dietrich (in Gesen. Lex. *s. v.*), the cognate dialects lead to the idea of bringing together or uniting, which, he thinks, is the fundamental idea in a banquet. *Cf. cœna* from κοινή.—The result of Elisha's act was that, from this time on, the raids of the Syrians ceased, not indeed because the magnanimity of the Israelites shamed them, but because they had found out that they could not accomplish anything by these expeditions, but rather brought themselves into circumstances of great peril.

Ver. 24. **And it came to pass after this,** &c. Josephus correctly states the connection between the passage which begins with ver. 24, and what precedes, as follows: κρύφα μὲν οὐκέτι διέγνω τῷ τῶν Ἰσραηλιτῶν ἐπιχειρεῖν βασιλεῖ, τὸν Ἐλισσαῖον δεδοικώς· φανερῶς δὲ πολεμεῖν ἔκρινε, τῷ πλήθει τῆς στρατιᾶς καὶ τῇ δυνάμει νομίζων περιέσεσθαι τῶν πολεμίων. Nevertheless, an interval of some years must be supposed to have elapsed between the two incidents. Ben-Hadad is not an appellative, like Pharaoh; it is the same king who is mentioned in 1 Kings xx. 1. In order to show the depth of the distress from the famine, the writer states the price of things which are not ordinarily articles of food. The worst part of an animal, which, at best, was unclean, the head of an ass, sold for 80 shekels, according to Bertheau and Keil, 35 thalers ($25.20), according to Thenius 53 thalers, 20 sgr. ($38.64). In like manner, in a famine among the Cadusians, Plutarch (*Artaxerxes*, xxiv.) tells that the head of an ass was scarcely to be bought for 60 drachmæ, whereas, ordinarily, the entire animal only cost 25 or 30 drachmæ. The price of a mouse rose to 200 denarii in Casalinum, when it was besieged by Hannibal (Pliny, *Hist. Nat.* viii. 57; Valer. Max., vii. 6).—There is no doubt that חריונים, *i. e.*, חֲרֵי יוֹנִים, means "dove's dung," and not "dove's food" (*Berleb.* and *Calw. Bibel*); the only question is, whether this is to be taken literally, or whether it is a designation of a very insignificant species of pease. Bochart maintains the latter (*Hieroz.* ii. 44), and he appeals to the fact that קַב is really a measure of grain: so also Clericus, Dathe, Michaelis, and others. The Arabs call the *herba alcali* "sparrow's dung." Celsius (*Hierobot.* ii. p. 30), on the contrary, maintains the literal meaning, which is supported by the keri דִּבְיוֹנִים, *fluxus, profluvium columbarum* (דִּיב from the Chald. דּוּב, to flow), a euphemism for the chetib. So also Ewald and Thenius; the latter says: "If snipe's dung is eaten as a luxury, necessity may well make dove's dung (2 Kings xviii. 27; Joseph. *Bella. Jud.* v. 13, 7) acceptable." Gesenius and Keil do not decide. We incline to the interpretation which makes it a kind of vegetable. Supposing even that dung was collected

for food, as was the case, according to Josephus, at the destruction of Jerusalem, why should dove's dung be especially used? There is, moreover, no instance of dove's dung having been used as food, and sold at so high a price. The meanest form of vegetable seems to be here put in contrast with the meanest form of flesh. The vegetable probably took its name from the similarity of color (white) and form, as in the case of the German *Teufelsdreck* (*assafœtida*). *Cab* is the smallest Hebrew dry-measure; according to Bertheau, it is equivalent to 27.58 cubic inches (Paris), and, according to Bunsen, to 56.355. Five shekels are equal to 2 thlr. 2 sgr. ($1.49, Keil), or 3 thlr. 10 sgr. ($2.40, Thenius).

Ver. 26. **And as the King of Israel was passing by,** &c. The wall of the city was very thick; the garrison of the city stood upon it; the king went thither in order to visit the posts, or to observe the movements of the enemy.—**If the Lord do not help thee, whence, &c.** אַל is taken here, by many, in its ordinary signification, *ne:* May the Lord not help thee! *i. e., perdat te Jehovah* (Clericus). If this is correct, the king invokes a curse upon her (Josephus: ὀργισθεὶς ἐπηράσατο αὐτῇ τὸν θεόν). The following words, however, "Whence," &c., do not coincide with this interpretation. The same is the case if we translate, with Maurer, *vereor, ut Deus te servet.* Keil's translation: No! let Jehovah help thee! (*i. e.*, do not ask me, let, &c.) is still more inadmissible, for אַל must not be separated from יוֹשִׁעֵךְ, with which it is connected by a makkeph. It evidently stands here for אִם לֹא (Ew. § 355, b), and the meaning is: "On the general supposition that there is *no* help for her: 'If God does not help thee, how can I?'" (Thenius). Cassel's interpretation of the words as a "rebellious invocation of God," is entirely mistaken: "Let God help thee: why does not the Eternal, whom ye have in Israel, and who has always revealed himself here, help thee? Where is He, then, that he may help us?" They are rather words of despair.—**Out of the barn-floor or out of the wine-press?** as much as to say: with corn or with wine? (Gen. xxvii. 28, 37); not, corn and oil, for יֶקֶב is wine-press (Prov. iii. 10). [The distress has reached a point where God's interposition alone can provide food. If He does not interpose, how can I satisfy thy hunger? from the threshing-floor or the wine-press—the only human resources in case of hunger? Thou knowest that these are exhausted, and that the limits of my power of relief have been passed. Address thyself, therefore, to God. If He does not help thee, much less can I. The difficulty of the passage is one that is common enough. There is an unexpressed premise, viz., the circumstances of the case, which are vividly present to the mind of both hearer and speaker, and an unexpressed conclusion, viz., the proper inference to be drawn, or the proper conduct to be pursued, in the premises. The first speaker has drawn a false inference from the facts, and the question aims to lead him to a correct judgment. Hence אַל is used, very nearly in the sense of אִם לֹא.—W. G. S.] When the woman had, probably, replied to the king that she did not demand food of him, but appealed to him as judge, he asked her: **What aileth thee?** Thereupon she relates the horrible incident, in which the existing misery had attained its height. The other woman had hidden her child, not in order to consume it alone, but in order to save it. Her act reminds us of 1 Kings iii. 26.

Ver. 30. **He rent his clothes,** &c., as a sign of horror and of grief. As he stood upon the wall, and therefore could be seen by all, the people observed that he had sackcloth next his body, like Ahab, 1 Kings xxi. 27, under the royal garment, which he tore open. Sackcloth was usually worn next the skin (Isai. xx. 2, 3), only the prophets and preachers of repentance appear to have worn it over the under-garment, because in their case it was an official dress, and so needed to be seen (Winer, *R.-W.-B.* ii. s. 352). The sentence: **He passed by upon the wall,** is not, according to Thenius, to be connected with what follows, but, as the athnach shows, with what goes before. Jehoram did not wear sackcloth in order to make a show before the people, for they could not see it before he tore the cloak which was above it; neither did he wear it out of genuine penitent feeling, for, in that case, he could not have sworn, with sackcloth upon his body, to put to death the prophet, whom he had called "Father," and to whom he was under such deep obligations. He wished, by means of this external action, to turn aside the wrath of God; "He thought that he had done enough, by this external self-chastisement, to satisfy God, and he wished now, in a genuine heathen disposition, to be revenged upon Elisha, since he learned from this story that the famine had not ceased" (Von Gerlach). It is not necessary to understand that Elisha had distinctly demanded that he should put on the garment of penitence (Ewald); perhaps the prophet had only exhorted generally to penitence, and the king, in order to put an end to the distress, had put on sackcloth. He became enraged at the prophet, partly because he believed himself deceived by him, if he, as we may suppose, had given the advice not to surrender the city ["If it had not been for him (Elisha), he (the king) would long before have surrendered the city on conditions," Ewald], but to rely upon the help of Jehovah, and partly because he thought that the prophet might have put an end to the distress if he had chosen, and thereby might have prevented the horrible crime of the women. The oath reminds one of that of Jezebel against Elijah (1 Kings xix. 2).

Ver. 32. **But Elisha sat in his house,** &c. The narrative in vers. 30–33 seems to be somewhat condensed, and to require to be supplemented. This, however, can be done with tolerable certainty from the context. The sentence: **Elisha sat in his house, and the elders sat with him,** is a parenthesis; the following, **and he,** namely, the king (not Elisha, as Köster and Cassel suppose), **sent,** &c., joins directly on to ver. 31. הַזְּקֵנִים can only refer to the magistrates of the city, not to the prophets or prophet-disciples (Josephus). They had not been sent in order to report to Elisha how far matters had come in the city (Cassel), but had betaken themselves to the prophet, since no one any longer could give counsel, in the great distress, in order to take his ad-

vice, and to beg for his assistance. While they were thus assembled the king sent a man, מִלְּפָנָיו, not, before him (Luther and others), but, from his presence, *i. e.*, one of those men who stood before him, and, as servants, waited for his commands (1 Kings x. 8; Dan. i. 4, 5), just as we see in Gen. xli. 46. This man was to behead Elisha, in fulfilment of the oath which the king had sworn in his excitement. Perceiving in spirit what was being done (as in chap. v. 26), the prophet says to the elders: **See ye,** *i. e.*, do ye know, &c. He applies to Jehoram the significant epithet: **son of a murderer;** as by descent, so also in disposition, is he a son of Ahab, the murderer of the prophets, and of the innocent Naboth (1 Kings xxi. 19); *filius patrizat.* With the words: **Is not the sound,** &c., Elisha straightway announces that the king will follow upon the heels of the messenger (*cf.* 1 Kings xiv. 6), and he calls upon the elders not to let in the messenger until the king himself comes.

Ver. 33. **And while he yet talked with them,** &c. The first question is, what is the subject of וַיֹּאמֶר? If we take הַמַּלְאָךְ to be the subject, then we must suppose, as Thenius, Cassel, and others do, that the messenger speaks the words: "This evil is of the Lord," &c., as the mouthpiece of the king, since they certainly are the words of the latter. This, however, is, in the first place, very forced, because he must have expressed it by saying: The king commands me to say to you, &c., but it is imperatively excluded by the consideration that the king, according to chap. vii. 17, was present, and so the messenger could not speak in his name, in his presence. Ewald, taking account of vii. 17, wishes to read הַמֶּלֶךְ for הַמַּלְאָךְ, but then the affirmation that the messenger, whom the elders were to restrain until the arrival of the king, really came, would be wanting from the text. The simplest course seems to be to supply הַמֶּלֶךְ as the subject of וַיֹּאמֶר (there is an athnach after אֵלָיו) and to supplement the text here by what is stated in vii. 17. The sense would then be: And the king, who had followed close upon his messenger, said, &c. Why did the king follow his servant? Certainly not "in order to see what was the result of his command" (Ewald); nor, "in order to be assured that his commands had been executed" (Eisenlohr); but, on the contrary, "in order to restrain the execution of a command which he had given in an excess of rage" (Keil). Even Josephus says: "Jehoram repented of the wrath against the prophet, which had overcome him, and, as he feared lest the messenger might have already executed his commands, he hastened to prevent it, if possible."—**Behold, this evil is of the Lord,** &c., *i. e.*, Jehovah has brought it to this pass that mothers slay and eat their own children; what further shall I then hope for or expect from Him? By these words, "he means to show the prophet that he no longer refuses to recognize the chastising hand of God in the prevailing distress, and then he desires to learn from him whether the divine wrath will not be turned aside, and whether the distressed city may not hope for aid" (Krummacher). To these *verba hominis pene desperantis* (Vatablus), Elisha replies in chap. vii. 1, with a promise of immediate and extraordinary deliverance. The interpretation: The distress is so great that no help can any longer be hoped for, so that nothing remains but to surrender the city; thou, however, who hast prophesied falsely, and hast vainly promised help, and therefore art to blame for the calamity, thou shouldst justly suffer death (Seb. Smith, and similarly Thenius), is entirely mistaken. If this were the sense, Elisha's solemn promise would seem to have been forced from him by the threat of death, whereas it rather serves to shame the king, who had doubted of Jehovah, and is, therefore, an answer fully worthy of the prophet. Jehoram had already given up his plan of murder when he followed his messenger. [His despair is, to a certain extent, intended as an excuse for his murderous project. It is as if he had said: God sends me only calamity upon calamity. Is it strange that my faith deserts me, and that I can no longer hope or believe that God will ultimately help? This despair produced the blind and senseless rage against thee. I have recovered from that madness, but how can I hope longer? This hope seems only to delay the catastrophe, and to make it worse the longer it is deferred. The prophet answers the despair by a new, definite, and confident prediction.—W. G. S.]

Chap. vii. ver. 1. **Hear ye the word of the Lord,** &c. The solemnity and distinctness with which the prophet addresses the king, the elders, and the others who are present, must not be overlooked.—On סְאָה see note on 1 Kings xviii. 32.—**In the gate of Samaria,** *i. e.*, the place where the market was usually held (Winer, *R.-W.-B.* ii. *s.* 616). On הַשָּׁלִישׁ and the following form of speech see note on 1 Kings ix. 22, and 2 Kings v. 18. Instead of לַמֶּלֶךְ, all the versions read הַמֶּלֶךְ, which, according to ver. 17 and 2 Kings v. 18, is the correct reading; the dative gives no sense.—The words of the "lord" in ver. 2 are the scoff and jest of unbelief; Jehovah will indeed open windows in heaven, and cause it to rain barley and meal! will that come to pass? Thenius connects the two sentences thus: "Supposing even that the Lord should make windows in heaven, will this (viz., the promised cheapness and plenty) even then come to pass?" This interpretation finds in the words only doubt, and not bitter scorn, but, from the threat with which Elisha answers, it seems that the latter must be included. "Windows in heaven" may be an allusion to Gen. vii. 11.

Ver. 3. **Four leprous men,** *cf.* Levit. xiii. 46; Numb. v. 2 *sq.* No one any longer brought them food from the city, and they were not permitted to enter it. In order to escape death from hunger, they proposed to go over to the camp of the enemy at dusk, when they would not be seen from the city. That בַּנֶּשֶׁף (ver. 5) does not mean "early in the morning" (Luther), is clear from vers. 9 and 12.—קוֹל, in ver. 6, can only be understood of a continuous and increasing rushing and roaring in the air, by which the Syrians were deceived. There are instances, even now-a-days, that people in certain mountainous regions regard a rushing and roaring sound, such as is sometimes heard

there, as a sign of a coming war.—On the kings of the Hittites, see note on 1 Kings x. 29. The slight remains of the nations of the Hittites having been subjugated by Solomon (1 Kings ix. 20), we have to understand that reference is made here not, as Thenius thinks, to "an independent remnant of this people, living near their ancient home (Gen. xv. 20; Numb. xiii. 29), towards the river of Egypt," but, to an independent Canaanitish tribe, which had withdrawn into the northern part of Palestine. "'The kings of the Egyptians' must not be understood too literally; they are only involuntarily mentioned for the sake of the balance of the phrases" (Thenius). Both expressions are only meant to convey, in general terms, the idea that people from the north and from the south are on the march to the assistance of the Israelites, so that danger threatens the Syrians upon all sides. [It is worth while to notice also the graphic force which is given to the story by quoting what purport to be the exact speeches of all the parties. We are told just what Elisha said, and what the officer said, and what the lepers said, and finally what the Syrians said, as if the speeches had been recorded at the time they were uttered. But how could any one tell what the Syrians said in their encampment at night? Evidently the writer puts himself in the place of the Syrians, and imagines what their interpretation of any sudden alarm would be. Instead of stating this in the flat and colorless form in which a modern historian would state it: The Syrians thought that some one was coming to help the Israelites—he gives the speech in what purport to be the exact words. The mention of the king of the Hittites is very strange. No such nation as the Hittites any longer existed, and the kings of Egypt did not interfere in Asiatic affairs throughout this entire period. Yet we should expect that the Hebrew writer would ascribe to the Syrians such fears as they would be likely to have under the circumstances.—W. G. S.]

On אֶל־נַפְשָׁם see note on 1 Kings xix. 3.

Ver. 9. **Then they said one to another**, &c. After they had satisfied their hunger and loaded themselves with booty, it occurred to them that *officium civium est, ea indicare, quae ad salutem publicam pertinent* (Grotius). They were justly anxious lest they might be punished if they should longer conceal the joyful intelligence from the king and the city.—In ver. 10, Thenius wishes to read, with all the oriental versions, שֹׁעֲרֵי, watchmen, instead of שֹׁעֵר, because לָהֶם follows. Maurer and Keil take the singular collectively for the body of persons who were charged with the guard of the city.—The subject of וַיִּקְרָא, ver. 11, is not the speaker among the lepers, but the soldier on guard. He could not leave his post, so he called to the other soldiers who were within the gate, and they then gave news of the occurrence to the guards in the palace. The attendants of the mistrustful king (ver. 12) give him very sensible advice, the sum of which is, "However it may turn out, nothing worse can happen to the troops we send out than has already happened to many others, or than will yet happen to the rest" (*Berleb. Bibel*). "Five" is here as it is in Isai. xxx. 17; 1 Cor. xiv. 19; Levit. xxvi. 8, a general designation of a small number. The origin of this use of language is probably that five, as the half of ten, is opposed to this number, which expresses perfection and completeness, to denote the imperfect and incomplete: so that it means a few horses. According to ver. 14 (two chariots) there were not five, but four. Two chariots, or equipages, were sent, in order, we may suppose, that if one were captured, the other might quickly bring the news.

Ver. 16 *sq.* **And the people went out**, &c. We may well imagine with what eagerness. The king had given to his adjutant (ver. 2) command to maintain order, but the people trod him down in the gate. He was not "crushed in the crowd," as Ewald states, but trodden under foot (רָמַס Isai. xli. 25). This can hardly have taken place unintentionally, for why should it have happened just to him? Probably the eager and famished people would not listen to his commands, and bore down his attempts to control them. The repetition of the prophet's prediction (vers. 1 and 2) in vers. 18 and 19, shows what weight the narrative lays upon its fulfilment. It is meant to be, as it were, "a finger of warning to unbelief" (*Calwer Bibel*), and designates this fulfilment as the object and the main point of the entire narrative.

HISTORICAL AND ETHICAL.

1. With the story of these two incidents now, we pass, in this *résumé* of the prophetical acts of Elisha (see above, *Historical* on chap. iv), to those which bear upon the *political circumstances and fortunes of the nation and of its king*. First come those which are connected with its foreign affairs. The especial danger from without was from the Syrians. Benhadad was the chief and bitterest enemy, who was evidently determined to subjugate Israel. He did not succeed in this; he only served as a rod of chastisement to bring back the king and the people from their apostasy to their God. Jehovah rescued them again and again from his hand; not by the hand of the king, nor by mighty armies, nor by great generals, but by the "man of God," the prophet, in order that all might perceive that salvation from the might of the sworn foe was not a work of human strength or wisdom, but was due to Him alone, the God of Israel, to testify of whom was Elisha's calling. The two incidents belong together, for one of them shows how his secret plans and cunning plots, and the other, how his open assaults, with the employment of the entire force at his disposal, were brought to naught by the intervention of the prophet. If anything could have done it, these extraordinary proofs of the might, the faithfulness, and the long-suffering of Jehovah, ought to have brought Jehoram to a recognition of his fault, and to reformation (chap. iii. 3). This is the point of view from which both narratives must be considered.

2. In the first incident, *Elisha appears in the distinct character of a seer*, רֹאֶה, which was the older name for a נָבִיא (1 Sam. ix. 9). He "sees" the place where the Syrians have determined to encamp, not once, only, but as often as they formed a plan, and, when they came to take him captive, he saw the heavenly protecting powers, and, at his prayer, the eyes of his attendant were opened, so

that he, too, saw them, whereas the enemy were struck with blindness. This gift of secret sight, while one is in clear possession of all the faculties of consciousness, is similar to that of prophecy. Both are effects of the spirit of Jehovah, which *non semper tangit corda prophetarum, nec de omnibus* (Syra), *nec datur illis per modum habitus, sic ut est in artifice* (Sanctius). The prophet only sees what others do not see when Jehovah grants it to him, and his sight does not apply to all things whatsoever, nor to all events, as its legitimate objects, but only to those things which pertain directly or indirectly to the relation to Jehovah and to the guidance of the people of Israel as a nation, or as individuals. [Moreover, it is not in the power of the prophet, by any physical and ever-available means, to bring about this state of the soul at will]. This sight is therefore something entirely different from so-called clairvoyance, which has nothing in common with divine revelation. It may be asked why Elisha, who saw the places where the Syrians would encamp, and would attack Israel, did not also foresee their coming to Dothan, and the danger which threatened him of being captured by them. Cassel (*Elisa, s.* 116) is of the opinion that "he must have known it; yet he remained at Dothan and awaited the hostile emissaries: he knew that there were more with him than all the enemies together could muster." This opinion, however, has no foundation in the text. On the contrary, it is clearly declared that the arrival of the Syrians was not observed until the morning, and that it was totally unexpected. If Elisha had known beforehand, by a divine revelation, that they were coming, he would have regarded it as a direction to escape from the threatening danger, and not to remain any longer in Dothan, as Elijah once fled from Jezreel (1 Kings xix. 3), and Joseph from Bethlehem (Matt. ii. 14). The great danger which suddenly came upon him, without his knowledge or fault, was a trial of faith for him and for his attendant. While the latter fell into anxiety and terror on account of it, Elisha showed himself a true "man of God" in that he trusted firmly in his Lord and God, and spoke courageously to his companion: "Fear not." In this firm faith he experienced the truth of what is written in Ps. xxxiv. 7, and xci. 11.

3. *The conduct of Elisha towards the band of Syrians, which had been sent out against him*, is not, as might at first appear, a mere pendant to the similar incident in Elijah's history (chap. i. 9–16). It cannot even be compared with it, for the persons and the circumstances are of an entirely different character. The emissaries, who were sent to take Elijah captive, were sent out by a king of Israel, who despised the God of Israel, and sought succor from the Fly-god of the Philistines. They were also themselves Israelites who, being of a like disposition with their king, mocked the prophet of Jehovah. Under these circumstances an act of kindness and forgiveness on the part of the prophet, whose high calling it was to pronounce, by word and deed, the judgment of God upon all apostasy, would have been a renunciation of his calling (see above, p. 6). Benhadad, on the other hand, was a heathen, who did not know the living God of Israel. His troops were blind instruments of his will, who did not know what they were doing, and did not scoff at the God of Israel, or at his prophet. Besides, Elisha's act was not merely a piece of good-nature and magnanimity, it was rather a prophetical act, in the strict sense of the words, which had no other aim than to glorify the God of Israel. Not for his own sake did Elisha pray Jehovah to smite the Syrians with blindness, but in order that he might lead them to Samaria. The thanks for their surrender into the hands of the king were due, not to him, but to Jehovah. Jehoram was to learn once more to recognize the faithfulness and might of Jehovah, and to be convinced that there was a prophet in Israel (chap. v. 8), from the fact that these dangerous enemies were delivered into his hands without a blow. On the other hand, Benhadad and the Syrians were to learn that they could not accomplish anything, with all their cunning plots, against the "prophet that is in Israel" (ver. 12), and much less, against Him whose servant and witness this prophet was. From this time on, therefore, they ceased their raids, as is expressly stated in ver. 23. The release, entertainment, and dismissal of the troops was a deep mortification to them. The slaughter of the captives, on the contrary, would have frustrated the purpose of the prophet's act.

4. *The miraculous features of this story* some have attempted to explain, that is, to do away with, in various ways. Knobel (*Der Proph. der Hebr.*, ii. *ss.* 93, 98 *sq.*) remarks upon the incident as follows: "Inasmuch as Elisha had extended his journeys as far as Syria (chap. viii. 7), he had gained information of the plans of the Syrians against Israel. This information, as a good patriot, he did not fail to make known to his king. He led the Syrians, who do not appear to have known either him or the locality, to Samaria. The inability to recognize the person as Elisha, or the place as Dothan, was, inasmuch as the safety of a man of God was at stake, caused by God; all the more, seeing that it appeared to be extraordinary and miraculous that they should not see that which was directly before their eyes. The cessation of this inability was then an opening of their eyes by God. Sudden insight into things which have long been before the eyes and yet have not been perceived, the Hebrews regarded as being directly given by God. . . . The horses and chariots of fire in the narrative are a purely mythical feature." This explanation is almost more difficult to explain than the narrative itself. Nothing is said anywhere about frequent journeys of Elisha to Syria. Only one such journey is mentioned, and that later (chap. viii. 7). He could only have gained knowledge of Benhadad's plans from his immediate and most familiar circle of attendants. These attendants, however, reject any hypothesis of treachery, and cannot explain Elisha's knowledge in any way except on the ground that he is a "prophet," *i. e.*, himself sees the things which are plotted in the king's bed-chamber. So far from conspiring with Elisha, these servants of Benhadad find out his place of abode, and so bring about the attempt to capture him. Then, when a company is sent to Dothan, and really arrives there, they must have known where the place was, and that they were there and not elsewhere. Furthermore, how could, not a single individual, but a whole company, allow themselves to be deceived by a man who was unknown to them, and to be led away five hours' journey without getting "insight into that which was directly before their

eyes?" The fiery horses and chariots, finally, are a symbolic but not a mythical feature (see above, p. 14). Ewald's explanation is much more probable than this rationalistic interpretation. According to him, Elisha proved himself "the most faithful counsellor, and the most reliable defence of the king and people, by pursuing the plans of the Arameans with the sharpest eye, and by frustrating them often single-handed, by means of his sure foresight and tireless watchfulness. The memory of this activity is preserved in chap. vi. 8 *sq.*, where we have a vigorous sketch of it, as it had taken form in the popular imagination." If, however, the prophet's second-sight, which is the central point of the entire story, is a product only of the popular imagination which, at a later time, wrought upon the story, then we no longer have history before us, and the "man of God," who is especially presented to us as seer and prophet, sinks down into a wise and prudent statesman. It would then be an enigma how he could have "sure forebodings" of the presence of the enemy at this or that place, and could give them out as certain facts. According to Köster, the gift of sight, which was imparted to the companion of Elisha, at the prayer of the latter, is only a "beautiful representation of the idea that the eye of faith sees the sure protection of God where, to the vulgar eye, all is dark." In like manner Thenius says: "It is a glorious thought, that the veil of earthly nature is here lifted for a moment, for a child of earth, that he may cast a look upon the workings of the divine Providence." But here we have not an idea, be it ever so beautiful, clothed in history, but an historical fact. The prayer of Elisha does not mean: Give him faith in the sovereignty of divine Providence; or: Strengthen this faith in him; but: Give him power to see that which, in the ordinary course of things, it is not permitted to a man to see. His companion then sees, not the thought-image of his own brain, but that which Jehovah allows him to see in symbolic form. In like manner it was a dispensation of Providence that the Syrians did not see, in spite of their open eyes. [The author vindicates the literal historical accuracy of the record, but his opponents bring out its practical importance. Let us suppose that, as a matter of historical fact, on a certain day, a certain man, under certain circumstances, looked up and saw in the air "chariots and horses of fire," or something else, for which "chariots and horses of fire" is a symbolic expression. The practical religious importance of the incident lies in the fact that he was thereby convinced that God protects His own. The prophet's object in his prayer could be none other than that he might be thus confirmed in the faith, and the edification of the story depends upon these two deductions: God protects His servants; and, to the eye of faith, this protection is evident, when earthly eyes see it not.—W. G. S.]

5. *The narrative of the second incident gives us information of the great famine in Samaria during the siege by the Syrians.* It is impossible not to perceive the intention of showing, in the description of this siege, how the threats in Levit. xxvi. 26–29, and Deut. xxviii. 51–53, against transgressions of the covenant, were here fulfilled; for the separate incidents, which are here referred to, correspond literally to those threats. The famine, such as had hardly ever before been experienced, and especially the abominable crimes which it occasioned, referred back to those threats, so that they forced the people to observe the violation of the covenant, and the great guilt of king and people, and, in so far, were the strongest possible warning to return to the God whom they had abandoned. As for the abomination wrought by the two women, nothing like it occurs anywhere but in the history of Israel; at least, no one has yet been able to cite any incident of the kind from profane history. According to Lament. ii. 20; iv. 10 (*cf.* Jerem. xix. 9; Ezech. v. 10), something similar seems to have occurred during the siege of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar (2 Kings xxv.; Jerem. xxxix.); and Josephus (*Bell. Jud.*, vi. 34) relates that, at the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus, a noble lady slew her child and ate a part of it, an action which filled even the Romans with horror, and caused Titus to declare that he would not permit "that the sun should shine upon a city on earth in which mothers nourished themselves with such food." That such abominations were perpetrated precisely among that people which had been thought worthy to be the bearer of the revelation and knowledge of the one living God, only proves that if such a people once falls away from its God, it sinks deeper than another which does not know Him, but adores dumb idols.

6. *The deliverance of Samaria*, like that of the three kings in the war with the Moabites, did not take place by a miracle, in the accurate sense of the word, but it belongs, nevertheless, as that does, in the rank of the events which bear witness to the special divine governance of Israel (see above, p. 36). Josephus' opinion that God raised a great tumult in the ears of the Syrians (*ἤρχετο ὁ θεὸς κτύπον ἁρμάτων καὶ ὅπλων ταῖς ἀκοαῖς αὐτῶν ἐνηχεῖν*) does not agree with the text, which distinctly mentions a real and strong roaring. Still less is קֹול to be rendered by "rumor" (Knobel: "The Syrians raised the siege suddenly, because they heard a rumor that the Egyptians and Hittites were on the march against them"). The threefold repetition of the word, which, moreover, never means rumor, is against this interpretation. As for the prediction of deliverance, by Elisha, that can never be explained on naturalistic grounds. Knobel leaves it undecided "whether Elisha, who probably had intrigues with the Syrians, succeeded in starting such a report among them, or whether, in reality, an hostile army was advancing upon the Syrians, of which fact Elisha had information." The first hypothesis falls to the ground when we consider that it was no "rumor" at all, but a rushing and roaring noise, which the Syrians heard. The alternative is just as unfounded, for all the external communications of the city were cut off, and the approaching army, of which, however, history makes no mention, must have been so near already that the noise of its march would be heard, not only in the Syrian camp, but also in Samaria; or, can we conceive that Elisha might have ordered up an Egyptian and Hittite army, over night, and that this might have marched at once? Ewald's notion that the prophet's promise of deliverance only shows the "lofty confidence" with which he met "the despairing complaints" of the king, is equally unsatisfactory. It would have been more than foolhardy in the prophet to proclaim, as the word of Jehovah, be-

fore the king, his attendants, and the elders, something which he, after all, only guessed, and which was contrary to all probability. If his guess had not been realized, what would have become of him, and how would he have been disgraced in his character of prophet? What is more, he not only promised deliverance, but also foretold to him who scoffed at his promise: "Thou shalt see it with thine eyes, but shalt not eat thereof," and the threat was fulfilled. The promise and the threat of the prophet form together the central point of the story; they are not mere incidental details, as is clear from the express repetition at the close. The truth of the occurrence, which no one doubts, stands or falls with both together. The object of the story is, to show that there is a prophet in Israel (chap. v. 8), so that it appears, to say the least, very insipid to hold, with Köster, that "the moral of the story is: God can save by the most unexpected means, but the unbeliever has no share in such salvation." [Chap. v. 8 cannot, with any justice, be cited as bearing upon the significance of this story. Its lesson is one much more nearly touching the "historical development of the plan of redemption" than chap. v. It was important that all should know that there were prophets of God in Israel, only to the end that they might believe what follows from this fact, viz., that God has a plan for the redemption of the world in which the Israelitish nation plays a prominent part: that He, therefore, is especially present among them by His prophets, and that their history and fortunes, their calamities and chastisements, their mercies and deliverances, are interpositions of God for the furtherance of His plan. The point of the incident before us is, that God would interpose to arrest a national calamity at the very crisis of its fulfilment, for the instruction, warning, and conversion of His people.—W. G. S.]

7. *King Jehoram* presents himself, in both narratives, just as he was described above (p. 34). He does not persecute the prophet; he rather listens to his counsel, and addresses him as "father" (chap. vi. 9, 21); but he never places himself decidedly on his side. "He stands an example of those who often permit themselves to be led, in their worldly affairs, by holy men, who admire them from a distance, who suspect the presence of a higher strength in them, but still hold them aloof and persist in their own ways" (Von Gerlach). When the prophet leads the enemy into his hands without a blow, he becomes violent, and is eager to slaughter them all; then, however, he allows himself to be soothed, gives them entertainment, and permits them to depart in safety. At the siege of Samaria, the great distress of the city touches his heart. He puts on garments which are significant of grief and repentance, but then allows himself to be so overpowered by anger that, instead of seeking the cause of the prevailing misery in his own apostasy and that of the nation, he swears to put to death, without delay, the man [who had endeavored to fix his attention upon the true cause of the calamity, and] whom he had once addressed as "father." Yet this anger is also of short duration. He repents of his oath, and hastens to prevent the murder, and asks Elisha, trembling and despairing, if there is no further hope. He does not hear the promise of deliverance with scorn, as his officer does, but with hope and confidence. Then again, when the promised deliverance is announced as actually present, he once more becomes doubtful and mistrustful, and his servants have to encourage him, and push him on to a decision. Thus, at one moment elated, at another depressed, now good-natured and now hard and cruel, now angry and again despairing, now trustful and again distrustful, he never rises above a character of indecision, changeableness, and contrasted dispositions. He was indeed better than his father Ahab, but he was still a true son of this father (see 1 Kings xviii., *Hist.* § 6). In one thing only he was firm: "He cleaved unto the sins of Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, which made Israel to sin; he departed not therefrom" (chap. iii. 3). Since, not to mention so many other proofs of the divine power, patience, and faithfulness, even the deliverance of Samaria from the greatest peril did not avail to bring him into other courses, judgment now came upon him and his dynasty, and the threat of the Law was fulfilled: "I, the Lord thy God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation" (Ex. xx. 5). He was the fourth member of the dynasty of Omri, or, as it is commonly called, from the principal sovereign of the family, the house of Ahab. With him, that dynasty ended (chap. ix. 10).

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

Vers. 8–23. The Lord is Hiding-place and Shield (Ps. cxix. 114). (*a*) He brings to nought the plots of the crafty, so that they cannot accomplish them (Job v. 12), vers. 8–14. (*b*) "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear Him, and delivereth them" (Ps. xxxiv. 7), vers. 15–19. (*c*) "The heathen are sunk down in the pit that they made: in the net which they hid is their own foot taken" (Ps. ix. 15; xxxv. 7), vers. 20–23.—Vers. 8–17. Krummacher: Hints of the Course of Things in Zion. (*a*) The revealed plot; (*b*) the military expedition against one man; (*c*) the peaceful abode; (*d*) the cry of alarm; (*e*) the unveiled protection from above.—Ver. 8. Cramer: The heart of man plots its courses, but the Lord alone permits them to prosper. "A man's heart deviseth his way; but the Lord directeth his steps" (Prov. xvi. 9). "There is no wisdom, nor understanding, nor counsel against the Lord" (Prov. xxi. 30).—Let them undertake the enterprise as cunningly as they can, God leads to another end than that they seek (Isai. viii. 10).—"In such and such a place shall be my camp" (Prov. xxvii. 1; James iv. 13–16).—Ver. 9. Osiander: It is no treason to bring crafty and malicious plots to the light. It is a sacred duty (Acts xxiii. 16). Beware of going into places where thou wilt be in jeopardy of soul and body. Be on thy guard when the enemy advances, and "put on the whole armor of God" (Ephes. vi. 13 *sq.*).—Ver. 10. No one has ever regretted that he followed the advice of a man of God; on the contrary, many have thus been saved from ruin.—Ver. 11. Starke: When God brings to naught the plots of the crafty, they become enraged, and, instead of recognizing the hand of God and humbling themselves, they lay the blame upon other men, and become more malicious and obstinate.—He who does not understand the ways of God, thinks that he sees human treason in what is really God's dispensation. Woe to the ruler

who cannot trust his nearest attendants (Ps. ci. 6, 7).—Ver. 12. A heathen, in a foreign land, confesses, in regard to Elisha, something which no one in Israel had yet admitted to be true. The same thing also happened when the greatest of all prophets appeared (Matt. viii. 10; xiii. 57).—KRUMMACHER: Tremble with fear, ye obstinate sinners, because all is bare and discovered before His eyes, and shudder at the thought that the veil, behind which ye carry on your works, does not exist for Him! All which ye plot in your secret corners to-day, ye will find to-morrow inscribed upon His book, and however secretly and cunningly ye spin your web, not a single thread of it shall escape His eye!—Ver. 13. How mad it is to fight against, or to attempt to crush, a cause in which the agency of a higher power is visible (Isai. xiv. 27; Acts v. 38, 39).—Ver. 14. Benhadad sends out an entire army against one, but finds out the truth of the words in Ps. xxxiii. 18 *sq.*

Vers. 14–23. Elisha during Distress and Danger. (*a*) (Although enclosed by an entire army, he does not fear or tremble, like his companion, but speaks to him words of encouragement and confidence. This is the effect of a firm faith, which is the substance, &c., Heb. xi. 1. Faith takes away all fear, and gives true and joyful courage, Ps. xxiii. 4; Ps. xci. 1–4; 2 Cor. iv. 8. David speaks with this faith, Ps. iii. 5 and 6; xxvii. 1–3; and Hezekiah, 2 Chron. xxxii. 7; and Luther: *Und wenn die Welt voll Teufel wär, und wollt,* &c.) (*b*) His prayer, vers. 17 and 18. ("Lord, I pray thee, open his eyes!" So should every true servant of God pray for every soul that is entrusted to him. We all need to use this prayer daily: Lord, open my eyes! for it is the greatest misfortune if one cannot see the light, even by day (Eph. i. 18). Elisha, however, also prays: "Lord, smite this people, I pray thee, with blindness," for his own protection, and for their salvation, for they were to learn that He is a God who can save marvellously from the greatest distress, and that no craft or skill avails against Him. It is not permitted us to pray for harm to our enemies; but we may pray that God will make them powerless, and show them His might.) (*c*) His victory, vers. 19–23. (Those who wish to capture him, he captures; but his victory is no victory of revenge. He causes the captives to be entertained kindly, and allowed to depart in safety, that they may learn that the God, whose prophet Elisha is, is not only a mighty, but also a merciful and gracious God. God is not so much glorified by anything else as by returning good for evil. "For so is the will of God," &c., Peter ii. 15; *cf.* Romans xii. 20. He won the highest victory who said upon the cross: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.")—Ver. 15. Our fortune also may change over night; then, how shall we bear it?—STARKE: Our feeble flesh cannot do otherwise than despair, when distress comes suddenly upon us, especially if we are young and inexperienced; for experience brings hope (Rom. v. 4).

Vers. 16 and 17. CRAMER: If we had spiritual eyes, so that we could see the protecting forces of loving, holy angels, it would be impossible for us to fear devils or wicked men (Ps. civ. 4; Heb. i. 14).—Vers. 17 and 18. BERLEB. BIBEL: In the kingdom of Jesus Christ, which is hidden from the world, blind men every day receive their sight, and men who see are smitten with blindness.—Ver. 18. The Lord smites with blindness those who fight against Him, not in order that they may remain blind, but in order that they may truly see, after they shall have observed how far they have strayed, and shall have recognized the error of their way (Acts ix. 8 *sq.*; John ix. 39).—Ver. 19. It is not a sin to withhold the truth from any one until the proper time for making it known, but, in many cases, it is even the duty of wisdom and love (John xiii. 7; Matt. x. 16). "Follow me!" is the call of the only one who can lead us where we shall find that which we are, consciously or unconsciously, seeking, for He is the light of the world, &c. (John viii. 12).—Ver. 20. A time will come for all who are spiritually blind, when their eyes will be opened, and they will learn that they have been walking in the paths of error.—KRUMMACHER: Ye dream of some unknown kind of an Elysium, and ye shall awake at last among those of whom it shall be said: "Bind them hand and foot, and cast them into outer darkness."—Vers. 21–23. "The wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God" (James i. 20). God does not give our enemies into our hands in order that we may revenge ourselves upon them, but in order that we may show ourselves to be children of Him who dealeth not with us according to our sins, neither rewardeth us according to our iniquities. He who receives forgiveness from God, must also show forgiveness to others; that is the gratitude which God requires of us, and which we owe to Him.—Ver. 23. STARKE: True love to one's enemies is never fruitless (1 Sam. xxiv. 7, 17, 18).

Vers. 24–31. Samaria during the Siege. (*a*) The great scarcity; (*b*) the two women; (*c*) the king.—Ver. 24. Evil men wax worse and worse (2 Tim. iii. 13). As Benhadad accomplished nothing by his raids, he made an attack with his entire force. A perverse and stubborn man cannot endure to be frustrated, and when he is, instead of leading him to submissiveness as it ought, it only hurts his pride, and makes him more irritated.—Ver. 25. General public calamities are not mere natural events, but visitations of God on account of public guilt. *Cf.* Jerem. ii. 19, and iii. 12 and 13.—KRUMMACHER: Of all the judgments of God in this world, none is more terrible than famine. It is a scourge which draws blood. . . . It often happens that God takes this scourge in hand when, in spite of manifold warnings, His name is forgotten in the land, and apostasy, rebellion, and unbelief are prevalent.—Vers. 26 to 29. Necessity leads to prayer, wherever there is a spark of the fear of God remaining; but where that fear is wanting, "necessity knows no law" becomes the watchword. The crime of the two women is a proof that, where men fall away from God, they may sink down among the ravenous beasts. Separate sores, which form upon the body, are signs that the body is diseased, and the blood poisoned. Shocking crimes of individuals are proofs that the community is morally rotten.—Ver. 26. STARKE: Earthly might can help and protect us against the injustice of men, but not against the judgments of God.—Ver. 27. How many a one speaks thus who might help if he only earnestly tried. When the prayer: Help me! is addressed to thee, do not refer the suppliant to God for consolation while any means of help, which are in thine own hands, remain untried (1 John iii. 17; James ii. 15, 16).—Vers. 30 and 31. CALW. BIBEL:

See here a faithful picture of the wrongheadedness of man in misfortune. In the first place, we halfway make up our minds to repent, in the hope of deliverance; but if this is not obtained at once, and in the wished-for way, we burst out in rage either against our fellow men, or against God himself. Observe, moreover, the great ingratitude of men. Jehoram had already, several times, experienced the marvellous interference of God; once it fails, however, and he is enraged. The garment of penitence upon the body is of no avail, if an impenitent heart beats beneath it. Anger and rage and plots of murder cannot spring from the heart which is truly penitent. It is the most dangerous superstition to imagine that we can make satisfaction for our sins, can become reconciled to God, and turn aside His wrath, by external performances, the wearing of sackcloth, fasting, self-chastisement, the repetition of prayers, &c. (Ps. li. 16, 17). The world is horrified, indeed, at the results of sin; but not at sin itself. Instead of confessing: "We have sinned" (Dan. ix. 5), Jehoram swears that the man of God shall die (2 Cor. vii. 10).—STARKE: Whenever God's judgments fall upon a people, the teachers and preachers must bear the blame (1 Kings xviii. 17; Amos vii. 10).

Ver. 32–Chap. vii. 2. Elisha's Declarations in his own House. (*a*) To the assembled elders; (*b*) to the despairing king; (*c*) to the scoffing officer. —Ver. 32. The Lord preserves the souls of His saints; he will save them from the hands of the godless (Ps. xcvii. 10). He sends friends at the right moment, who serve us as a defence against wickedness and unrighteous persecution.—KRUMMACHER: It is pleasant to be with brethren in a time of calamity. One feels in union a power against all calamities which threaten him. . . . . Moreover, especial promises attach to such a union. Where two or three are gathered together in the name of the Lord, there is He in the midst of them.—CRAMER: Although the saints of God are unterrified at the possibility of martyrdom, yet they are not permitted to cast themselves into the flames, but may properly make use of all ordinary and just means to preserve themselves for the good of the church of God (Phil. i. 22).—Ver. 33, *cf.* Prov. xxi. 1. The wrath of the king changes to timidity and hesitation. The heart of the natural man is a rebellious, but, at the same time, wavering thing. Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord (Jer. xvii. 7, 9; Ps. xxxvii. 17).—Chap. vii. 1. We must still answer "Hear the word of the Lord" to those who, in littleness of faith and in despair, cry out, what more shall I wait for from the Lord? A bruised reed shall he not break, &c. (Matt. xii. 20). "To-morrow, at this time." When the need is greatest, God is nearest. If God often unexpectedly helps even apostates out of great need, how much more will He do this for His own, who call to Him day and night. He has roads for every journey; He does not lack for means.—Ver. 2. The Sin of Unbelief and its Punishment. The children of this world consider their unbelief to be wisdom and enlightenment, and they seek to put that which is a consolation and an object of reverence to others, in a ridiculous light. The Lord will not leave such wickedness unpunished. It is only too often the case that high-born, and apparently well-bred men, at court, take pleasure in mockeries of the word of God and of its declarations, without reflecting that they thereby bear testimony to their own inner rudeness, vulgarity, and want of breeding. It is a bad sign of the character of a prince, where scoffers form the most intimate circle of his retinue (Ps. i. 1–4). Unbelief is folly, because it robs itself of the blessing which is the portion of faith.

Ver. 3–16. The Miraculous Deliverance of Samaria. It declares loudly (*a*) what is written in Daniel ii. 20: "Wisdom and might are His." (He knows how, without chariots or horses, without arms or army, merely by His terror, to put an enemy to flight, Ex. xxiii. 27; to feed the hungry, and set the captives at liberty, Ps. cxlvii. 7, in order that all may confess: "Who is so great a God," &c., Ps. lxxvii. 13 and 14; and: "Let not the wise man glory," &c., Jerem. ix. 23, 24); (*b*) *cf.* Ps. ciii. 8: If ever a deliverance was undeserved, then this was, that all might admit: "It is of the Lord's mercies," &c. (Lament. iii. 22; Rom. ii. 4 and 5).—Vers. 3–10. The Lepers outside the City. (*a*) Their conversation (ver. 3 and 4); (*b*) their visit to the Syrian camp (vers. 5, 8); (*c*) their message to the king (vers. 9, 10).—Vers. 3 and 4. KRUMMACHER: How often the same disposition meets us in the dwellings of the poor; instead of a joyful and believing looking up to heaven, a faithless looking for help from human hands; instead of submission to God, a dull discontent—a despair which quarrels with the eternal. . . . Thence comes the frequent neglect of the household, and decay of the family. And then what language is this: "If they kill us, we shall only die," as if the grave was the end of men, and the great Beyond were only a dream; or as if it were a matter of course that the pain of death atones for the sins of a wasted life, and must rightfully purchase their pardon, and a reception into heavenly blessedness. Our life lies in the hand of God, who sets its limit, which we may not anticipate. Circumstances may, indeed, arise in which a man wishes for death; it makes a great difference, however, whether this wish comes from weariness of life, or whether we say, with St. Paul: "I long to depart and be with Christ." Only when Christ has become our life, is death a gain.—Vers. 5–7. STARKE: The Almighty laughs at the planning of the proud, and brings their schemes to a disgraceful end (Ps. ii. 1 *sq.*; Dan. iv. 33 and 34).—WÜRTEMB. SUMM.: It is only necessary that in the darkness a wind should blow, or that water should splash in free course, or that an echo should resound from the mountains, or that the wind should rustle the dry leaves, to terrify the godless, so that they flee as if pursued by a sword, and fall, though no one pursues them (Levit. xxvi. 36). Therefore, we should cling fast to God in the persecution of our enemies, should trust Him, and earnestly cry to Him for help; He has a thousand ways to help us. —Ver. 6. KRUMMACHER: It happens to the unconverted man, as it did here to the Syrians. God causes him to hear the rumbling of His anger, the roaring of the death-floods, the thunder of His law, and the trumpet-sounds of the judgment-day. Then he flees from the doomed camp, in which he has dwelt hitherto, and hurls away the dead-weight of his own wisdom, justice, and strength.—Vers. 8 and 9. WÜRT. SUMM.: Many a one gets chances to acquire property dishonestly, to enjoy luxury and debauchery, to gratify fleshly lusts, and to commit other sins, and, if he is secure

from human eye, he does not trouble himself about the all-seeing eye of God; but his crime is discovered at last in his own conscience, and, by God's judgment, it is revealed and punished. Conscience can, indeed, be benumbed for a time; but it will not rest forever; it awakes at last, and stings all the more the longer it has been still. He who conceals what he has found, is not better than a thief.—PFAFFSCHE BIBEL: It is a good action to warn others of wickedness, and to hold them back from sin, still more to encourage them to virtue (Heb. x. 24).—Ver. 10. Lepers, *i. e.*, outcast and despised men, were destined, according to God's Providence, to announce to the threatened city, in the crisis of its danger, the great and wonderful act of God. God is wont to use slight and contemptible instruments for his great works, that He may, by the foolish things of the world, confound the wise (1 Cor. i. 27). Fishermen and publicans brought to a lost world the best Good News, the gospel, which is a power to make all blessed who believe in it.—Vers. 12–15. Doubt and distrust of God's promises are deeply inrooted in the human heart. Where it is most necessary to be prudent, there the heart of man is sure and free from care (Ps. liii. 5), and where there is nothing to fear, there it is anxious. Instead of confessing with joy: Lord, I am unworthy of the least of all thy mercies, when the promised help is offered, it does not trust even yet, until it can see with the eyes and grasp with the hands.—Ver. 16. CALW. BIBEL: Learn from this that He can lead us, as in a dream, through the gates of death, and, in an instant, set us free.—WÜRT. SUMM.: It is easy for our Lord and God to bring days of plenty close upon days of famine and want. Therefore, we should not despair, but trust in God, and await His blessing in hope and patience, until He "open the windows of heaven" (Mal. iii. 10).—STARKE: God's word fails not; not a word of His ever fell upon the earth in vain; every one is fulfilled to the uttermost, both promise and threat.—Vers. 17–20. The judgment upon the king's officer proclaims aloud: "Be not deceived: God is not mocked" (Gal. vi. 7; Prov. xiii. 13).—KRUMMACHER: His corpse became a bloody seal upon the words of Jehovah, and of His prophet.—BERLEB. BIBEL: In the last days also, when the abundance of the divine grace shall be poured out, like a stream, in the midst of the greatest misery, many despisers of the glorious promises of God will see the beginning thereof, but will not attain to the enjoyment of it; they will be thrust aside by marvellous judgments.

D.—*The Influence of Elisha with the King, and his Residence at Samaria.*

CHAP. VIII. 1–15.

1 THEN spake [Now] Elisha [had spoken] unto the woman, whose son he had
restored to life, saying, Arise, and go thou and thine household, and sojourn
wheresoever thou canst sojourn: for the LORD hath called for [up] a famine;
2 and it shall also come upon the land seven years. And the woman arose, and
did after the saying of the man of God: and she went with her household, and
3 sojourned in the land of the Philistines seven years. And it came to pass at
the seven years' end, that the woman returned out of the land of the Philistines:
4 and she went forth to cry unto the king for her house and for her land. And
the king talked [was *just then* talking] with Gehazi the servant of the man of
God, saying, Tell me, I pray thee, all the great things that Elisha hath done.
5 And it came to pass, as he was telling the king how he had restored a dead
body to life, that, behold, the woman, whose son he had restored to life, cried
to the king for her house and for her land. And Gehazi said, My lord, O king,
6 this *is* the woman, and this *is* her son whom Elisha restored to life. And when
the king asked the woman, she told him. So the king appointed unto her a
certain officer, saying, Restore all that *was* hers, and all the fruits of the field
since the day that she left[1] the land, even until now.
7 And Elisha came to Damascus: and Benhadad the king of Syria was sick;
8 and it was told him, saying, The man of God is come hither. And the king said
unto Hazael, Take a present in thine hand, and go, meet the man of God, and
9 inquire of the LORD by him, saying, Shall I recover of this disease? So Hazael
went to meet him, and took a present with him, even of [and—*omit* even of] every
good thing of Damascus, forty camels' burden, and came and stood before him,
and said, Thy son, Benhadad king of Syria hath sent me to thee, saying, Shall
10 I recover of this disease? And Elisha said unto him, Go, say unto [tell] him
[*then*], Thou mayst [shalt[2]] certainly recover [live]: howbeit the LORD hath
11 shewed me that he shall surely die. And he [Elisha] settled his countenance
[, and gazed] steadfastly [*at him*], until he was ashamed [became confused]:

12 and the man of God wept. And Hazael said, Why weepeth my lord? And he
answered, Because I know the evil that thou wilt do unto the children of Israel:
their strong holds wilt thou set on fire, and their young men wilt thou slay with
the sword, and wilt dash their children [in pieces], and rip up their women with
13 child. And Hazael said, But what, *is* thy servant a dog, [What is then[3] thy
servant, the dog,] that he should do this great thing? And Elisha answered,
The Lord hath showed me that thou *shalt be* [let me see thee] king over Syria.
14 So he departed from Elisha, and came to his master; who said to him, What
said Elisha to thee? And he answered, He told me [:] *that* [*omit that*] Thou
15 shouldest [shalt] surely recover [live]. And it came to pass on the morrow, that
he [Hazael] took a thick cloth [the blanket], and dipped *it* in [the] water,
and spread *it* on his face, so that he died: and Hazael reigned in his stead.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

[1] Ver. 6.—[The Masoretes write ה in עֹזְבָה as suffix without mappik, of which other examples occur (*cf.* 1 Kings xiv. 12; Isai. xxiii. 17). It might be punctuated as a perfect עָזְבָה. Ew. 247, d. and nt. 2.—Böttcher (§ 418, c) accounts for the omission of mappik by the accumulation of guttural and hissing letters: א, ז, ע.

[2] Ver. 10.—[*I. e.*, give him that delusive hope, since he longs for it, and you, as a courtier, desire to gratify him. This is adopting the keri לוֹ. See *Exeget.*

[3] Ver. 13.—[כִּי has the force of *then*. What then is thy servant, the dog, that, &c. The English translators rendered the sentence as if it were the same use of language as in 1 Sam. xvii. 43; 2 Sam. iii. 8, but it is quite the contrary. Hazael calls himself a dog and asks how he can do great deeds. Goliath and Abner resent being treated as if they were contemptible, which they do not admit. מָה, even when it refers to persons, asks, not *who?* but *what?* *i. e.*, what kind of one? (Böttcher, § 899, ζ.)—W. G. S.]

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

Ver. 1. **Then spake Elisha,** &c., or, as it should read, Elisha had spoken; for what is told in ver. 2 took place long before the incident which is narrated in the 3d and following verses, and forms only the necessary introduction. The famine of four years' duration is doubtless the same which is mentioned chap. iv. 38. The years in which it falls among the twelve of Jehoram, it is impossible to fix. The advice which the prophet gave the woman to go into a foreign land, must have been founded upon peculiar grounds, since she did not belong to the poorer classes (ver. 6 and chap. iv. 8 *sq.*). Perhaps she had become a widow, as some suppose, and had lost, in her husband, her chief reliance in a time of distress. She chose the land of the Philistines as her residence, probably because it was near, and because the plains on the seacoast did not suffer so much from scarcity as the mountainous country of Israel (Thenius). On her return, the woman found her property in the hands of strangers. We may suppose that it had been taken possession of, either by the royal treasury, as property which the owner had abandoned (Grotius, Clericus, and others), or by individuals, who had illegally established themselves in the possession of it, and who were not willing now to surrender it. She appeals, therefore, to the chief judge, the king.

Ver. 4. **And the king talked with Gehazi,** &c. Piscator, Sebast. Smith, Keil, and others, have felt compelled to assign this incident to a time previous to the healing of Naaman, because it is said (v. 27) that Gehazi and all his posterity were, from that time on, to be lepers, but here we find the king conversing with him. In general, there is no objection to this, for it is very doubtful if the narrative of the acts of Elisha presents them to us in their chronological order (see above, p. 45). The principal ground for this opinion, viz., Gehazi's leprosy, has not compulsory force, for, although lepers were obliged to remain outside the city (chap. vii. 3, and the places there cited), yet it was not forbidden to talk with them (Matt. viii. 2; Luke xvii. 12). Naaman, the leper, was admitted to the palace of the king (chap. viii. 6), and, at a later time, such persons were not excluded even from attendance in the synagogues (Winer, *R.-W.-B.* i. s. 117). Gerlach thinks that the king could the more probably meet with Gehazi, for the very reason that the latter had not been for a long time in Elisha's service. Jarchi and some of the other rabbis declare that the four lepers (chap. vii. 3) were Gehazi and his sons, but this is a purely arbitrary and unfounded notion. They were led to it probably by the desire of bringing the present incident into some connection with the preceding. Menzel also brings the story, vers. 1–6, into connection with that in chap. vii. by saying: "Great fear of the prophet took possession of the king from that time on" (*i. e.*, from the death of the scoffer—vii. 20—which Elisha had predicted). However, if this had been the ground of his interview with Gehazi, the story would certainly have had a different introduction from that in vers. 1–3. It is no cause for wonder that the king did not ask Elisha himself in regard to his acts, but obtained a recital of them from Gehazi. As he had been himself a witness of so many of the prophet's acts, he was now curious to hear, from a reliable source, about those acts which Elisha had done quietly, in the narrow circle of his intimate associates, and in regard to which so many unreliable reports circulated among the people. To whom could he apply with more propriety for this information than to one who had formerly been the prophet's familiar servant? Among these acts the restoration of the Shunammite's son to life was the most important. By סריס, ver. 6, we must understand

a high officer of the court, not necessarily a eunuch (*cf.* 1 Kings xxii. 9). תְּבוּאָה can hardly mean the *rent;* it is rather the produce in kind, which must have been restored to her out of the royal stores.

Ver. 7. **And Elisha came to Damascus, &c.**: not *into* the city of Damascus, as is often assumed, for Hazael came out with camels to meet him (ver. 9), so that the most it can mean is that he came into the neighborhood of the city. Perhaps the name Damascus stands for the whole province, as Samaria did. Keil, who follows the old expositors, thinks that Elisha clearly went thither "with the intention of executing the commission which had been laid upon Elisha at Horeb (1 Kings xix. 15) to appoint Hazael to be king of Syria," but so important an object to the journey must have been specified in some way. To pass over the objection that that commission was given to Elijah and not to Elisha, and that there is nowhere any mention of its having been transferred to the latter, we observe that the prophet does not say here (ver. 12): Jehovah has commanded me to anoint, or appoint, thee, Hazael, king of Syria, but: He has made me see that thou wilt be king of Syria, and that thou wilt do much evil to Israel. According to Ewald, Elisha went into voluntary exile for a time, on account of a disagreement between himself and Jehoram, who still tolerated idolatry, but the text does not say anything of this, and we are not compelled to assume anything of the kind. The prophet was already known and highly esteemed in Syria, as we see from the entire narrative, especially from vers. 7 and 8. He might very well, therefore, even without any especial ground, extend the journeys, which he made in the pursuit of his prophetical calling (chap. iv. 9), as far as Damascus. We may, nevertheless, suppose that it was done "by the instigation of the Spirit" (Thenius). The revelation, of which he speaks in vers. 10 and 13, he certainly did not receive until after his arrival in Syria. It was not the occasion of his journey thither.

Ver. 8. **And the king said unto Hazael, &c.** Josephus calls Hazael ὁ πιστότατος τῶν οἰκετῶν: perhaps he was also commander-in-chief of the army (ver. 12). There is a tacit request in the question of Benhadad that the prophet would obtain his restoration to health, from Jehovah, by prayer. He who wished to consult a man of God did not come with empty hands (1 Sam. ix. 7; 1 Kings xiv. 3). The וְ before כָּל, ver. 9, is hardly explanatory: "and in truth" (Keil); it is rather the simple conjunctive (Thenius). The messenger had a "gift in his hand," and besides there were all kinds of other valuable articles and products from Damascus, which were carried by forty camels. A camel-load is reckoned at from 500 to 800 pounds, but it would be wrong to reckon the weight of these gifts accordingly at 20,000 to 32,000 pounds (Dereser). "The incident is rather to be estimated by the oriental custom of giving the separate parts of a gift to as many servants, or loading them upon as many animals as possible, so as to make the grandest possible display of it. Harmar, *Beobb.*, ii. *s.* 29. Rosenmüller, *Morgenland*, iii. *s.* 17." (Keil). "Fifty persons often carry what a single one could very well carry" (Chardin, *Voyage*, iii. p. 217). Nevertheless, the gifts were very important, and we see from their value in how great esteem Elisha stood among the Syrians. If he refused to accept any gift whatsoever at the healing of Naaman (2 Kings v. 16), far less is it likely that he accepted these grand gifts in this case, where he had to bewail the misfortunes of his country (vers. 11 and 12).

Ver. 10. **And Elisha said unto him, &c.** The keri gives לוֹ instead of לֹא after אֱמָר, and the Massoretes reckon this among the fifteen places in the Old Testament where לֹא is a pronoun, and not the negative particle. All the old translations, and some manuscripts also, present the keri. No one of the modern expositors but Keil has adopted לֹא, *non;* he accepts that reading as "the more difficult." He rejects the makkeph between אמר and לֹא, joins לֹא with the following word חָיֹה, and translates: "Thou shalt not live, and (for) Jehovah hath shown me that he will die." But וְ never means *for*, as it would here, if this interpretation were correct. It rather means here *but*, as it so often does, so that the sentence which begins with it forms a contrast to the one which precedes. This tells strongly against the chetib לֹא. A further consideration is that the infinitive before the verb (חָיֹה תִחְיֶה) always serves to strengthen the verbal idea (Gesen., *Gramm.*, § 131, 2, a), and that, in this construction, the negative stands before the finite verb and not before the infinitive, *cf.* Judges xv. 13 (Ew., *Lehrb.*, § 312, b). לֹא cannot, therefore, be connected with חָיֹה. Still less can it be taken as a negative with אֱמָר, for Hazael says, ver. 14: "He (the prophet) told me: 'Thou shalt surely recover.'" This, therefore, was the answer of Elisha, which Hazael (suppressing the other words of the prophet) brought to the king; an answer such as the latter was eager to receive. If there is any case where the keri is to be preferred to the chetib, this is one. Nearly all the expositors, accordingly, agree in reading לוֹ, but their interpretations differ. Some translate, apparently with literalness: "Tell him:—Thou shalt recover;—but God hath shown me that he shall die," and they suppose, accordingly, that Elisha consciously commissioned Hazael with a falsehood, either because he did not wish to terrify or sadden the king, that is, out of compassion (Theodoret, Josephus), or, because it was generally held to be allowable to deceive foreign enemies and idolaters (Grotius). Neither the one nor the other, however, is consistent with the dignity and character of the prophet, who here speaks in the name of Jehovah. It is impossible that the narrator, who only aims to advance the glory of the prophet, in all his stories about him, should have connected with his words a sense which would have made Elisha a liar. Other expositors, therefore, explain it thus: "Of thy illness thou shalt not die, it is not unto death;" but that he then added, for Hazael: "the king will lose his life in another way" (*i. e.*, violently). Clericus (following Kimchi), J. D. Michaelis, Hess, Maurer, Von Gerlach, and others, agree in this interpretation. The form חָיֹה תִחְיֶה in the first member of the sentence, to which מוֹת יָמוּת in the second member corresponds, is a bar to this interpretation. The infinitive strengthens the verbal idea in both

cases. It cannot serve with תְּחְיֶה to tone down the verb ("as far as this illness is concerned, thou mayest preserve thy life"), and with יָמוּת to strengthen it. We must, therefore, translate: "Thou shalt surely live," and: "He shall surely die." Then the words can have no other sense than that which Vitringa has established in his thorough discussion of the verse (*Observatt. Sac.*, i. 3, 16, pages 716–728): *Vade, et dic modo* (*κατ' ἐπιτροπήν*) *ipsi: Vivendo vives; Deus tamen mihi ostendit, illum certe moriturum esse.* So, likewise, Thenius: "Just tell him (as thou, in thy capacity of courtier, and according to thy character, wilt surely do): 'Thou shalt surely recover;' yet Jehovah hath revealed to me that he shall surely die" (*cf.* Roos, *Fuszstapfen des Glaubens Abrahams*, *s.* 831). [This exposition of the grammatical sense of the words is undoubtedly correct, but there is room for some scruple about the interpretation. Elisha seems to encourage the courtier to flatter the king with a delusive hope. This could at best be only a sneer, or irony. A clue to a better interpretation is given above. Note that the question is: "Shall I recover of this disease?" The answer seems to be measured accurately, and strictly to fit this question: "Go, say to him: Thou shalt surely live." That is the answer to the question asked, and the infinitive has its full force. Thus the prophet promises a recovery from the illness. At the same time he sees farther, and sees that though the illness is not fatal, other dangers threaten Benhadad. He need not declare this, and in his categorical answer to the king he does not, but in an aside he does: "Nevertheless, Jehovah hath shown me that he shall surely die," *i. e.*, not of the disease, but by violence.—W. G. S.] Elisha, by his prophetical insight, had seen through the treacherous Hazael, just as he once saw through the plans of Benhadad (chap. vi. 12), and he now showed him that he knew the secret purpose which he cherished in his heart. He gave him to understand this, not only by his words, but also by the circumstance which is added in ver. 11: "And he fixed his countenance steadfastly until he (Elisha) shamed him (Hazael)," *i. e.*, he fixed his eyes steadily and sharply upon him, so that the piercing look produced embarrassment and made Hazael's countenance fall. This detail is consistent with the above interpretation of ver. 10 and with no other. ["Jehovah hath shown me that he shall surely die," says the prophet, and fixes his eyes upon the ambitious and treacherous courtier, who has already conceived the idea of murdering his master, until the guilty conscience of the latter makes him shrink from the scrutiny.—W. G. S.] The Sept. give a purely arbitrary rendering of ver. 11, thus: *καὶ ἔστη 'Αζαὴλ κατὰ πρόςωπον αὐτοῦ, καὶ παρέθηκεν ἐνώπιον αὐτοῦ τὰ δῶρα ἕως ᾐσχύνετο.* The only possible subject of וַיַּעֲמֵד is Elisha, and the text says nothing about the presentation of the gifts. עַד־בֹּשׁ does not mean either: "remarkably long" (Ewald), nor: "In a (taking the words strictly) shameless manner" (Thenius), *cf.* on chap. ii. 17. The man of God did not weep for Benhadad, nor for Hazael, but for his own countrymen, on account of the judgments which should be inflicted upon them by the hand of Hazael, as he himself declares in ver. 12.

Ver. 12. **And Hazael said, Why weepeth my lord?** The particular statements in Elisha's reply must not be taken too strictly in their literal meaning. He only means to say: Thou wilt commit in Israel all the cruelties which are wont to be practised in the bitterest wars (see Hos. x. 14; xiii. 16; Isai. xiii. 15 *sq.*; Nahum iii. 10 *sq.*; Ps. cxxxvii. 9; Amos i. 13 *sq.*). How this was fulfilled we see in chap x. 32 *sq.*; xiii. 3, 4, 7, 22. In the 13th verse, where the proud Hazael, high in office, and already plotting to reach the throne, calls himself "thy servant, the dog," he commits an extravagance which, in itself, shows us that he was not in earnest, and that his humility was hypocritical and false. "Dog" is the most contemptuous epithet of abuse, 1 Sam. xxiv. 14; 2 Sam. xvi. 9 (Winer, *R.-W.-B.*, i. *s.* 517). Elisha now declares openly to the hypocrite that which, in vers. 10 and 11, by word and look, he had only hinted at: "Jehovah hath shown thee to me as king of Syria," *i. e.*, I know what thou aimest at, and also what thou wilt become. The words by no means involve a solemn prophetical institution or consecration (anointing) to be king, such as, for instance, occurs in chap. ix. 3, 6, but they are a simple prediction (which, at the same time, probes Hazael's conscience) of that which should come to pass. He means to say: As God has revealed to me Benhadad's death, so has he also revealed to me thy elevation to the throne. Hazael, therefore, startled by the revelation of his secret plans, makes no reply to the earnest words of the prophet, but turns away.

Ver. 14. **So he departed from Elisha,** &c. Hazael makes the very reply to his master which the prophet had predicted that he would (ver. 10), and we see from the words אָמַר לִי וגו still more clearly, that we must read לוֹ for לֹא in ver. 10. In the 15th verse וַיִּקַּח cannot have any other subject than the three verbs which precede, וַיָּבֹא, וַיֵּלֶךְ, and וַיֹּאמֶר. It is not, therefore, Benhadad (Luther, Schulz, and others), but Hazael. Moreover, it is inconsistent with the entire context that Benhadad himself, in order to refresh himself, should have laid a cloth, dipped in water, upon his face, and then should have died from the effects of the repressed perspiration. מַכְבֵּר means, primarily, something woven, *a woven fabric*, but it is not a fly-guard (Michaelis, Hess, and others), nor a bath-blanket or quilt (Ewald); but a woven, and hence thick and heavy, coverlet (Sept. *στρῶμα*); the bed-coverlet. This, when dipped in water, became so heavy that, when spread over his face, it prevented his breathing, and so either produced suffocation, as most understand it, or brought on apoplexy, as Thenius suggests. Clericus correctly states the reason why Hazael chose just this form of murder: *ut hominem facilius suffocaret, ne vi interemtus videret.* He would have the less opposition to fear, in mounting the throne, as he intended, if Benhadad appeared to have died a natural death. We have not, therefore, to think of strangulation, which Josephus states was here employed (*τὸν μὲν στραγγάλῃ διέφθειρε*). Philippson remarks that, in cases of violent fever, it is the custom in the Orient, according to Bruce, to pour cold water over the bed, and that this bold treatment was perhaps tried in the case of Benhadad, but with unfortunate results. This, however, is not at all probable. We may feel confident that no one will ever succeed in clearing Ha-

zael from the crime of regicide, however much some have tried it. Ewald (*Geschichte des Volkes Israel*, iii. *s.* 522 [3*e Ausg. s.* 561]), narrates the occurrence thus: "As the king was about to take his bath (?), his servant (?), we cannot now tell more precisely from what particular motive, dipped the bathing-blanket (?) in the warm (?) water, and drew it, before the king could call for help, so tightly together (?) over his head, that he was smothered." Every one sees that the text says nothing of all that. [It is unnatural, of course, to introduce a new subject for ויקח. Also, it is not likely that the king committed suicide the day after he had shown so much anxiety about his life. Hazael alone remains, and so we translate. But Ewald refers the case to the usage in which an indefinite subject, *one* (Germ. *man*), must be supplied, § 294, b. He furthermore points to the article in המכבר, which refers to some well-known object, he thinks to a *bath-blanket*. This, then, would identify the subject as the servant who was assisting him in the bath. Again, Ewald observes that if Hazael were the subject he would not be mentioned again immediately afterwards (*Geschichte*, ed. iii. vol. III. *s.* 562 n. 2). These considerations are not, perhaps, strong enough to support the inferences which he draws from them, but they certainly are not contemptible. —W. G. S.]

HISTORICAL AND ETHICAL.

1. *This passage is not by any means arbitrarily inserted* here in the course of the history of the kings. It stands in close and intelligent connection with what precedes and what follows. The first incident (vers. 1–6) is not intended simply to prove "how God, by overruling slight circumstances, often brings about great blessings" (Köster); neither can it properly be entitled: "The Seven-year Famine," or "The Restoration of the Shunammite's Property." It is rather intended to show the high estimation in which the king held the prophet. The king had been a witness of very many acts of Elisha, which forced from him a recognition of the prophet's worth. In order to arrive at a still more complete estimate of him, he desires to learn from a reliable source all the great and extraordinary works which Elisha had accomplished, and of which he had already perhaps heard something by public rumor. He therefore applies to Gehazi for this information. While Gehazi was telling the story of the Shunammite, she herself came in and was able to ratify what he narrated. The king was so much carried away by the story, and by this marvellous meeting with the woman herself, that he, for the sake of the prophet, restored to her the property she had lost, and even added more than she ever could have expected. This story, therefore, shows us the effect which the acts of Elisha had had upon the king, and is perfectly in place here. Moreover, it forms the connection with what follows. In spite of all his recognition of Elisha as a prophet, still Jehoram "cleaved unto the sins of Jeroboam and departed not therefrom" (iii. 3). He still tolerated the disgraceful idolatrous worship in Israel, so that, before his end, Jehu could retort upon him: "What peace, so long as the whoredoms of thy mother Jezebel and her witchcrafts are so many?" (chap. ix. 22). Therefore it was that the storm-clouds of divine judgment, which were to bring ruin to him, and to the entire house of Ahab, were already collecting. This judgment came from two directions, as the oracle 1 Kings xix. 15 *sq.* (see *Exeg.* notes thereon) had already predicted that it would come, both from without and from within; foreign invasion from Syria by Hazael, and domestic rebellion by Jehu. The second narrative above concerns Hazael; chap. ix. treats of Jehu. The main point in the second narrative (vers. 7–15) is the announcement of the divine judgment which is to fall upon Israel by the hand of Hazael (vers. 11–13). All the rest, both what precedes and what follows, is only introduction to this, or development of it. As God's prophet in Israel (v. 8), Elisha had the painful task, which he performed with tears, of designating in advance the usurper Hazael as the one through whom the divine judgment should be inflicted, "in order that Israel might thereafter know all the more surely that Jehovah had prepared this chastisement, and that it was His hand which laid this scourge upon apostates" (Krummacher). [As the whole series of incidents, of which this is one, is told in order to show the greatness of the prophet, so it seems more consistent to see the aim of this one in the intention to show that Elisha foreknew and foretold Hazael's crime and usurpation, and the misery which he inflicted upon Israel. —W. G. S.]

2. *The first narrative* (vers. 1–6) contains, besides the chief point, which has already been specified, a series of incidents which form a marvellous web of divine dispensations. The restoration of the Shunammite's property, with which it ends, is connected by a chain of intervening incidents with the famine predicted by the prophet, with which it begins. The restoration of the property presupposes its loss; this the temporary absence from the country; that took place by the advice of the prophet, and this advice was founded upon the scarcity which God had inflicted as a punishment, and which He had revealed beforehand to the prophet. It was especially the marvellous, divinely ordered, meeting of the Shunammite and Gehazi in the presence of the king, which influenced the latter to his unexpected decision. This meeting was, for the king, a seal to the story of Gehazi, and for the Shunammite a seal upon her faith and trust in the prophet. Once she declined any intercession of the prophet with the king on her behalf (chap. iv. 13); now she found that she received help, for the prophet's sake, even without his immediate interference. Krummacher: "God does not always help by startling miracles, although His hands are not tied from even these. More frequently His deliverances are disguised in the more or less transparent veil of ordinary occurrences, nay, even of accidents. This and that takes place, which at the time we hardly consider worthy of notice; but let us wait until these slight providential incidents are all collected together, and the last thread is woven into the artistic web."

3. What is here told us about *king Jehoram* presents him to us from his better side. His desire to learn all of Elisha's acts, still more the way in which he was ready at once to help the distressed Shunammite to the recovery of her property, testify to a receptivity for elevated impressions, and to a disposition to yield to them. By the fact that he recognized all that was extraordinary in the person of the prophet, and yet that he did not desist from his false line of conduct, he showed that, in

the main point, the relation of himself and of his people to Jehovah, nothing good could any longer be expected of him. His better feelings were transitory and, on a broad and general survey, ineffectual. He continued to be a reed, swayed hither and thither by the wind, easily moved, but undecided and unreliable, so that finally, when all the warnings and exhortations of the prophet had produced no effect, he fell under the just and inevitable judgment of God.

4. *The second narrative* (vers. 7-15) relates, it is true, the fulfilment of the oracle in 1 Kings xix. 15, but it shows, at the same time, that that oracle cannot be understood in its literal sense (see the *Exeg.* notes on that passage), for it is historically established here that Hazael, who now appears for the first time in the history, was not anointed king of Syria by either Elijah or Elisha, though he does appear as the divinely-appointed executor of the judgments which God had decreed against Israel. Jehovah "shows" him as such to the prophet, and the latter, far from seeking him in Damascus and anointing him, or even saluting him, as king, gives the usurper, who comes to meet him with presents and hypocritical humility, to understand, both by his manner and his words, that he sees his treacherous plans, and he tells him, with tears, what God had revealed, that he should be the great enemy and oppressor of Israel. Thereupon Hazael departs, startled and embarrassed, without a word. This is the clear story of the incident as this narration presents it to us. There is no room, therefore, for any supposition that Hazael was anointed by the prophet. On the other hand, it is an entire mistake, on the part of some of the modern historians, to see in the conduct of Elisha only the "enmity of the prophets of Jehovah" towards Jehoram and his dynasty, and to make Elisha a liar and a traitor, as Duncker (*Geschichte des Alterthums*, i. *s.* 413) does, when he says: "At a later time [after the siege of Samaria by Benhadad, chap. vi.] Elisha spent some time among the enemies of his country, in Damascus. Here Benhadad was slain by one of his servants, Hazael, at the instigation of Elisha. Hazael then mounted the throne of Damascus and renewed the war against Israel, not without encouragement from Elisha." In like manner Weber (*Gesch. des Volkes Israel's*, 236) remarks: "This opportunity [the illness of Benhadad] appears to have been taken advantage of by the prophet to bring about a palace revolution, as a result of which the king of Damascus was murdered on his sick-bed, by means of a fly-net (?)." Such misrepresentation of history can only be explained by the neglect or ignorance of the Hebrew text. When will people cease to make modern revolutionary agitators of the ancient prophets? According to Köster (*Die Proph.*, *s.* 94) the sense of the entire story is this: "A prophet may not allow himself to be restrained from proclaiming the word of Jehovah, by the possibility of evil or crime which may result from it." This thought, which is, at best, a very common-place one, and which might have been presented more strikingly and precisely in a hundred other ways, is entirely foreign to the story before us.

5. ***The prophet Elisha appears, in this second narrative, in a very brilliant light.*** As he had forced recognition of his own worth from the king of Israel, so he had attained to high esteem with the king of Syria. The rude, proud, and unsubmissive Benhadad, the arch-enemy of Israel, whose undertakings Elisha had often frustrated, who had once sent an armed detachment to capture him, shows him, as soon as he hears of his presence in his country, the highest honors. He sends out his highest officer with grand gifts to meet him, calls himself humbly his son, and sends a request to him that he will pray to God on his behalf. This in itself overthrows the notion that "Elisha's celebrated skill in medicine" (Weber) led the king to this step. We are not told what produced this entire change in Benhadad's disposition; but it is, at any rate, a strong proof of the mighty influence which Elisha must have exerted, both by word and deed, that he was held in so high esteem even in Syria, and that Benhadad himself bent before him. This reception, which he met with in a foreign land, was also a warning sign for Israel. He stands before us, high in worth and dignity in this occurrence also, both as man of God and prophet. He does not feel himself flattered by the high honors which are conferred upon him. They influence him as little as the rich gifts, which he does not even accept. At the sight of the man who, according to the purpose of God, was to be the scourge of his people, he is carried away by such grief that he, as our Lord once did, at the sight of Jerusalem moving on to its destruction, burst into tears for the people who did not consider those things "which belonged to their peace." How any one can form the suspicion, under such circumstances, that Elisha stood in secret collusion with Hazael, to whose conscience he addresses such sharp reproofs, or can say: "Hazael at once commenced a war upon Israel, instigated by Elisha" (Weber), it is hard to understand.

6. This narrative leaves no room for doubt as to *Hazael's character*, and especially is that labor thrown away which is spent upon the attempt to acquit him of the murder of Benhadad, or to represent his guilt at least as uncertain, for וַיָּמֹת, which follows the words: He (Hazael) "spread it on his face," means, so that he died, as in 1 Sam. xxv. 38; 1 Kings ii. 46; 2 Kings xii. 21. At heart proud, haughty, and imperious, he affects humility and submissiveness; towards his master, who had entrusted him with the most important commission, he is false and treacherous. He shrinks from no means to attain his object. He lies and deceives, but, at the same time, he is cunning and crafty, and knows how to conceal his traitorous purposes. When, alarmed and exposed by the words of the prophet, he can no longer keep them secret, he marches on to the crime, although he seeks to execute it in such a way that he may not appear to be guilty. With all this he combines energy, courage, cruelty, and a blind hatred against Israel, as the sequel shows. On account of these qualities, he was well fitted to be, in the hand of God, a rod of anger and a staff of indignation (Isai. x. 5). "The Lord makes the vessels of wrath serviceable for the purpose of His government" (Krummacher), and here we have again, as often in the history of redemption, an example of wickedness punished by wickedness, and of godless men made, without their will or knowledge, instruments of holiness and justice (see above, 1 Kings xxii. *Hist.* § 6).

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

Vers. 1–6. King Jehoram and the Shunammite. (*a*) The marvellous meeting of the two (the inscrutable and yet wise and gracious orderings of God, Isai. xxviii. 29; lv. 8, 9); (*b*) the restoration of the property believed to be lost (a proof of the truth of Prov. xxi. 1; and Ps. cxlvi. 7, 9; therefore, Ps. xxxvii. 5).—Vers. 1–3. Krummacher: Famine, pest, war, and all other forms of calamity, form an army which is subject to the command of God, which comes and goes at His command, which is ready to attack or ready to retire as He may order, and which can assail no one without command. They are sometimes commissioned to punish, and to be the agents of the divine justice, sometimes to arouse and to bring back the intoxicated to sobriety, sometimes to embitter the world to sinners, and push them to the throne of grace, and sometimes to try the saints, and light the purifying fires about them. . . . So no man has to do simply with the sufferings which fall upon him, but, before all, with Him who inflicted them.—Seiler: It is not a rare thing for God to lead even a large number of persons at the same time away from a certain place, where some calamity would have befallen them with others. Do not abandon thy fatherland without being certain of the call of God: "Arise! Go," &c., as Abraham was (Gen. xii. 1). Faith clings to the words in Ps. xxxvii. 18, 19. It is the holy duty and the noblest task of human government to help the oppressed, to secure justice for orphans, and to help the cause of the widow (Isai. i. 17; Ps. lxxxii. 3).—Vers. 4–6. The King's Consultation with Gehazi. (*a*) The motive of it; (*b*) the effect of it.—Ver. 4. Osiander: That is the way with many great men; they like to hear of the deeds and discourses of pious teachers, and even admire them, but will not be improved by them (Mark vi. 20; Acts xxiv. 24 *sq.*; xxv. 22; xxvi. 28).—Krummacher: People are not wanting even now-a-days who, although they are strangers to the life which has its source in God, nevertheless have a feeling of interest and enthusiasm for the miraculous contents of the text. They read such portions of Scripture with delight. . . . Even a certain warmth of feeling is not wanting. What, however, is totally wanting, is the broken and contrite spirit, the character of a poor and helpless sinner.—Ver. 5. That the word which has been heard may not fall by the wayside, but take root in the heart, God, in His mercy, often causes special occurrences to take place immediately afterwards which bear testimony to the truth of the word.—Ver. 6. For the sake of the prophet the Shunammite was helped out of her misfortune, and reinstated in the possession of her property. The Lord never forgets the kindnesses which are shown to a prophet in the name of a prophet (Matt. x. 41); He repays them not once but many times (chap. iv. 8–10). The word of God often extorts from an unconverted man a good and noble action, which, however, if it only proceeds from a sudden emotion, and stands alone, resembles a flower, which blooms in the morning, and in the evening fades and dies. True servants of God, like Elisha, are often fountains of great blessing, without their own immediate participation or knowledge.

Vers. 7–15. Elisha in Syria. (*a*) Benhadad's mission to him; (*b*) the meeting with Hazael; (*c*) the announcement of the judgments upon Israel.—Vers. 7 and 8. Benhadad upon the Sick-bed. (*a*) The rebellious, haughty, and mighty king, the arch-enemy of Israel, who had never troubled himself about the living God, lies in wretchedness; he has lost courage, and now he seeks the prophet whom he once wished to capture, just as a servant seeks his master. The Lord can, with his hammer, which breaketh in pieces even the flinty rock, also make tender the hearts of men (Isai. xxvi. 16). Those who are the most self-willed in prosperity are often the most despairing in misfortune. Not until the end approaches do they seek God; but He cannot help in death those who in life have never thought of Him. (*b*) He does not send to ask the prophet: What shall I, poor sinner, do that I may find grace and be saved? but only whether he shall recover his health. (Starke: The children of this world are only anxious for bodily welfare; about eternal welfare they are indifferent.) It should be our first care in severe illness to set our house in order, and to surrender ourselves to the will of God, so that we may truthfully say with the apostle: "For whether we live," &c. (Rom. xiv. 8). The time and the hour of death are concealed from men, and it is vain to inquire about them.—Ver. 7. The man of God is come! That was the cry in the heathen city of Damascus, and the news penetrated even to the king, who rejoiced to hear it. This did not occur to Elisha in any city of Israel, Luke iv. 24 *sq.* (John i. 11; Acts xviii. 6). Blessed is the city and the country where there is rejoicing that a man of God is come!—Vers. 9–11. So much the times may change! He who once was despised, hated, and persecuted, is now met with royal honors and rich presents; but the one makes him uncertain and wavering just as little as the other. The testimonials of honor, and the praise of the great and mighty, the rich and those of high station, are often a much more severe temptation to waver for the messengers of the word of God, than persecution and shame. To be a true man of God is not consistent with vanity and self-satisfaction. The faithful messenger delivers his message without respect of persons, in season and out of season (2 Tim. iv. 2). He who seeks for the honor which cometh only from God (John v. 44), will not let himself be blinded by honor before men (Acts xiv. 14; Sirach xx. 31).—Ver. 10. However well a man may know how to conceal his secret thoughts and wicked plans, there is One who sees them, even long before they are put in operation; from whom the darkness hideth not, and for whom the night shineth as the day (Ps. cxxxix. 2–12). He will sooner or later bring to light what is hidden in darkness, and reveal the secret counsel of the heart (1 Cor. iv. 5).—Ver. 11. He who has a good conscience is never disturbed or embarrassed if any one looks him directly in the eye; but a bad conscience cannot endure an open, firm look, and trembles with terror at every rustling leaf.—Vers. 11, 12. Elisha weeps. These were not tears of sentiment, but of the deepest pain, worthy of a man of God, who knows of no greater evil than the apostasy of his people from the living God, the determined contempt for the divine word, and the rejection of the divine grace. Where are the men who now-a-days weep such tears? They were also tears of the most faithful love, which is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil, vaunteth not itself, and is not puffed up. So

our Lord wept once over Jerusalem (Luke xix. 41), and St. Paul over Israel (Rom. ix. 1–3).—Ver. 13. Subserviency before men is always joined with falseness and hypocrisy. Therefore trust no one who is more than humble and modest. Hazael called himself a dog, while he plotted in his heart to become king of a great people.—CRAMER: It is the way with all hypocrites that they bend and cringe, and humble themselves, and conceal their tricks, until they perceive their opportunity, and have found the key of the situation (2 Sam. xv. 6).—KRUMMACHER: There is scarcely anything more discordant and disgusting than the dialect of self-abasement, when it bears upon its face the stamp of affectation and falsehood.—Vers. 14, 15. It is the curse which rests upon him who has sold himself to sin, that all which ought to awaken his conscience, and terrify and shock him out of his security, only makes him more obstinate, and pushes him on to carry out his evil designs (*cf.* John xiii. 21–30).—Ver. 15. The Lord abhorreth the bloody and deceitful man (Ps. v. 7). He who, by treason and murder, ascends a throne, is no king by the grace of God, but only a rod of wrath in the hands of God, which is broken in pieces when it has served its purpose.

FIFTH SECTION.

THE MONARCHY UNDER JEHORAM AND AHAZIAH IN JUDAH, AND THE ELEVATION OF JEHU TO THE THRONE IN ISRAEL.

CHAP. VIII. 16–IX. 37.

A.—*The reigns of Jehoram and Ahaziah in Judah.*

CHAP. VIII. 16–29 (2 CHRON. XXI. 2–20).

16 AND in the fifth year of Joram the son of Ahab king of Israel [(] [1]Jehosha-
phat *being* then [had been] king of Judah[)], [*or expunge the sentence in parenthesis*]
17 Jehoram the son of Jehoshaphat king of Judah began to reign. Thirty and
two years old was he when he began to reign; and he reigned eight years [2] in
18 Jerusalem. And he walked in the way of the kings of Israel, as did the house
of Ahab; for the daughter of Ahab [3] was his wife: and he did evil in the sight
19 of the Lord. Yet the Lord would not destroy Judah [4] for David his servant's
sake, as he [had] promised him to give him always [*omit* always] a light [forever],
and to [referring to] his children.
20 In his days Edom revolted from under the hand of Judah, and made a king
21 over themselves. So Joram went over to Zair, and all the chariots with him:
and he rose by night, and smote the Edomites which compassed him about,[5] and
[*smote*][6] the captains of the chariots [i. e., of the Edomites]: and the people [of
22 Israel] fled into their tents. Yet [So] Edom revolted from under the hand of
23 Judah unto this day. Then Libnah revolted at the same time. And the rest
of the acts of Joram, and all that he did, *are* they not written in the book of
24 the Chronicles of the kings of Judah? And Joram slept with his fathers, and
was buried with his fathers in the city of David: and Ahaziah his son reigned
in his stead.
25 In the twelfth year of Joram the son of Ahab king of Israel did Ahaziah the
26 son of Jehoram king of Judah begin to reign. Two and twenty years old *was*
Ahaziah when he began to reign: and he reigned one year in Jerusalem. And
27 his mother's name *was* Athaliah, the daughter of Omri king of Israel. And he
walked in the way of the house of Ahab, and did evil in the sight of the Lord,
as *did* the house of Ahab: for he *was* the son-in-law of [connected by marriage
with] [7] the house of Ahab.
28 And he went with Joram the son of Ahab [And Joram himself [8] went] to
the war against Hazael king of Syria in Ramothgilead; and the Syrians

29 wounded Joram. And king Joram went back to be healed in Jezreel of the wounds which the Syrians had given him [10] at Ramah, when he fought against Hazael King of Syria. And Ahaziah the son of Jehoram king of Judah went down to see Joram the son of Ahab in Jezreel, because he was sick.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

[1] Ver. 16.—[Keil and Bähr and the English translators take וִיהוֹשָׁפָט מֶלֶךְ יְהוּדָה as a parenthesis. In this view it must be understood that Jehoram of Judah assumed the government during the lifetime of his father. (See the Excursus on the Chronology.) In the Sept. (Alex.) Syr., Arab., and many MSS., the words are wanting. They arise from an error of the copyist, who repeated them from the end of the verse (Thenius, Bunsen). Ewald supplies מֵת before מֶלֶךְ; but, as Thenius well objects, there is no instance of any such statement inserted in the midst of this current formula.

[2] Ver. 17.—[The keri proposes the pl. שָׁנִים according to the rule for numbers between two and ten.

[3] Ver. 18.—[" Daughter of Ahab," viz., Athaliah, ver. 26. According to 2 Chron. xxi. 4, he put to death all his brothers, perhaps, as Keil suggests, in order to get the treasures which Jehoshaphat had given to them (2 Chron. xxi. 3).

[4] Ver. 19.—[" The Lord would not destroy Judah," &c., 2 Chron. xxi. 7. "The Lord would not destroy the house of David, because of the covenant that He had made with David," *cf.* 2 Sam. vii. 12. On נִיר, see on 1 Kings xi. 36. לְבָנָיו, *i. e.*, "*referring to*, or, according to the sense, *through*, or *by means of*, his children" (Thenius, Bähr, Keil, Bunsen, and others). A man's posterity is spoken of as his light. It burns until his descendants die out. God promised that David's light should last forever, "referring to" his posterity, through whom, or by preserving whom, God would keep the promise. (*Cf.* 1 Kings xv. 4, for another example of the usage. The "and" in the E.V. is imported from 2 Chron. xxi. 7, where it is adopted, as in the Vulg. and Sept., as an "easier reading" (Thenius).

[5] Ver. 21.—[הַסֹּבֵב is an anomalous form. It is punctuated with tsere, which is thus written full, although it is long only by accent. Ewald only says of it that it "is very remarkable" (s. 52, note 1). There are a few forms like יֹסִיף which have sometimes been explained as part. kal, and some desire to punctuate this סֹבֵב, still regarding it as part. kal, but explaining it by the last-mentioned analogy. Böttcher, however (§ 994, 3), disposes otherwise of every one of those forms, and thus destroys that analogy. He punctuates this הַסָּבִיב. The sense would not be different, but a concise and literal translation is difficult. "He attacked Edom, the investment against him," *i. e.*, he attacked the line which enclosed him.

[6] Ver. 21.—[" Smote" must be repeated in the English in order to show that "captain" is in the same construction with "Edomites."

[7] Ver. 27.—[חתן is used here generally for a relative by marriage. See the Chron. (II., xxii. 3 and 4) for a development of this statement.

[8] Ver. 28.—[אֶת is not the prep., but the case-sign. Böttcher has vindicated for this the signification "self," § 515, *cf.* 2 Kings vi. 5. "The iron itself;" the part which was iron; not the handle.

[9] Ver. 28.—[For the omission of the article in ארמים, *cf.* 1 Sam. xvii. 52 and 53, and Ew. § 277, c. The article is necessary according to the general usage, but exceptions occur.

[10] Ver. 29.—[" Which the Syrians had given." The imperf. here, and in ix. 15 in the Hebrew text, is very remarkable. Elsewhere we find the perf. in relative or other subordinate clauses, which interrupt the flow of discourse in order to specify attendant circumstances or details. It is like the aorist used for the pluperf. In 2 Chron. xxii. 6 we find the perf.—In 2 Chron. xxi. 17 it is stated that the Philistines and Arabians carried away all the sons of Jehoram but Jehoahaz, the youngest. In xxii. 1 it is stated that the inhabitants of Jerusalem made Ahaziah, the youngest and only remaining son of Jehoram, king. The two names are equivalent in meaning, the syllable from the name of Jehovah being in the one case prefixed, and in the other, affixed. Probably the latter form was the one adopted when he ascended the throne. In xxii. 6 we have the form Azariah, which is probably, as Ewald suggests, a slip of the pen.—W. G. S.]

THE CHRONOLOGY OF THE PERIOD FROM AHAB TO JEHU.

Polus says of the chronological statement with which this passage commences: *Occurrit hic nodus impeditus*, because it does not accord with previous data, especially with chap. i. 17, and has, therefore, caused the expositors great trouble. The question whether any reconciliation at all is possible, and, if so, how it is to be brought about, can only be answered after comparing all the data with reference to the reigns of the several kings of both realms between Ahab and Jehu. For, not only does a new period in the history of the monarchy begin with Jehu's reign, but also it gives a fixed point from which to calculate the chronology of the preceding period, seeing that Jehoram of Israel and Ahaziah of Judah were both slain by him, perhaps upon the same day (chap. ix. 21–27), and so there was a change of occupant on both thrones at the same time. This year, which almost all modern expositors agree in fixing, with a unanimity which is not usual with them, is the year 884 B.C. [This unanimity is not apparent. Rösch (Art. "*Zeitrechnung*," in Herz. *Encyc.*) gives a table of twelve authorities. They fix this date as follows: Petavius, 884; Ussher, 884; Des Vignoles, 876; Bengel, 886; Thiele, 888; Winer, 884; Ewald, 883; Thenius, 884; Keil, 883; Seyffarth, 855; Bunsen, 873. We may add, Rawlinson, 884; Lenormant, 886; Lepsius (on the ground of the Egyptian chronology) 861. No one of them makes this the starting point for introducing the dates of the Christian era into the Jewish chronology, and it is clear that there is no more certain means of establishing the date of Jehu's accession in terms of the Christian era, than that of any other event. This date being thus arbitrarily fixed by the consensus of chronologers who have reached it by starting from some other date which they were able to fix by some independent means, all the other dates in Bähr's chronology must suffer from the uncertainty which attaches to this. It is not an independent and scientific method of procedure. For the true point of connection between the Jewish chronology and the Christian era, see the appendix to this volume. The

dates adopted by Bähr are also there collected into a table for convenience of reference.—W. G. S.] From this date backwards, the dates of the other reigns must therefore be fixed according to the data given in the text. As there are two kings who have the same name, יוֹרָם or יְהוֹרָם (in 2 Kings i. 17 and 2 Chron. xxii. 6, both are called יְהוֹרָם; in 2 Kings ix. 15, 17, 21, יוֹרָם is the name of the king of Israel; in 2 Kings viii. 16 and 29, the king of Israel is called יוֹרָם, and the king of Judah יְהוֹרָם, while in chap. viii. 21, 23, 24, the king of Judah is called יוֹרָם), we will call the king of Israel, in what follows, Joram, and the king of Judah, Jehoram, simply in order to avoid ambiguity.

We have to bear in mind, first of all, in counting the years of the reigns, the peculiar method of reckoning of the Hebrews. According to a rule which is given several times in the Talmud, and which was adopted also by Josephus in his writings, a year in the reign of a king is reckoned from Nisan to Nisan, in such a way that a single day before or after [the first of] this month is counted as a year (see Keil on 1 Kings xii. *s.* 139 *sq.*, where the passages from the Talmud are quoted). [The note is as follows: "'The only method of reckoning the year of the kings is from Nisan.' Further on, after quoting certain passages in proof, it is added: 'Rabbi Chasda said: "They give this rule only in regard to the kings of Israel."' Nisan was the beginning of the year for the kings, and a single day in the year (*i. e.*, after the first day of Nisan) is counted as a year. 'One day on the end of the year is counted as a year.'" The citations are from the tract on the "Beginning of the Year" (רֹאשׁ הַשָּׁנָה) in the Guemara of Babylon, c. i. fol. iii., p. 1, ed. Amstel.] It cannot be doubted that this method of reckoning is the one employed in the books before us, for we saw above (1 Kings xv. 9 and 25) that the reign could not have comprised full years to the number stated. The same is also clear from a comparison of 1 Kings xxii. 51, and 2 Kings iii. 1, and other examples will follow. Such a method of reckoning, which counted portions of a year as whole years in estimating the duration of a reign, necessarily produced inaccuracies and uncertainties, so that the difference of a year in different chronological data cannot present any difficulty, much less throw doubt upon the entire chronology of the period or overthrow it. If now we reckon back from the established date, 884 B.C., the reigns of the separate kings, the following results are obtained:

(*a*) For the kings of Judah:—Ahaziah, who died in 884, reigned only one year (2 Kings viii. 26), and, in fact, as is generally admitted, not a full twelvemonth. He therefore came to the throne in 884 or 885. His predecessor, Jehoram, reigned eight years (chap. viii. 17), down to 885, so that his accession fell in 891 or 892. Jehoshaphat, his father, reigned twenty-five years (1 Kings xxii. 42), that is, from 916 or 917 on. As he came to the throne in the fourth year of Ahab, the accession of the latter falls in 919 or 920.

(*b*) For the kings of Israel:—Joram, who died in 884, had reigned for twelve years (chap. iii. 1). He came to the throne, therefore, in 895 or 896. His predecessor, Ahaziah, reigned for two years (1 Kings xxii. 51 and 2 Kings iii. 1), but, as is admitted, not two full years. Hence he became king in 897 or 898. Ahab, his father, reigned for twenty-two years (1 Kings xvi. 29); came to the throne, therefore, between 919 and 920, which agrees with the reckoning above.

Again, if we reckon the corresponding years of the reigns in the two kingdoms, we arrive at the following calculation: (*a*) Ahaziah of Judah became king in the twelfth year of Joram of Israel (chap. viii. 26), and, as the latter was slain in the same year as the former (884), the one year of the former (viii. 26), cannot have been a full year. (*b*) Jehoram of Judah became king in the fifth year of Joram of Israel (viii. 16), and, as the latter's accession falls in 895 or 896 (see above), his fifth year coincides with 891 or 892, the date above established for the accession of Jehoram. (*c*) Ahaziah of Israel became king in the seventeenth (1 Kings xxii. 51), and his successor, Joram, in the eighteenth (2 Kings iii. 1) year of Jehoshaphat, whence it is clear that Ahaziah, as was above remarked, did not reign for two whole years (1 Kings xxii. 51). The seventeenth of Jehoshaphat falls, reckoning from his accession in 916, in 899, and his eighteenth in 898, whereas, according to the above calculation, Ahaziah came to the throne between 897 and 898, and Joram between 897 and 896. This insignificant discrepancy is evidently due to the Hebrew method of reckoning, for under that system it might well be that the two years of Ahaziah, although not complete, might embrace parts of 898, 897, and 896, and still Ahaziah might follow in the seventeenth and Joram in the eighteenth year of Jehoshaphat. At any rate, the historical details, which are of far greater importance, are not touched by these slight chronological differences, far less are they in contradiction with them. Finally, if we add the reigns of the three kings of Judah, viz., Jehoshaphat twenty-five, Jehoram eight, and Ahaziah one, the sum is thirty-four years. As these years, however, were not all full, there cannot be more than thirty-two in all. The reigns of the three kings of Israel, Ahab twenty-two, Ahaziah two, Joram twelve, amount to thirty-six years, which were not all complete, so that they cannot give in all over thirty-five years. The entire period from Ahab to Jehu contains between thirty-five and thirty-six years, and, as Jehoshaphat came to the throne in the fourth year of Ahab, the sums agree.

While the eleven data given in six passages thus agree essentially, one statement, 2 Kings i. 17, according to which Joram of Israel became king in the second year of Jehoram of Judah, differs decidedly. If it is authentic, Jehoshaphat cannot have reigned twenty-five years, but only seventeen, and there was no eighteenth year of his, in which the accession of Joram of Israel is declared to have fallen (iii. 1). Moreover, Jehoshaphat's successor, Jehoram of Judah, did not then reign eight (chap. viii. 17), but fourteen years, and he came to the throne, not in the fifth (viii. 16) year of Joram of Israel, but a year before him. This brings great disturbance, not only into the chronology, but also into the history of the entire period. In order to do away with this glaring discrepancy, the founder of biblical chronology, Ussher, following the rabbinical book called *Seder Olam*, adopted the explanation, in his *Annal. Vet. et Nov. Testam.*, 1650, that Jehoram reigned for six

or seven years with his father Jehoshaphat. This theory of a joint reign is the most generally accepted explanation. Keil defends it very vigorously, and asserts that "Jehoshaphat, when he marched out with Ahab to war against Syria in Ramoth Gilead (1 Kings xxii. 3 *sq.*), appointed his son regent, and committed to him the government of the kingdom. The statement in 2 Kings i. 17, that Joram of Israel became king in the second year of Jehoram of Judah, dates from this joint government. . . . But, in the fifth year of this joint administration, Jehoshaphat gave up the government entirely to him (Jehoram). From this time, *i. e.*, from the twenty-third year of Jehoshaphat, we have to reckon the eight years of the reign of Jehoram of Judah, so that he reigned alone, after his father's death, only six years." This reconciliation is artificial and forced; but the following considerations tell especially against it:

(*a*) The biblical text says nothing anywhere about the assumed fact that Jehoshaphat raised his son to share his throne six or seven years before he died, and that he then, in the fifth year of this divided government, retired entirely, although, if any king had done such a thing, it must have had deep influence on the history of the monarchy. Keil himself is forced to admit that "we do not know the reasons which impelled Jehoshaphat to abdicate in favor of his son two years before his death." It never can be proper to supplement the history on the basis of an isolated chronological statement. In 2 Chron. xxi. 5 and 20, the reign of Jehoram dates from the death of his predecessor, just as in the case of all the other kings, and its duration is stated as eight years, no account being taken of any two years during which he is thought to have reigned while his father was yet alive, or of five years that he reigned jointly with him. It is said there, in ver. 3, that Jehoshaphat "gave" to his sons gold and fortified cities, but to his eldest son, Jehoram, the kingdom; yet that clearly refers to the disposition he made for the time after his death, and not to any distribution which he accomplished two, or, in fact, seven, years before his death.

(*b*) Appeal is made, in support of this assumed joint government, to the obscure words in 2 Kings viii. 16: וִיהוֹשָׁפָט מֶלֶךְ יְהוּדָה, which Clericus supplements by עוֹד חַי, *adhuc erat in vivis, aut simile quidpiam.* Keil, with many of the old commentators, translates: "While Jehoshaphat was (still) king of Judah," *i. e.*, during the lifetime of Jehoshaphat. But those words are wanting in the Syrian and Arabic versions, in some MSS., and in the Complutensian Septuagint. Luther and De Wette leave them untranslated. Houbigant, Kennicott, Dathe, Schulz, Maurer, and Thenius want to remove them from the text. Thenius says that they are "evidently due to an error of the copyist, who has repeated them here from the end of the verse," and that "they were then provided with the conjunction, in order to give them a connection." We cannot, therefore, call their omission from the text "a piece of critical violence," as Keil does. If, however, it is desired to retain them, because they are in the massoretic text, the Chaldee version, the Vulgate, and the Vatican Sept., still they cannot be translated in the manner proposed. The word "still," which is here so important, is wanting in the text, and cannot be inserted without further deliberation. Kimchi and Ewald, with the rabbinical *Sedar Olam*, supply מֵת after יְהוּדָה, *i. e.*, "and Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, was dead." This, however, would be constructing a sentence which states what is true to be sure, but "the superfluousness of which, and the unprecedentedness also, in the midst of the current formula in which it occurs, it is not necessary to point out" (Thenius) If the words are to stand, the only possible recourse is to supply הָיָה, which so often is wanting, in the sense of the pluperfect. The sentence would then have to be understood as a parenthesis, intended to refer back again to the last king of Judah, because, in this verse, the history of the kingdom, which has been interrupted by the narrative of other incidents from 1 Kings xxii. 50 up to this point, is now to be resumed. "Jehoshaphat had been king of Judah." But in what manner soever the words may be translated, they can in no case obscure the clear and definite declaration that Jehoram became king in the fifth year of Joram of Israel, and that he reigned eight years. What is obscure can never explain what is clear, but only, *vice versa*, that which is clear can explain what is obscure.

(*c*) When Joram of Israel undertook the war against Moab (2 Kings iii. 4 *sq.*), (at the earliest in the first year of his reign), he called upon "Jehoshaphat king of Judah" to go with him, and when the three kings of Judah, Israel, and Edom, turned, in their distress, to Elisha, he would have nothing to do with Joram, but referred him to the prophets of Ahab and Jezebel, and finally gave ear to him only for the sake of "Jehoshaphat king of Judah," who was faithful to Jehovah (ver. 14). But if Jehoram had then been king of Judah according to chap. i. 17, or even joint ruler, Jehoshaphat could not have been spoken of simply as ruling king of Judah.

(*d*) Jehoshaphat held firmly to the worship of Jehovah, and was a decided opponent of all worship of Baal or Astarte. He was, in fact, one of the most pious of the kings of Judah (1 Kings xxii. 43; 2 Chron. xvii. 3–6; xix. 3; xx. 32); his son Jehoram, on the contrary, did what was evil in the sight of God, and was devoted to the worship of Baal, which Ahab's family had introduced (2 Kings viii. 18; 2 Chron. xxi. 6 and 11 *sq.*). It is impossible, therefore, that they should have ruled together. If Jehoshaphat had allowed his fellow-ruler to introduce and foster the worship of Baal, he would have made himself a participant in the same guilt, and would not have received the praise of changeless fidelity to Jehovah.

(*e*) Joint governments are foreign to Oriental, and, above all, to Israelitish antiquity. It is true that it is stated in the history of king Azariah (Uzziah) that he was a leper, and, therefore, lived in a separate house, and that his son Jotham "was over the house, judging the people of the land" (2 Kings xv. 5). The "house" here meant is the royal palace (*cf.* 1 Kings iv. 6; xviii. 3), and it is not intended to assert that he became *king* during the lifetime of the rightful king, as is assumed with regard to Jehoram. Jotham did not become king until Uzziah's death, and then he ruled for sixteen years (2 Kings xv. 7, 33). The years in which he acted as regent for his sick father are not reckoned in these, as they should be, if it is to be a precedent for including in the eight years of Jehoram certain years during which he was joint

ruler with his father. There is no statement anywhere with regard to Jehoshaphat that he was sick or otherwise incapacitated for governing. This energetic ruler was far from needing an assistant, certainly not such a weak one as Jehoram. The latter was sick for two years before his death; but even he had no joint regent. His son Ahaziah did not come to the throne until after his death.

From all this we see plainly that all attempts to bring 2 Kings i. 17 into agreement with the other chronological data, which are essentially in accord among themselves, are vain. We are therefore forced to the conclusion that the text of this verse, as it lies before us, is not in its original form. Thenius considers it corrupt, and desires to read for: "In the second year of Jehoram, the son of Jehoshaphat," "in the twenty-second year of Jehoshaphat." But this does not agree with 2 Kings iii. 1, where it is said that Joram of Israel came to the throne in the eighteenth, not twenty-second, of Jehoshaphat, nor with 1 Kings xxii. 51, where "in the seventeenth year" must be changed, as Thenius proposes, to "in the twenty-first year," a change which is inadmissible. On the other hand, it must be admitted that the form of statement varies considerably from the standing formula. In each case where the death of a king is recorded, there follows immediately the formula: such a one became king in his stead, without any further details in regard to the successor than simply his name. Then when the history of the following reign commences, often after the insertion of other incidents and reflections of greater or less length, it is stated in what year of the reign of the king of the other nation he began to reign, of what age he was, and how many years he ruled (*cf.* 1 Kings xiv. 20–31; xv. 8–24; xvi. 28; xxii. 40–51; 2 Kings viii. 24; x. 35; xii. 22; xiii. 9; xiv. 16–29; xv. 7, 22, 25, 30, 38; xvi. 20; xx. 21; xxi. 18, 26; xxiii. 30; xxiv. 6). Now, in 2 Kings i. 17, after the words "and he died according to the word of the prophet Elijah," follows the ordinary formula, "and Joram became king in his stead;" but then there is added, what is not added in a single other passage: "In the second year of Jehoram, son of Jehoshaphat king of Judah," but without the further details, which are usually given in that connection, in regard to the length of the reign, &c. These details are not added until we come to the commencement of the history of his reign, chap. iii. 1; there, however, they vary very much from this short statement, as does also viii. 16. Now since, of course, the two complete and precise statements are to be preferred to the incomplete one, the unusual chronological datum in i. 17 must be regarded as a later and incorrect addition, all the more as it stands in contradiction with all the other chronological data of the period in question. It appears distinctly as an addition in the Sept., where it stands at the end of the verse, and is not incorporated into it. It is remarkable that scholars have preferred to change the other complete and consistent data, in order to force them into agreement with this, rather than to give up this one statement which is totally unsupported, and which introduces confusion not only into the chronology, but also into the history.

Finally, we have to notice another calculation of the chronology of this period which Wolff has attempted (*Studien und Kritiken*, 1858, 4: *s.* 625–688). He rejects in general very decidedly any assumption of joint sovereignty, and especially the joint rule of Jehoram and Jehoshaphat; but he inconsistently sets up such an assumption when he says (*s.* 643): "As his (Ahaziah of Israel's) health was so far lost that he could no longer administer the government, he took his brother Joram on the throne with himself, as co-regent, at about the end of the eighteenth year of Jehoshaphat. He remained king until the twenty-second year of Jehoshaphat, and then gave up the government entirely in favor of his brother, but did not die until the second year of Jehoram." Ignoring the above-mentioned Jewish mode of reckoning, and starting from the purely arbitrary and unfounded assumption that only the dates given for the reigns of the kings of Judah are correct and reliable, Wolff changes the twenty-two years of Ahab to twenty, the two years of Ahaziah of Israel to four and a half, makes Joram succeed to the throne in the twenty-second instead of the eighteenth year of Jehoshaphat, Jehoram in the third and not in the fifth year of Joram, and, finally, Ahaziah of Judah in the eleventh and not in the twelfth year of Joram. No one else has hitherto conceived the idea of undertaking so many changes in the text; they are all as violent as they are unnecessary, and, therefore, need no refutation, although their necessity is confidently asserted. The joint rule of Ahaziah and Joram is, if possible, still more contrary to the text than that of Jehoshaphat and Jehoram.

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

Ver. 19. **Yet the Lord would not destroy Judah, &c.** The connection between vers. 19 and 20 is this: Although for David's sake Judah did not, as a consequence of its apostasy, lose its dynasty and its existence as a nation, yet it had to pay dearly for its sin; for the Edomites, who had been subject to Judah for one hundred and fifty years, endeavored, during Jehoram's reign, to regain their independence. Josephus says that they had killed the governor, whom Jehoshaphat had appointed (1 Kings xxii. 47), and had chosen a king for themselves. In order to re-subjugate them Jehoram marched out with an army צָעִירָה, unquestionably the name of a place, but not equivalent to Zoar (Hitzig and Ewald), for this lay in Moab (Jerem. xlviii. 34), not in Edom. The place cannot be more definitely located. The chronicler has instead עִם־שָׂרָיו, *i. e.*, "with his captains," and does not mention any place, probably because he did not know any place by the name here given. Thenius proposes to read שֵׂעִירָה, which is favored by the Vulg., Seira, so that we should have to understand it as referring to the well-known mountainous region of Edom.

Ver. 21. **And he rose by night, &c.** "It is clear that we have in this verse the record of an unsuccessful attempt of Jehoram to re-subjugate Edom. We must, therefore, form our conceptions of the details according to this character of the whole" (Thenius). It is an utter mistake to understand the occurrence as the *Calwer Bibel*, on 2 Chron. xxi. 7 *sq.*, explains it: "The cowardly,

faithless king plotted and executed a massacre by night of the Edomites who surrounded him, in which his own captains also fell; and since, according to 2 Kings viii. 21, his own people upon this deserted him, he could not accomplish anything further against the Edomites, and they remained independent." The passage rather states simply that the army of Judah, as it approached Edom, was surrounded by the Edomites, but broke through them by night, and fled homewards (1 Kings viii. 66), so that it barely escaped an utter defeat. From this time on the dominion of Judah over Edom was at an end (Ps. cxxxvii. 7).

Ver. 22. **Unto this day,** *i. e.*, until the time of composition of the original document from which this is taken (see above, on 1 Kings viii. 8). The Edomites were, indeed, re-subjugated for a short time (xiv. 7, 22), but never again permanently.—**Then Libnah revolted at the same time.** This city lay in the plain of Judah, not far from the frontier of Philistia. It was at one time an ancient royal residence of the Canaanites, and afterwards one of the priests' cities [cities of refuge] of the Israelites (Josh. xv. 42; xii. 15; xxi. 13), though it can hardly have retained the latter character until the time of Jehoram. We may suppose that it was instigated to revolt by the Philistines, and that it was assisted by them. Among the further details mentioned by the chronicler, it is stated that the Philistines attacked Jehoram, and inflicted upon him a severe defeat (2 Chron. xxi. 16 *sq.*). [It is also stated there that the allied Philistines and Arabians took Jerusalem and plundered the temple, an event to which Hitzig refers the passage Joel iv. 4–6. Thenius approves this, but thinks that 2 Chron. xxi. 17 is inconsistent with 2 Kings x. 3, which assigns a different fate to Ahaziah's kindred.—W. G. S.]

Ver. 25. **Did Ahaziah begin to reign.** The chronicler states Ahaziah's age at his accession as forty-two (II., xxii. 2). This is the result of a mistake of מ for כ, in the numerals (Keil, Winer, Thenius), as we must conclude from the age assigned to Jehoram in ver. 17. Jehoram was thirty-two when he ascended the throne; he reigned eight years; died, therefore, at forty. Ahaziah was twenty-two at his accession; he was, therefore, born when his father was eighteen. There is nothing astonishing in this, for, according to the Talmud, young men might marry after their thirteenth year, and eighteen was the usual age of marriage (Winer, *R.-W.-B.*, i. *s.* 297). [It should be noticed that this bears upon 2 Chron. xxi. 17, where it is said that Ahaziah was the *youngest* of the sons of Jehoram.—W. G. S.]—Athaliah is here (ver. 26) called the daughter of Omri, although she was in fact his granddaughter, because he was the founder and father of the royal house to which she belonged, and which brought so much misfortune upon Israel and Judah. The chronicler adds (II., xxii. 3), that she was "his [Ahaziah's] counsellor to do wickedly."

Ver. 28. **And he went with Joram,** &c. [Joram himself went; see the amended translation and *Textual and Grammatical*, note 7. If אֶת is taken as the prep., then we have to assume that, after Joram was wounded, Ahaziah also left the seat of war and went to Jerusalem, and then that he went down from there again to Jezreel to visit Joram; for that is the simple and natural meaning of the last clause of ver. 29. The awkwardness of this acceptation is evident. It is better to take אֶת as the so-called "accusative sign," as explained in the note referred to.—W. G. S.] On Ramoth-Gilead, see note on 1 Kings iv. 13. This strongly fortified city was, in the time of Ahab, in the hands of the Syrians, and he did not succeed in taking it away from them. He was wounded in the attempt so that he died (1 Kings xxii.). From chap. ix. 2; xiv. 15, we see that, at the time when Joram was at war with Hazael, it was again in the possession of the Israelites. It is not states when or how, since the death of Ahab, it came into their hands. According to ix. 14, Joram was שֹׁמֵר בְּרָמֹת, *i. e.*, he was defending the city against the attacks of Hazael, who was thirsting for conquest, and who undoubtedly commenced the war. It was, therefore, in defending, and not in attacking the city, that Jehoram was smitten, that is, severely wounded. [See note on ix. 1.] He ordered that he should be taken to Jezreel (see note on 1 Kings xviii. 45), and not to Samaria, although the latter was much nearer, probably because the court was at Jezreel. [Thenius' suggestion that he could make this journey over a smooth road, while the way to Samaria lay over mountains, is also good.—W. G. S.] But the army remained under command of the generals in and before Ramoth. The king's wound does not seem to have healed for some time. Ewald maintains that Ahaziah did not go to the war with Joram, but went to visit him from Jerusalem at a later time, when he was being healed of his wound. He says, therefore, that the particle אֶת in ver. 28 is to be struck out. There is, however, no ground for this (see Thenius on the verse), for יָרַד, in ver. 29, does not prove that he went from Jerusalem to Jezreel, since the latter lay to the north of Ramoth as well as of Jerusalem. It may well be that he visited Joram from Ramoth, whither he had gone with him to the war, especially as it was not so far from there as from Jerusalem. [אֶת is not the prep. but the case-sign with the nominative; יוֹרָם is therefore the subject of וַיֵּלֶךְ, and not Ahaziah, as it is commonly understood (see *Text. and Gramm.*). Ahaziah did not go to Ramoth, but went down from Jerusalem to Jezreel.—W. G. S.]

HISTORICAL AND ETHICAL.

1. The history of the *reign of the two kings of Judah*, which forms a consistent whole, does not interrupt the flow of the narrative, as might at first appear, but is inserted here for good and imperative reasons. The kingdom of Judah had kept itself free from the worship of the calf and of Baal, which prevailed in the kingdom of Israel, until the death of Jehoshaphat. That worship was, however, transplanted to Judah by the marriage of Jehoram, the son and successor of Jehoshaphat, with Athaliah, the daughter of Ahab and Jezebel, for Athaliah controlled her husband Jehoram, and his son, Ahaziah, as we see from vers. 18 and 27, and from 2 Chron. xxi. 6 and xxii. 3, just as Jezebel, the fanatical idolatress, controlled Ahab. Though the guilt of the house of Ahab,

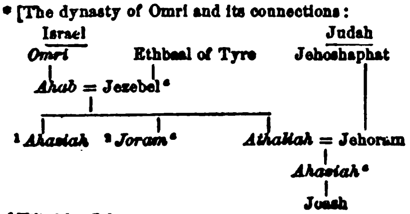
which persisted in its evil courses in spite of all the testimonies of the divine grace, and in spite of all the exhortations and threats of the prophets Elijah and Elisha, was already great enough, it became still greater and heavier by the extension of the apostasy to Judah. Thus the measure became full, and the judgment which the prophet Elijah had predicted, the utter destruction of the dynasty, was brought about. It was inaugurated by Hazael, and consummated by Jehu. Joram of Israel was defending Ramoth against the former when he was wounded; he was brought to Jezreel where Jezebel was. Ahaziah of Judah came thither to visit him (by an especial dispensation of Providence, as 2 Chron. xxii. 7 expressly states), and so it came to pass that the three chief representatives of the house of Ahab were present at one and the same place. At this time now, Jehu was elevated to the throne; he hastened to Jezreel and killed all three of them, Joram, Ahaziah, and Jezebel. It was necessary, therefore, that the history of Jehoram and Ahaziah of Judah should precede chap. ix., which tells about the elevation of Jehu. This also explains the brevity of this record compared with the more detailed one in Chronicles. The author restricts himself to those details which give the causes and the explanation of the judgment which fell upon Joram and Ahaziah by the hand of Jehu.*

2. *Jehoram and Ahaziah* were the first kings of Judah under whom idolatry was not only tolerated, but formally introduced (2 Chron. xxi. 11). The book of Chronicles contains no further information than is here given in regard to Ahaziah, who did not reign for even one full year. What is there stated in regard to Jehoram shows him to us as one of the wickedest and most depraved kings that ever reigned in Judah, under whom the nation not only sank religiously, but also politically came near to ruin. He drove it by force to idolatry (יַדַּח); he murdered his six brothers, and other princes besides; the Edomites established their independence of his authority; the Philistines and Arabians defeated him, and carried off all his treasures, his wives, and his children; finally, a horrible disease attacked him, which lasted two years, when he at length died. Schlier (*Die Könige in Israel*, *s.* 121 *sq.*) asserts in regard to him: "It was oppressive to him to be only a joint ruler; he determined to cast off the restraints of a correcting and warning father. So he sought to accomplish this by his marriage. He murdered his six brothers, who were better than himself, and also several chiefs who stood by them, and he held his royal father in captivity. It is true that he scrupled to stain his hand with the blood of his father, and that he left him still the title of king; but he held the government, from this time on, entirely in his own hands." Of all these facts, with the exception of the murder of his brothers and the other prominent men, there is not a word in the biblical text. They are all pure fictions, to the invention of which the author is led by assuming as an historical certainty that Jehoshaphat and Jehoram ruled together for seven years. After making this assumption he feels justified in going on to explain the circumstances which produced this state of things, and especially why, after five years of this arrangement, Jehoshaphat should have retired entirely from the government for the last two years of his life. [It is a very good instance of the method of commenting on the Scriptures which consists in inventing possible combinations in order to reconcile apparently inconsistent statements, and it shows what comes of it. It is often undertaken in a false idea of reverence for the Scriptures, and in a mistaken desire to save their authority. It is clear that a high and pure conception of, and loyalty to, historical truth, must be abandoned before any one can adopt this method of interpretation. The statements of the text are one thing, and the inventions of the commentator are another. Any one who undertakes this work must determine beforehand to keep the distinction between the two clearly and firmly before himself in his work, and the only sound method of interpretation is to cling to the text and leave inventions aside. The notion of a joint government is a pure fiction, and there is no reason why any one who adopts it should not go farther, and invent fictitious causes, occasions, and other details to account for it.—W. G. S.] The asserted facts fall to the ground with the false assumption on which they are built. The facts which are given in the documents are more than sufficient in themselves to establish the depravity of Jehoram. His wickedness is explained, since his father was one of the best and most pious kings of Israel, by the influence of his wife, and by his connection with the house of Ahab. In his history and that of Ahaziah we have a terrible example of the way in which one bad woman (Jezebel) can radically corrupt entire dynasties and entire states, and of the curse which rests upon matrimonial connections which are only formed in order to attain political objects (see above, 1 Kings xxii. *Hist.* § 1).

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

Vers. 16–29. Jehoram and his son Ahaziah: (*a*) The way in which both walked (18–27); (*b*) how they came to choose this way (18–27); (*c*) whither they were brought by it (vers. 20–22, 28, 29; see also *Histor.* § 2).—The Spirit of the House of Ahab: (*a*) Perversion of all divine and human ordinances. Wicked and corrupt women set the tone, and ruled over their weak husbands; (*b*) immorality, licentiousness, murder, and tyranny (2 Chron. xxi. 4, 6, 11); (*c*) contempt, on the one hand, for the richness of God's long-suffering and goodness, and, on the other, for the warnings of God's judgments and chastisements. What a different spirit animated the household of a Cornelius (Acts x. 2), of a Crispus (Acts xviii. 8), of the jailer at Philippi (Acts xvi. 34)! *Cf.* Prov. xiv. 11; xii. 7; Ps. xxv. 2 and 3.—The Importance of Family Relationships: (*a*) The great influence which they exert. (They necessarily bring about

* [The dynasty of Omri and its connections:



*Killed by Jehu.

relationship in spirit and feeling; they work gradually, but mightily; one member of the connection draws another with him, either to good or to evil. In spite of their pious father and grandfather, Jehoram and Ahaziah were tainted by the apostasy of the house of Ahab (vers. 18, 27). How many are not able to resist the evil influences of these connections, and therefore make shipwreck of their faith, and are either drawn into open sin and godlessness, or are transformed into a superficial, thoughtless, and worldly character. (*b*) The duty which therefore devolves upon us. (The calamities which even the pious Jehoshaphat brought upon his house, nay, even upon his country, arose from the fact that he gave the daughter of Ahab and Jezebel to his son, as a wife, and did not bear in mind that relationships which do not rest upon the word and commandment of God bring discontent and ruin. Therefore beware of entering into relationships which lack the bond of faith and unity of spirit, however grand or advantageous externally they may seem to be. Do not, by such connections, transplant the Ahab and Jezebel spirit into your house, for it eats like a cancer, and corrupts and destroys to the very heart.)—Ver. 19. Behold the faithfulness of God, who, for the sake of the fidelity of the father, chastises indeed the son, but yet will not utterly destroy him.—CRAMER: God will sustain his Church (kingdom) until the end of the world, in order that a holy leaven may remain, no matter how many may be found who scoff at His promise to sustain His Church.—Ver. 20. God punishes infidelity to himself by means of the infidelity of men to one another.—CRAMER: If we do not keep faith with God, then people must not keep faith with us. By means of insurrection God punishes the sins of sovereigns, and dissolves the authority of kings (*cf.* Job xii. 18).—Ver. 26. CALW. BIB.: It is a horrible thing when not merely relatives, but even a mother instigates to evil.—Ver. 28. CRAMER: Have no dealings with a fool-hardy man, for he undertakes what his own mind dictates, and you will have to suffer the consequences with him (Sirach viii. 18).—Ver. 29. CALW. BIB.: As he so gladly joined himself to Ahab's family, and was so fond of spending his time with them, there it was, by the ordering of Providence, that he met his end. Those who, by their hostility to the Lord, belong together, must come together, according to God's just decree, that they may perish together. Jehoram was so anxious to be healed of the bodily wound which the Syrians had given him, that he left the army and returned to Jezreel; but the wounds of his soul, which he had inflicted upon himself, caused him no trouble, and did not lead him back, as they should have done, to Him who promised: "I will restore health unto thee, and I will heal thee of thy wounds" (Jerem. xxx. 17). The children of this world visit one another when they are ill; they do it, however, not in order to console the sick one with the Word of Life, and to advance God's purpose in afflicting him, but from natural love, from relationship, or other external reasons. Their visits cannot, therefore, be regarded as Christian work.

B.—*Jehu's Elevation to the Throne of Israel.*

CHAP. IX. 1–37. [2 CHRON. XXII. 7–9.]

1 And Elisha the prophet called one of the children of the prophets [prophet-
disciples], and said unto him, Gird up thy loins, and take this box [vial] [1] of oil
2 in thine hand, and go to Ramoth-gilead: And when thou comest thither, look
out there Jehu the son of Jehoshaphat the son of Nimshi, and go in, and make
him arise up from among his brethren, and carry [lead] him to an inner cham-
3 ber; Then take the box [vial] of oil, and pour *it* on his head, and say, Thus saith
the Lord, I have anointed [I anoint] thee king over Israel. Then open the door,
and flee, and tarry not.
4 So the young man, *even* the young man [the servant of] [2] the prophet, went
5 to Ramoth-gilead. And when he came, behold, the captains of the host *were*
sitting; and he said, I have an errand to thee, O captain. And Jehu said, Unto
6 which of all us? And he said, To thee, O captain. And he arose, and went into
the house; and he poured the oil on his head, and said unto him, Thus saith the
Lord God of Israel, I have anointed [I anoint] thee king over the people of the
7 Lord, *even* over Israel. And thou shalt smite the house of Ahab thy master,
that I may avenge the blood of my servants the prophets, and the blood of all
8 the servants of the Lord, at the hand of Jezebel. For [*omit* for] The whole
house of Ahab shall perish; and I will cut off from Ahab him that pisseth
against the wall, and him that is shut up and left [both him that is of age and
9 him that is not of age] in Israel: and I will make the house of Ahab like the
house of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and like the house of Baasha the son of

10 Ahijah: and the dogs shall eat Jezebel in the portion [purlieus] [3] of Jezreel,
and *there shall be* none to bury *her*. And he opened the door, and fled.
11 Then Jehu came forth to the servants of his lord: and *one* said unto him, *Is*
all well? wherefore came this mad *fellow* to thee? And he said unto them, Ye
12 know the man, and his communication [secret]. And they said, *It is* false; tell
us now. And he said, Thus and thus spake he to me, saying, Thus saith the
13 Lord, I have anointed [I anoint] thee king over Israel. Then they hasted, and
took every man his garment, and put *it* under him [*Jehu*] on the top of the stairs
14 [bare steps],[4] and blew with trumpets, saying, Jehu is king. So Jehu the son
of Jehoshaphat the son of Nimshi conspired against Joram. (Now Joram had
kept [defended] Ramoth-gilead, he and all Israel, because of [against] Hazael
15 king of Syria: but king Joram was returned to be healed in Jezreel of the
wounds which the Syrians had given him, when he fought with Hazael king of
Syria.) And Jehu said, If it be your minds, *then* let none [no fugitive] go forth
16 *nor* escape [*omit* nor escape] out of the city to go to tell *it* in Jezreel. So Jehu
rode in a chariot, and went to Jezreel; for Joram lay there. And Ahaziah king
17 of Judah was come down to see Joram. And there stood a watchman on the
tower in Jezreel, and he spied the company of Jehu as he came, and said, I see
a company.[5] And Joram said, Take a horseman, and send to meet them, and
18 let him say, *Is it* peace [Is all well]? So there went one on horseback to meet
him, and said, Thus saith the king, *Is it* peace [Is all well]? And Jehu said,
What hast thou to do with peace [well *or ill*]? turn thee behind me. And the
watchman told, saying, The messenger came to them, but he cometh not again.
19 Then he sent out a second on horseback, which came to them, and said, Thus
saith the king, *Is it* peace [Is all well]? And Jehu answered, What hast thou
20 to do with peace [well *or ill*]? turn thee behind me. And the watchman told,
saying, He came even unto them, and cometh not again: and the driving *is* like
21 the driving of Jehu the son of Nimshi; for he driveth furiously. And Joram
said, Make ready. And his chariot was made ready. And Joram king of Israel
and Ahaziah king of Judah went out, each in his chariot, and they went out
against [to meet] Jehu, and met him in the portion of Naboth the Jezreelite.
22 And it came to pass, when Joram saw Jehu, that he said, *Is it* peace [Is all
well], Jehu? And he answered, What peace [is well], so long as the whore-
23 doms of thy mother Jezebel and her witchcrafts [sorceries] *are so* many? And
Joram turned his hands, and fled, and said to Ahaziah, *There is* treachery,
24 [Treachery!] O Ahaziah. And Jehu drew [took][6] a bow with his full strength
[in his hand] and smote Jehoram between his arms, and the arrow went out at
25 his heart, and he sunk down in his chariot. Then said *Jehu* to Bidkar his cap-
tain [lieutenant], Take up, *and* cast him in the portion of the field of Naboth
the Jezreelite: for remember how that, when I and thou[7] rode together [two
by two] after Ahab his father, the Lord laid this burden [passed this sentence]
26 upon him; Surely I have seen yesterday the blood of Naboth, and the blood
of his sons, saith the Lord; and I will requite thee in this plat, saith the Lord.
Now therefore take *and* cast him into the plat *of ground*, according to the word
of the Lord.
27 But when Ahaziah the king of Judah saw *this*, he fled by the way of the
garden house. And Jehu followed after him, and said, Smite him also [Him
also! Smite him][8] in the chariot. *And they did so* at the going up to Gur, which
28 *is* by Ibleam. And he fled to Megiddo, and died there. And his servants car-
ried him in a chariot to Jerusalem, and buried him in his sepulchre with his
29 fathers in the city of David. And in the eleventh year of Joram the son of
Ahab began Ahaziah to reign over Judah.
30 And when Jehu was come to Jezreel, Jezebel heard *of it*; and she painted
31 her face [eyelids], and tired her head, and looked out at a window. And as
Jehu entered in at the gate, she said, *Had* Zimri peace, who slew his master
32 [Hail! *thou* Zimri, murderer of his master!]? And he lifted up his face to the
window, and said, Who *is* on my side? who? And there looked out to him two
33 *or* three eunuchs. And he said, Throw her down. So they threw her down;

and *some* of her blood was sprinkled on the wall, and on the horses: and he
34 trode her under foot. And when he was come in, he did eat and drink, and
said, Go, see now [to] this cursed *woman*, and bury her: for she *is* a king's
35 daughter. And they went to bury her: but they found no more of her than
36 the skull, and the feet, and the palms of *her* hands. Wherefore they came again,
and told him. And he said, This *is* the word of the Lord, which he spake by his
servant Elijah the Tishbite, saying, In the portion [purlieus] of Jezreel shall
37 dogs eat the flesh of Jezebel. And the carcass of Jezebel shall be as dung upon
the face of the field in the portion [purlieus] of Jezreel; [*so*] [so] that they shall
not say, This *is* Jezebel.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

[1] Ver. 1.—[פַּךְ הַשֶּׁמֶן, 1 Sam. x. 1, here, and in ver. 8.

[2] Ver. 4.—[The article is used with the second נַעַר in the stat. const. to give it definite reference back to the first one. Ew. § 290, d. 3. *Cf.* chap. vii. 18.

[3] Ver. 10.—[On חֵלֶק see 1 Kings xxi. 23, where חֵל occurs nearly in the same meaning. חֵל is the moat or ditch just outside the wall, with the adjacent strip of country. חלק has a wider application to the district on which the city is built, including the strip of country just outside the wall. In a walled city this latter place is always a place of deposit for rubbish and offal. Hence the degradation involved in the fate prophesied for her.

[4] Ver. 13.—[The words גֶּרֶם הַמַּעֲלוֹת are very obscure. No better meaning is suggested than this, that they spread their over-garments directly upon the stairs, and so formed something resembling the covered scaffolding on which the king presented himself to the people, and received their homage.

[5] Ver. 17.—[The second שִׁפְעַת is in the case absolute. Ew. § 173 d. *Cf.* חַיַּת Ps. lxxiv. 19.

[6] Ver. 24.—[מלא ידו בקשת, word for word, "filled his hand with a bow," *i. e.*, made ready an arrow.

[7] Ver. 25.—[אני and אתה are accusatives after זכר. "Remember me and thee riding." The E. V. is a smooth and correct rendering of it. צמדים; "together" would be a correct rendering of it, but the word suggests that they were together, one pair in a retinue which was formed two by two.

[8] Ver. 27.—[This is a translation of the Hebrew as it stands. It seems necessary, however, to correct the text. (*a*) We may insert וַיַּכֻּהוּ after הַכֻּהוּ = "Smite him also! and they smote him in the chariot." This is Bähr's emendation, following Ewald and others (see *Exeg.* on the verse). (*b*) We may read וַיַּכֻּהוּ for הַכֻּהוּ and translate: "Him also! So they smote him in the chariot." This gives the same sense, but "Him also!" stands as a short exclamatory command. (*c*) Thenius takes these words in this way, but then (following the Sept.) he conjectures וַיַּכֵּהוּ for הַכֻּהוּ = "And he smote him." It is very tame to make Jehu utter this exclamation merely as such, not as a command, and then shoot the king himself. The second emendation is the best.—W. G. S.]

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

Ver. 1. **And Elisha called one of the prophet-disciples,** &c. Elisha was undoubtedly at this time in Samaria, where his residence was. The prophet-disciple, to whom he gave this commission, may have stood to him in the same relation in which he once stood to Elijah. It is an unfounded supposition of several of the rabbis that it was the prophet Jonah, the son of Amittai [chap. xiv. 25]. —**To Ramoth:** see chap. viii. 28.—It is not stated anywhere to what tribe Jehu belonged. It is very probable that he, as the most able of the generals, had received the supreme command on the departure of Joram, as Josephus states.—Ver. 2. **And go in:** *i. e.*, into the house in which he dwells, as is clear from ver. 6 (הַבַּיְתָה), and from the words: **to an inner chamber** (see note on 1 Kings xx. 30). Jehu with his army was not, therefore, in camp before Ramoth besieging it, but in the city itself defending it (see note on viii. 28). [No mention is made anywhere of any hostilities between Israel and Syria, from the death of Ahab until this time, in which the city of Ramoth could have changed hands. It is clear that the representation throughout this chapter is, that the Israelites were in possession of the city. It may, therefore, be inferred with considerable certainty that they had succeeded in taking it in this war, either in the assault in which Joram was wounded, or in some previous one. If Joram had gained this important victory for them, it is not probable that the army would have been in a disposition to see him deposed by any one else. The inference is that, in the battle, he had not conducted himself well, and that Jehu's talents had shone by comparison. It would be quite consistent with the character of each as it appears to us elsewhere. Moreover, we see from ver. 21 that Joram was already so far recovered as to be able to go out in his chariot to meet Jehu. Yet he had not rejoined his army. This would seem to indicate that he had made much of a slight wound, and that he was shirking the hardships of the war. Putting all this together, we can understand that the feeling of the army towards the king was that of contempt, and towards Jehu that of admiration and respect, and the sudden and complete success of the revolution is not then difficult to understand.—W. G. S.] The prophet-disciple entered the house, in the court of which the generals were sitting together, perhaps holding a council of war. Jehu was to be anointed privately, and the fact was for a time to be kept secret.—Ver. 3. **And tarry not:** that no questions might be asked and "that he might not be involved in affairs with which he was not competent to deal" (Von Gerlach); Josephus: ὅπως λάθῃ πάντας ἐκεῖθεν ἀπιών. It was not, therefore, in order that he might escape the danger of being captured by the friends

of Joram (Theodoret, Clericus).—Ver. 6. **I have anointed thee**; see above, *Exeg.* on 1 Kings xix. 16.—On vers. 7-10 see notes on 1 Kings xiv. 10; xvi. 3, 4; xviii. 4; xix. 10; xxi. 21 *sq.* On חֵלֶק see note on 1 Kings xxi. 23 [and note on this verse under *Textual and Grammatical*].

Ver. 11. **Then Jehu came forth, &c.** The question הֲשָׁלוֹם occurs, in this chapter, six times, and it is impossible that it should have a different sense in each case. As it evidently stands in opposition to "strife" or "hostility" in vers. 17, 18, 22, and 31, it must also be translated in its original meaning in ver. 11, "Is it peace?" and not: *rectene sunt omnia?* (Vulg.); or *Stehet es wohl* (is all well)? (Luther). *Cf.* 1 Kings ii. 13. [Nearly all the commentators agree with the opinion here advocated, and translate "Is it peace?" שָׁלוֹם unquestionably meant, originally and etymologically, welfare, *salus*. It is often used generally, not in any special formula, for "peace." As a formula of salutation, however, its etymological signification was entirely lost, as much as in our own "good-bye," the etymological meaning of which we very seldom have in mind when we use it. As a question it is destitute of intrinsic meaning. It merely asks, "What is the news you bring?" In form only it asks, "Is it good news?" "Is all well?" Every language presents similar examples of current formulæ and words which have lost their etymological significance. Our own word "well" is a good instance, particularly in colloquial usage, where it often is almost meaningless, and where it often implies anything but approval of what has preceded. The inflection of the voice here carries all the significance. A similar instance occurs in this chapter. In ver. 26 Jehu quotes the sentence of God upon Ahab, beginning with the words אִם לֹא. This is the formula for an oath, and an ellipsis is necessary to explain the form. This consists of an imprecation upon the speaker by himself. "If I did not see—then may—&c." As Thenius well remarks, we cannot believe that the origin of this formula could have been present to the mind of Jehu, or that he could have thought of the alternate, omitted, phrase, when he represented God as having spoken in these words. The alternative was utterly lost sight of, and אִם לֹא meant simply "verily," as a strong affirmation.—הַשָּׁלוֹם therefore is simply a salutation which calls upon the person addressed to tell the news, or his message. So in ver. 11 it might be translated: "Well? Wherefore came," &c. In vers. 17 and 18 it has the same meaning, but Jehu plays upon it by using it in its strict meaning in his reply (see the amended translation). In ver. 22 this is still more evident. In ver. 31 Jezebel uses it as the regular conventional salutation, with which to address her insulting and defiant words to Jehu. To make it mean in vers. 17, 18, 22, "Is there peace?" *i. e.*, do you come with hostile or peaceful intent towards me? is to ascribe to the king a suspicion, first of the unknown party which is approaching, and afterwards of Jehu. If he had been suspicious that it was an enemy, he would not have sent out one man; if he had been suspicious of Jehu, he would not have gone down himself, and, as it seems, without guards, to meet him. Finally, ver. 23 shows that he did not suspect anything until he heard Jehu's answer, which was a bold condemnation of Jezebel. Then he recognized treachery, and, as soon as he did, he endeavored to escape. To send out a man to meet the coming troop and "say הַשָּׁלוֹם," was, therefore, simply to send him out to salute them and inquire what was the intelligence they brought. When Jehu was recognized, the same message was sent to him (*cf.* chap. x. 13). Finally, the king went to ask for himself. *The only news which he expected was news about the war.* When the commander-in-chief came riding in hot haste towards the capital, news, either of a great victory or an overwhelming defeat, was to be expected. As for hostility from the approaching party before it was recognized, or from Jehu after he was recognized, there was no thought of it, until Jehu's answer, in ver. 23, revealed it all at once as openly declared.—W. G. S.] The generals put this inquiry, not because "they feared the madman might have done him some harm" (Ewald), but because they inferred, from the haste with which the prophet-disciple departed, that he had brought important intelligence, perhaps bad news, about the war with Syria (Thenius). Their further question: **Wherefore came this הַמְשֻׁגָּע to thee?** is generally understood as the mocking and contemptuous speech of rude soldiers about a prophet. The Hebrew word is then understood to mean a madman or rhapsodist. It is certain, however, that these soldiers, who were expecting important and perhaps discouraging intelligence in regard to the war, were not in a disposition to scoff at prophets. If they had taken the prophet for a madman, they would not, when Jehu made known to them (ver. 12) the object for which he came, have taken the extraordinary step they did, without consideration or delay, and made Jehu king, on the word of a fanatic. In ver. 20 it is said of Jehu himself: "He driveth בְּשִׁגָּעוֹן," whereby it is not meant to be said that he was a crazy man, a lunatic, or a fanatic, but that he was a man of fierce and violent temper (Vatablus, following the Syriac, translates *præcipitanter*). In Arabic שגע means to be bold, rash, wild (see Ges. Dict., *s. v.*). The generals meant to say, therefore, that the wild behavior of the man, who had come and gone without saying a word to any one, had struck them. They thought that his conduct indicated some extraordinary intelligence, and they wanted to know what it was. Jehu at first gives them an evasive answer: **Ye know the man and his שִׂיחַ.** This word does not mean "his speech or words" (Ges., De Wette, and Luther, who follows the Vulg.: *et quid locutus sit*); nor, "his babble" (Junius, Köster, and Philippson, who follows the Sept. ἀδολεσχία), for the word does not occur anywhere in this sense. Neither does Jehu connect with his words the meaning: "Ye yourselves have sent this prophet to me, in order to give me courage to carry out the plan which ye have formed (Dereser following Seb. Smith, J. D. Michaelis), nor this meaning: "Ye know the man and what he said to me; ye yourselves are at the bottom of this jest, for ye it was who planned the farce" (Krummacher). Jehu could not have meant this, for he knew that the plan or jest had not originated with the generals, and his answer

would not then have been an evasive one. No less incorrect is the explanation of Cornelius a Lapide, whom Keil follows: *Nostis, eum insanum esse ac proinde insana loquitur, ideoque non credenda, nec a me narranda*, for שִׂיחַ is no synonym of שָׁגַע. Finally, we cannot translate it with Bunsen and Thenius, "his disposition:" "Ye should be accustomed to his disposition, since ye have often seen him before." The word is rather to be taken here in the same sense as in 1 Kings xviii. 27, *i. e.*, *meditatio*, absorption in thought; so that, in other places, it stands for every deep agitation of the soul: rancor, sorrow, or dissatisfaction (Ps. liv. 2; cii. 1; cxlii. 2; Job vii. 13), and in 1 Sam. i. 16 it stands as synonym to כַּעַס. Jehu means to say: The conduct of this man ought not to astonish you; he was lost in thought, as prophets are wont to be; therefore he did not enter into conversation with any one, and departed as hastily as he came. [It must be apparent that the epithet מְשֻׁגָּע, as it is correctly explained above, is not a proper epithet for a man who is lost in meditation. Wildness of behavior is in general inconsistent with meditation. Moreover, as above stated (note on ver. 11), it is an error to take השלום to mean "Is there peace?" and then to suppose that these soldiers asked the question with reference to the war with Syria. How should they ask whether there was peace with Syria, when they were there on purpose to make war with that country? or how should they expect that this prophet could bring intelligence which was to decide that point? The prophet came from home, from Israel, and although his message might ultimately bear upon the continuance of the war with Syria, the natural expectation would be that he brought news from Israel, whence he came. They asked in general what the news was which he brought. The epithet which they applied need not be pressed so far as to make them guilty of any intentional disrespect to a prophet. He was wild in his behavior, and they called him carelessly a "mad fellow." The tone and meaning could hardly be better given in English. Jehu's reply is best understood as an attempt to sound them. He appears in chap. x. distinctly in the character of a crafty man. So here; he is in doubt whether the prophet has been instigated by his fellow-commanders to do this thing, because they hesitated to make an outspoken proposition of rebellion to him. He charges them with having plotted this, as a means of inducing him to rebel. *Ye* know the man, and the errand he had. שִׂיחַ occurs very frequently in the sense of "complaint," a deep-seated subject of anxiety. It is used here of the business or communication which the prophet brought deeply hidden in his heart—the deep plot which had been the result of long meditation. To this interpretation of ver. 11, שֶׁקֶר, "it is a lie," in ver. 12, answers well. They deny the charge.—W. G. S.] The generals notice that Jehu is trying to evade them, and, as he is not able to conceal his agitation entirely, they are only the more urgent. They reply: שֶׁקֶר, *i. e.*, not: "That is not true!" (Luther, Keil), or: "A lie!" (De Wette), but, "Deceit!" (1 Sam. xxv. 21; Jerem. iii. 23), Thenius: "Nonsense! thou desirest to escape us." Thereupon Jehu cannot help himself any longer; he tells them plainly what has happened. Niemeyer's interpretation: "It is true that he (this man) does not always tell the truth, yet tell us what he said," is certainly false.

Vers. 13. **Then they hasted and took every man his garment.** The immediate and joyful homage to the general shows, on the one hand, that they were far from scoffing at the prophet, or regarding him as a crazy man or a mere fanatic, on the other hand, that a deep dissatisfaction with Joram and the house of Ahab prevailed in the army, while Jehu stood in high esteem. The words אֶל־גֶּרֶם הַמַּעֲלוֹת have been understood in many different ways. Generally גֶּרֶם is taken in the sense of its synonym עֶצֶם, "self," and the clause is translated: "upon the stairs themselves," *i. e.*, upon the bare steps (Kimchi, whom Keil follows); but the word scarcely has this signification except in connection with personal pronouns. Still less can we approve the translation of Grotius, Clericus, and others: *in fastigio graduum*, for גֶּרֶם never means the top or summit. Thenius believes that גֶּרֶם is written for צֶלֶם, as the Vulg. shows: *in similitudinem tribunalis*. He translates: "As a representation of (or make-shift for) the (necessary) scaffolding [by mounting upon which to show himself to the people and receive their homage, a king was inaugurated], Jehu stepped up upon the piled-up garments." But, to say nothing of other objections, there could be no mention of "steps" in connection with a pile of heaped-up garments. Evidently, we have rather to think of a spreading-out of the garments such as is recorded in Matt. xxi. 8, and, as אֶל, which we must not interchange with עַל, designates motion to or towards, we translate literally: "towards," or, "in the direction of, the stairs." In the building, in which the generals were assembled, there was, therefore, a staircase, an arrangement like that in the court of the temple for the king (2 Chron. vi. 13), which had perhaps been prepared for the king, who formerly lived in Ramoth. The generals spread their garments over the ground from the place where Jehu stood to this place, which was ordinarily reserved for the king, and thus formed a path for him to this place, on which they saluted him with royal honors. [See note under *Grammatical* on this verse.]—On the blowing of the trumpet, see note on 1 Kings i. 34; *cf.* 2 Kings xi. 14.—Ver. 14 does not state the cause of the act in ver. 13, but the consequence of it, so that we must not understand that there was a "conspiracy" in the ordinary sense of the word, *i. e.*, a secret bond, previous to the wounding of Joram (Köster). After they had chosen Jehu king by acclamation, he bound himself and them firmly and solemnly to hostility to Joram (קשר means to bind, to fetter). The word does not imply, in itself, that he made them take an oath of allegiance to himself.

Ver. 14. **Joram had defended Ramoth, &c.** שֹׁמֵר בְּרָמֹת shows again, what we saw in ver 6, that the city was not at that time besieged by Joram (Köster), but that he was in it and was de-

fending it against the Syrians. In vers. 15 and 16 we have a repetition of viii. 28, 29, but it is not "a mere superfluous" repetition, which "proves that those verses and the chapter before us were not written by the same person" (Thenius). In the former place the statement is purely historical, but here it is intended to explain the event narrated in vers. 1–14. Ver. 21 shows that Joram was healed at the time that Jehu was anointed. Instead of returning, however, to share the labors and the dangers of the war, he remained in his summer palace in Jezreel, and appears to have been taking his pleasure with his guest, king Ahaziah of Judah. This must have had a bad effect on the army, which could see in it only indifference or cowardice, and it explains the enthusiasm with which they yielded allegiance to Jehu, as well as the haste with which the latter started for Jezreel, inasmuch as it was important for him to lay hands at once upon the trio, Joram, Ahaziah, and Jezebel. He therefore proposes to the generals that they shall keep the army at Ramoth, and not allow any one to leave the city, and he hastens with a small company (שִׁפְעָה ver. 17) to take possession of Jezreel. Peter Martyr: *Silentium et celeritatem adhibet, ne Joramo spatium detur vel ad deliberandum vel ad se muniendum.* Ewald's assertion: "He mounted his chariot *alone* with his old companion in arms Bidkar, and drove," &c., contradicts the text.

Ver. 17. **And there stood a watchman, &c.** Ver. 17 stands in close connection with the end of ver. 16. While the two kings were enjoying themselves in the summer palace, and thought of no danger, the watchman appeared before Joram, and reported: "I see a company." That which is narrated in vers. 17–20 is as characteristic of Joram as of Jehu, and that is why it is narrated with so much detail. It shows, on the one hand, how careless Joram was, since it was not till after he had in vain sent out two horsemen, that he took a more earnest view of the matter, and, on the other hand, how decided and energetic Jehu was, since he did not allow himself to be detained, and kept the two horsemen in his own train, lest they should hurry on before him with intelligence of his coming. His question in ver. 18 has the meaning, What is it of thy business, whether I come in friendship or in hostility; thou hast nothing to do with that, it does not concern thee. [See note on ver. 11.] It is probable that the watchman had seen, while they were at a distance, that they were not Syrians. As they came nearer, he recognized more and more distinctly that they were Israelites, and he inferred, from their violent speed, that Jehu, the commander of the army, whose wild and fierce disposition was well known to him, was at their head. On בְשִׁגָּעוֹן see note on ver. 11.

Ver. 21. **And Joram said: Make ready, &c.** Now, at length, when he heard Jehu's name, he became anxious, and set out to meet him—a thing which he could not have done, be it noticed, if he had been confined by his wound. [It must be clear that this anxiety could only have been as to what events of the war east of the Jordan could have been the cause that the chief commander came hurrying home in such haste. If he had suspected treachery, it is not conceivable that he would have gone to meet Jehu. See notes on vers. 11, 22, and 30.—W. G. S.] **The portion of Naboth,** where the two kings met Jehu, "is the כֶּרֶם, vineyard, of Nabôth, which now formed a part of the park of the royal palace" (Keil). Joram's question, ver. 22, "Is it peace?" shows that he did not even yet suspect rebellion, but rather expected news of a victory from Ramoth, otherwise he certainly would not have gone out alone to meet him. [That is to say; the question had reference to the hostility between Syria and Israel, not to any suspected hostility of Jehu towards his king. This is just the distinction which must be kept in mind, and this question must be interpreted as asking news of the war. No other interpretation is possible. The rest of the chapter must therefore be interpreted consistently with this. The king did not here ask: Is there peace *between me and thee?* No more did he send a messenger to ask: Dost thou come for peace or war *between me and thee?* in vers. 17 and 18. If he knew that they were Israelites, he certainly did not ask the question in this sense; if he thought that they were Syrians, he would not send out one man to ask them the idle question whether they came for peace or war. See note below, on ver. 30.—W. G. S.]—In Jehu's answer, עַד has the same force as in Judges iii. 26 [so long as, or. while]. He gives as the reason for his hostile coming, the whoredoms and sorceries of Jezebel. [He gives the king to understand that he has not come to bring news from the war, but to overthrow him, by a reply in which he condemns the vices of the queen-mother, in terms which no man could use who was willing any longer to be a subject.—W. G. S.] זְנוּנִים is not to be taken literally, but is used, as it so often is, in referring to idolatry (Jerem. iii. 2, 9; Ezek. xxiii. 27, &c.), with which, however, licentiousness was almost always connected. By כְּשָׁפִים we have not to understand "mysteries" (Thenius), but that general practice of sorcery, and use of incantations for producing various supernatural effects (Winer, *R.-W.-B.*, II. *s.* 718), which was closely connected with idolatry. All these practices were forbidden, as well as idolatry, on pain of death, in the Mosaic law (Ex. xxii. 18; Deut xviii. 10). Jehu's words show that Jezebel was generally regarded as the foundress and patroness of idolatry. They also contain a rebuke for Joram, because he had submitted to be led by her, had helped her instead of opposing her, and had thereby made himself accessory to her crime.—וַיַּהֲפֹךְ, ver. 23, see 1 Kings xxii. 34. The exclamation, מִרְמָה, *deceit*, means, "We are *deceived*, *i. e.*, really, *betrayed*" (Keil).

Ver. 24. **Between his arms,** *i. e.*, from behind, since Joram, in his flight, had turned his back to Jehu. It means, therefore, really, between the shoulders (Vulg. *inter scapulas*), so that the arrow went obliquely through his heart.

Ver. 25. **Then said Jehu to Bidkar, his lieutenant.** זְכֹר is rendered by all the old versions, which are misled by אֲנִי, which follows, in the first person: "For I remember how," &c. But it is evidently incorrect. Whether רֹכְבִים here signifies riding on horseback, or in a chariot, is of

very little importance. The point is, that Jehu was in Ahab's retinue, was an ear-witness when the prophet pronounced upon the king the sentence of God, after the death of Naboth (1 Kings xxi. 19 *sq.*). This had made an ineffaceable impression upon Jehu.—מַשָּׂא means really: "burden," *i. e.*, something which must be borne. If God lays a "burden" upon any one, he passes a sentence of punishment upon him, which must be endured. Hence the word is often used by the prophets in the sense of a condemnation of, or judicial sentence upon, a man or a nation (Isai. xiii. 1; xiv. 28; xv. 1).—אִם לֹא, in an oath or affirmation: "Verily" (Numb. xiv. 28). Jehu quotes the sentence which was pronounced 1 Kings xxi. 19–24 according to its substance, as it remained in his memory after sixteen years, and with such inaccuracies in the wording as were occasioned by his excitement in a moment of the most violent activity. The repetition of "saith the Lord" places emphasis on the oracle of God, as such. I have seen, saith the Lord: I will repay, saith the Lord. Jehu, however, mentions something which was not mentioned at all in the former place; viz., "The blood of his sons," and that he should be requited *in the field of Naboth.* Thenius considers this an "essential variation," and says that "all attempts at reconciliation are vain." But the author must have been the most thoughtless man in the world, if he had not perceived that what he here recorded was contradictory to what he had written a few pages before. It may, therefore, nevertheless be permitted us to attempt a "reconciliation" which will make him talk sense. Although the blood of the sons of Naboth is not mentioned in 1 Kings xxi., it may nevertheless be that they were also killed. It is impossible that Jehu should have talked to an eye and ear witness, as Bidkar was, about the blood of the sons of Naboth, if their blood had never actually been spilled. Thenius very justly remarks on ver. 7 ("And the blood of all the servants of the Lord"), that "Jezebel must have vented her rage upon a still wider circle than that which is expressly mentioned." Perhaps Naboth's sons were murdered because it was feared that they might lay claim to the property of which their father had been robbed, and might avenge his murder. Jehu mentions their blood also, as well as that of their father, because the divine punishment would thereby appear all the more just, and his own command, to throw Joram's corpse upon the field of Naboth, would be more completely justified. As the murder fell upon Naboth and his sons, so the penalty fell upon Ahab and his sons. The word "yesterday" must not be insisted upon too strongly in its strict signification. It implies simply, "a while ago," as in Isai. xxx. 33. The sentence of condemnation in 1 Kings xxi. was certainly not pronounced on the day after Naboth's murder. Secondly, as to the addition, "In this plat," the emphasis is not upon this phrase, but upon the word requite: that is the main idea, about which all the rest is grouped, not the "plat." The slaying of Joram, the "son of a murderer" (vi. 32) is marked as a penalty for the murder of Naboth and his sons by this very circumstance, that his body is cast upon the field which that murder had been committed to win. Jehu very justly saw, in the fact that Joram must die just here, a dispensation of Providence, the ground for which he discovers in the oracle 1 Kings xxi. [Jehu commands the corpse to be cast upon the field of Naboth, and proceeds to quote the oracle as a motive for the command, after which he repeats his order. (Throw him there, for God said that he would requite him there; therefore throw him there.) It is, therefore, evident that the emphasis is on the words, "In this plat." For the rest, 1 Kings xxi. 19 is strictly and literally fulfilled by this command of Jehu, although it is not literally quoted.—W. G. S.]

Ver. 27. **But when Ahaziah the king of Judah saw this, &c.** The garden-house, towards which Ahaziah fled, was certainly not the summer palace in Jezreel (Calmet), but, since he sought the open country, either a house which "stood at one of the exits from the park" (Thenius), or which did not belong at all to the royal domain, but "stood at some distance from Jezreel" (Keil).—**And Jehu followed after him, and said, &c.** From his words it is clear that he did not himself pursue Jehu, but gave the command to do so, just as so often that which one commands to be done is ascribed to himself. His object was to reach Jezreel, where Isabel, the originator of all the mischief, was, and, as he was now close to the city, he hastened thither (ver. 30), leaving the pursuit of Ahaziah to some of his followers. After the words: "Smite him in the chariot," something must be supplied, viz., the fulfilment of the command, as also after the command in ver. 26: "Cast him into the plat of ground," &c. The Sept. have: *Καίγε αὐτόν. Καὶ ἐπάταξεν αὐτὸν ἐπὶ τῷ ἅρματι ὄντα ἐν τῇ ἀναβάσει Γούρ.* Thenius, as usual, follows them, and desires to make the utterly unnecessary change from הַכֻּהוּ to וַיַּכֻּהוּ. He then translates: "Him also! (I must have him also!) And he smote (wounded) him on the chariot on the height of Gur." The rendering of the Vulg. is better: *Etiam hunc percutite in curro suo! Et percusserunt eum in ascensu Gaver*, except that *in curru suo* belongs with *percusserunt.* Ewald, Maurer, and Keil are satisfied with inserting וַיַּכֻּהוּ after הַכֻּהוּ, and this is certainly the simplest course to pursue.—The height or hill Gur is not mentioned anywhere else. [Thenius takes גּוּר to mean a caravanserai (*cf.* גּוּר בַּעַל, 2 Chron. xxvi. 7, *hospitium Baalis.* Ges.), and thinks that the hill had its name from an inn which stood alone upon it. Ges., *Thesaurus*, gives the name under גּוּר, *catulus*, a cub or whelp. So that it would mean *ascensus catuli.* The place was not important, and the name was a popular and ephemeral one.—W. G. S.] Jibleam is mentioned Josh. xvii. 11 and Judges i. 27 in connection with Megiddo. On the latter place, see note on 1 Kings iv. 12. The location of Jibleam cannot be more definitely fixed either from the two places cited, or from 1 Chron. vi. 55, where בִּלְעָם stands for it. As Megiddo lay, according to all the latest maps, directly west of Jezreel, and as Ahaziah died at Megiddo, Jibleam, whither he fled and where he was wounded, must have been likewise to the west of Jezreel, and between that place and Megiddo (Thenius). It is true that Keil objects that "between Jezreel and Megiddo there is only the plain of Jezreel or Esdraelom, in which we cannot suppose that there was any height Gur."

But Megiddo, and therefore Jibleam, which was near it, did not lie in the midst of the plain, but on the slope of Mt. Carmel, where there may well have been a height, such as is referred to. Least of all can we adopt Keil's supposition that Jibleam was "south of Jenin," for this place was in a direct line as far south of Jezreel as Megiddo was west. It is not clear how Ahaziah, when severely wounded, should have gone from there in a northwesterly direction, to Megiddo. He cannot have fled at the same time in a direct westerly and a direct southerly direction.—The chronicler gives another story of Ahaziah's death (II., xxii. 8 *sq.*): "And it came to pass that when Jehu was executing judgment upon the house of Ahab . . . he sought Ahaziah, and they caught him, for he was hid in Samaria, and brought him to Jehu; and when they had slain him they buried him." Keil thinks, in order to combine the two stories, that it is very possible "that Ahaziah really escaped to Samaria, and that he was there captured by Jehu's followers and brought back. Then that he was wounded at the hill Gur, near Jibleam, and, having fled again from there, that he breathed his last at Megiddo." This explanation is, in the first place, very forced and unnatural, but it falls to the ground when we know that Jibleam was on the road westward towards Megiddo, and not on the road from Jezreel to Samaria. A variation in the history is here clearly apparent, and cannot be denied. The main point, *i. e.*, the slaying of Ahaziah by Jehu or his followers, is firmly established by both. A different tradition in regard to the where? and how? may have prevailed in the time of the Chronicler. The one which is followed by the record before us, which is certainly older, appears, especially on account of its geographical details, to be the more correct and reliable.—The difference between ver. 29 and chap. viii. 25, which amounts, after all, to only one year, is explained "most simply on the supposition of a difference in reckoning the first year of the reign of Joram" (Keil). See above, note on chap. viii. 16.

Ver. 30. **Jezebel heard of it.** Women make use of paint for the eyes, in the Orient, until the present day. It consists of a mixture of antimony (*stibium*) and zinc, which is moistened with oil, and applied with a brush to the eye-brows and eyelids. The eye itself is thrown into relief by the dark border, and appears larger (Pliny says of *stibium* in his *Hist. Nat.* 33: *in calliblepharis mulierum dilatat oculos*). Large eyes were considered beautiful. Homer applies to Juno the epithet βοῶπις (*cf.* Rosenmüller, *Alt. und Neu. Morgenland*, iv. 268, and Keil on this passage). [Boxes have been found in the tombs of Egypt containing portions of this mixture; also the small, smooth sticks of wood, or bone, or ivory, by means of which it was applied. There are specimens in the "Abbot Collection" in the rooms of the N. Y. Hist. Soc.—W. G. S.] **And tired her head** hardly means that she put on a "coiffure of false hair" (Thenius). It refers rather to the ordinary decorations of the head, head-band, crown, &c. The old opinion, which is still held by Ewald and Eisenlohr, that she summoned up all her seductive fascinations, in order to tempt and conquer Jehu, is certainly incorrect, for Jezebel had, at this time, a grandson who was 23 years old (viii. 26), so that she must have been advanced in years. Since, moreover, women fade earlier in the Orient, she cannot have intended to excite any carnal desire in Jehu. The haughty, imperious woman intended, rather, to go to meet the rebel in all the majesty of her position as queen-dowager, and to so far overawe him that he should desist from any further steps. She therefore takes her place at the lofty-window of the palace, and shouts to him, as he enters the gate, the bold and haughty words in ver. 31: "Is it peace, Zimri, murderer of his master?" Luther translates [like the E. V.]: "Had Zimri peace, who slew his master?" Maurer supports this rendering by suggesting that she could not have asked him if he came in peace, at the same time that she called him a murderer of the king. But הַשָׁלוֹם cannot have any different meaning here from that in ver. 22 [where, as Bähr explains it, it means, "Is there peace in the Syrian war?" or, "Dost thou bring news of a victory?"]. Jezebel connects with the question this meaning: "Wilt thou submit to me, the queen, and desist from the rebellion, or wilt thou persist in it?" [The reader will see that this interpretation, which makes הַשָׁלוֹם mean, "Is there hostility between me and thee?" is not consistent with the author's own exposition of ver. 22. Jezebel must have felt that the hostility of Jehu reached to herself, even if she had not heard that his declaration of war was aimed, in its terms, exclusively at her. She had heard of the fate of the king, as the last part of her speech shows. She could not, therefore, have intended to ask Jehu if he came, in general, on a peaceful errand. This is perhaps the clearest instance of all, to prove that this formula had lost its etymological significance, and it must be apparent that the attempt to give it this meaning here produces inconsistency and confusion. It was a standing formula, empty of all independent meaning, used as an interjection in beginning an address: Ho! or Hail!—Just what she hoped to accomplish by her decorations, and by her address, it is difficult to see. Perhaps the safest conclusion is one founded upon her domineering and wilful character. These traits were developed in her to a tragical degree. She has scarcely a parallel either in history or poetry save Medea. Her last toilet was probably the consequence of a determination to die in full state, self-willed, arrogant, defiant to the last.—W. G. S.] There is a threat also in her words. Zimri, who murdered king Elah (1 Kings xvi. 10–18), reigned only seven days, and met with a frightful end. She means to terrify the violent rebel. "Thou shalt fall as did Zimri. Thy rule shall not endure!" Perhaps she had also taken measures of resistance, had collected about her those on whom she thought that she could rely, and was, therefore, all the more self-willed. Jehu's reply, ver. 32, **Who is on my side? Who?** seems to sustain this opinion. He gives her no answer whatever, still less does he submit to the influence of her manner; he knew well that no one would heartily support the hated and tyrannical woman. The two eunuchs, who were her immediate attendants, gave Jehu a sign, probably from another window, that they would join him and serve his purposes. They obeyed his command. [The "or" between "two" and "three" in ver. 32 is not in the text. It means either that two looked out first, and were immediately joined by another, or that two appeared at one window, and three at another (the latter is

adopted by Stanley).—W. G. S.]—וַיִּרְמְסֶנָּה, ver. 33, literally: **And he trode her under foot,** not, however, "with his own feet" (Ewald). He caused her to be trodden under foot, *i. e.*, the horses of his chariot trode upon her. Hence the Sept. and Vulg. have the plural συνεπάτησαν αὐτήν, *conculcaverunt eam* (*cf.* Hom., *Il.*, x. 432; xi. 534).

Ver. 34. **And when he was come in,** &c. After Jezebel was slain, Jehu went into the palace, took possession of it, and refreshed himself, after the day of bloody labor, with food and drink. Then, not, according to Köster's fiction, at the banquet, but afterwards, he gave orders to see to the corpse of Jezebel and bury it. He calls her: **this cursed woman,** not "abusing her in his wrath" (Thenius), but as the originator of all the corruption which had now met with its fitting reward. Nevertheless, he does not wish to have her refused burial, for, he says, **she is a king's daughter.** Not, therefore, because she was the wife of Ahab, the mother of Joram, and the grandmother of Ahaziah, but because she was the daughter of the king of Tyre and Sidon, she was to be spared the last ignominy of lying unburied (see note on 1 Kings xiv. 11). Polus: *Forte sic fecit, ne invidiam et odium regum Zidoniorum in se inflammaret.* When he was told that sepulture was no longer possible, he remembered also the remainder of the oracle which he had quoted in ver. 26 (1 Kings xxi. 23). This shows that that was no prediction *post eventum.* He quotes the oracle freely, according to its sense, calling to mind particularly that portion of it which seemed to him the most important. This explains the use of חֵלֶק instead of חֵל (see above, on ver. 10 [and the *Grammatical* note on that verse]). Jehu did not intentionally bring it about that Jezebel had no sepulchre, *i. e.*, that there was no spot which perpetuated her memory. This was ordained by God. The memory of her was to be rooted out (Ps. xxxiv. 16).

HISTORICAL AND ETHICAL.

1. *The fall of the house of Ahab* is one of the most important events in the history of the Israelitish monarchy, and is marked as such by the detailed and vivid description which we have of it. In order to understand it correctly and estimate it justly we must look at it from the stand-point of the Old Testament theocracy. The house of Ahab was not only devoted to the cultus of the calf-images of Jeroboam, but it had also (a thing which no other dynasty had ever done) formally introduced idolatry, murdered the prophets, and persecuted the worshippers of Jehovah. All attempts to draw it away from these evil courses had proved vain. We see from chap. x. 18–28 how far the worship of Baal had taken possession of the kingdom of the ten tribes. As a result of intermarriage with the house of Ahab, the evil had spread to Judah also, and had been already fostered by two kings, Jehoram and Ahaziah. "According to all appearances, therefore, the corruption, which had already eaten so deeply into Israel, and which, in spite of all the opposition which the prophets had exerted, threatened to gradually destroy all the good influences which remained, was about to strike root also in Judah, the last stronghold of the religion of Jehovah, and thereby to destroy the very foundation of the Mosaic theocracy" (Eisenlohr, *Das Volk Israel*, ii. *s.* 192). The rule of the house of Ahab was, in very truth, the opposite of what the monarchy of Israel ought to have been. Instead of holding and maintaining (Deut. xvii. 19, 20) the laws and commandments of Jehovah, and, above all, the Mosaic law, the covenant upon which the existence of Israel, as the chosen people, rested, it destroyed, consciously and intentionally, the foundations of the Israelitish nationality, and was, therefore, a continual rebellion against Jehovah, the true and only king of Israel. The prolonged rule of this house would have drawn Israel down into heathenism, and would thereby have frustrated its destined influence on the history of the world. It would have been the end of Israel as the chosen people of God. The overthrow of this house had become a matter of life and death for the Old Testament theocracy as an institution, and a necessity, if God's redemptive plan with Israel was ever to reach its consummation. It had been threatened many times with destruction, and, after it had shown itself during forty years incapable of reformation, the time was come at last when it was to meet the fate with which it had been threatened. It was so decreed in the counsels of Him who raises up and puts down kings, who has power over the kingdoms of men, and gives them to whomsoever He will (Dan. ii. 21; iv. 14, 31). Here, therefore, the question of the justifiableness of rebellion against a legitimate dynasty, or of revolution in the ordinary sense of the word, cannot arise. The course of the house of Ahab was a rebellion against all law, divine and human, in Israel. It was, therefore, a revolution which was being brought about by those in authority. Therefore it resulted in a catastrophe which was not the overthrow of divine and human order, but rather its restoration. All the details of the occurrence must be weighed from this stand-point.

2. The long-threatened downfall of the house of Ahab is the work of *the prophet Elisha*, in so far that he gave the order to anoint Jehu king. His name therefore stands at the head of the narrative, and whereas, in other places, his name stands either alone or with the epithet, "man of God," here we find him expressly called "the prophet," in order to show that he did what is here recorded of him as a *prophet*, *i. e.*, by virtue of his prophetical calling; as one, therefore, who, as he himself solemnly declares (1 Kings xvii. 1), stands, like Elijah, "before Jehovah," and, as an immediate servant of God, acts in His name and by His authority. Thereby we are pointed, from the outset, to the grand difference between the fall of the house of Ahab and that of the other earlier or later dynasties. While the latter were all overthrown by military chiefs, whose only concern was to arrive at power, the fall of the house of Ahab was brought about by the prophet, and did not aim at the gratification of ambition, but at the uprooting of the idolatry which had been introduced and fostered by this family. The first and chief duty of the prophets, before all, of the great prophets Elijah and Elisha, consisted in bearing witness by word and deed against the radical evil, idolatry, in combating it by every means, and in plucking it up by the roots. Jehovah had appointed them "watchmen over His people," and

armed them by His Spirit for this work, in order that the great object of the choice of this one people out of all the nations of the earth (Ex. xix. 3-6), *i. e.*, its destined influence in the history of the world, might not be frustrated (Habak. ii. 1; Ezek. iii. 17; xxxiii. 7; Jerem. vi. 17, 27). The words which Jeremiah heard, when he was called to be a prophet: "See, I have this day set thee over the nations and over the kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, to build, and to plant" (Jerem. i. 10; *cf.* xviii. 7; Ezek. xliii. 3; xxxii. 18), hold true of all true prophets. They appear, therefore, as Knobel (*der Proph. der Hebr.*, i. *s.* 196 *sq.*) justly observes, not only as heralds of the acts of God, but also as executors of them, and things are often ascribed to them which in truth were done, and could be done, by God alone (see *Exeg.* on 1 Kings xix. 15-18, and, besides the places already quoted, Jerem. v. 14; xxv. 15; Hos. vi. 5). It was therefore the right and duty of the prophet Elisha, when idolatry had been pushed to the utmost, and every attempt to bring the house of Ahab into other courses had failed, by virtue of his prophetical office and calling, to labor to bring about the fall of that dynasty and the foundation of another. Far from being a sinful and rebellious undertaking, what he did was, for all Israel, as Eisenlohr himself admits, "an act of salvation."

3. *The anointing of Jehu* is generally regarded, as it is by Keil, as the fulfilment of "the last of the commissions which Elijah received at Horeb" (1 Kings xix. 16). But the correct interpretation of that passage (see notes thereon) makes this explanation unnecessary; and it is moreover to be noticed, that such an explanation presupposes that Elijah commissioned his successor to do something which *he* was commanded to do, and which he might have done, since Jehu was already, in the lifetime of Elisha, in the train of Ahab (ver. 25), but which he nevertheless did not do. There is no hint in the text that this act of Elisha was a fulfilment of that command to Elijah, and it is not consistent with the universal and unconditional obedience of Elijah. [The discrepancy between this chapter and 1 Kings xix. 16 in this particular must be frankly admitted. Even a superficial examination will show that, between the two, this passage contains the historical account of the share of the prophets in Jehu's revolt.—W. G. S.] It is still more improbable that Elisha should not have executed a commission which had been given him, as is suggested, by Elijah, but should have commissioned another, a prophet-disciple, to do it. Von Gerlach thinks that the "already aged Elisha" did this, because "he was bent with age;" but Elisha did not die until Joash was on the throne (2 Kings xiii. 14), so that he lived for at least forty-three years after Jehu was anointed. Accordingly, at the time of that event, he was not fifty years old. Neither can the reason which Krummacher assigns be maintained: "Nothing could have been more distasteful to the loving and evangelical disposition of Elisha than the command, in his own person, to put the avenging sword into the hands of Jehu. So God, who, father-like, weighs with the most tender anxiety what He may demand of each one of His children, and what not, exonerated him from this duty, and allowed him to send one of the prophet-disciples in his place." The narrative itself shows us the reason clearly. The prophet-disciple was commanded to lead Jehu into an inner chamber, and, after anointing him, to depart immediately, without speaking a word to any one. The important transaction was, therefore, to be carried out in private, and to be kept as secret as possible. This was the reason why Elisha did not take it in hand himself, for if he, the well-known head of the prophet-guild, had gone to Ramoth and had had dealings with Jehu, it would have occasioned great observation, and the cause of his coming could not have been kept secret. The affair was to be kept quiet for a time, and only to be proclaimed when the right time should come according to the leadings of Providence, just as, at a former time, the communication of the prophet Ahijah to Jeroboam (1 Kings xi. 29 *sq.*) was not to be made public, and Jeroboam had to wait until the right moment for his elevation came (see *Hist.* § 3 on 1 Kings xi. 14-43). Therefore also Jehu did not at once make known to his fellow-commanders what had been done, but gave them an evasive answer. When they pressed him, he broke silence and thought that the right time had come. Elisha limited his own action strictly to the announcement of the destiny which awaited Jehu. All the rest he left to the control of Providence, so we hear no more of him until his death (chap. xiii.).—As for the act of anointing, it was not performed with "the sacred oil of anointing" (Menzel), as in the case of the kings of Judah (1 Kings i. 39; *cf.* 2 Kings xi. 12; xxiii. 30), for, in the kingdom of the ten tribes, where there was no sanctuary of Jehovah, and where the levitical priesthood did not exist, it appears that the kings were not anointed at all. It was not, therefore, a priestly act which Elisha in this case executed, but a prophetical one, *i. e.*, a symbolical act, a physical sign and testimony of that which Jehovah has determined upon and will do. Hence it is accompanied by the words: "Thus saith the Lord: I anoint thee," &c. (vers. 3-6), just as in chap. ii. 21, where the prophet throws the salt into the fountain with the words: "Thus saith the Lord: I have healed these waters" (see pp. 17, 25). For the significance of the act of anointing, when it is ascribed to Jehovah himself, see above, note on 1 Kings xix. 15-18.

4. What Schlier (*Die Könige in Israel*, *s.* 207) says of *the newly-anointed king Jehu*, holds true. "There are few persons in the sacred history who have been so variously judged as he. To some he is a stirrer up of rebellion and a bloody despot; others see in him a pure and unimpeachable servant of the Lord. Both equally err, for both depart alike from what the sacred record declares, and all depends, especially in the case of Jehu, on allowing ourselves to be led simply by the record." If we restrict ourselves to what is said in chap. ix., this much is certain, that he did not make himself king. There is not a word to justify the suspicion that he plotted and conspired before he was anointed king; on the contrary, the story shows clearly that the prophetical calling to be king surprised and astonished him, and also that his fellow-commanders knew nothing of it. He ought not, therefore, to be put in the same category with Baasha, Zimri, Shallum, Menahem, Pekah, and Hoshea (1 Kings xv. 27; xvi. 9, 16; 2 Kings xv. 10-30), who, instigated by ambition, without authority and in self-will, took the royal power into

their hands. He was called to be king by the prophet, in the name of Jehovah. The explanation of the selection of just this man, as the instrument for the destruction of the house of Ahab, and for the uprooting of idolatry, is found in the fact that at that time there was scarcely a man who united, as he did, all the necessary qualifications; so that Ewald also is forced to admit that "Elisha certainly could not have fixed his eye upon a military chief who was better fitted for the purpose he had in view." In the first place, Jehu was a decided opponent of idolatry and of the abuses which were connected with it (ver. 22). The opposition of the prophet Elijah to Ahab and Jezebel, after the murder of Naboth, had made an indelible impression upon him, so that he had not forgotten the words of the prophet sixteen years afterwards (vers. 25 and 36). This was the first characteristic which was required. Jehu possessed the second also. He was a man of the greatest energy. Pushing onward with boldness and enterprise, decided and pitiless, he shrank back before no difficulty (vers. 20, 24, 32 *sq.*). Moreover, he did not lack prudence or wisdom (vers. 11, 15, 18). Finally, he stood high in the popular esteem as a military leader. After Joram left Ramoth he seems to have had supreme command of the army. We see from the joy with which his fellow-commanders caught up his nomination and anointment, and from the readiness with which they obeyed his commands, that he enjoyed their fullest confidence (vers. 14–16). It is true that his subsequent conduct is fierce and soldier-like; that was the natural product of his character, calling, and education. "To drive like Jehu" has become a proverb. We ought not to overlook the fact, however, that nothing was to be accomplished here by mild and kind means. If the deep-rooted evil of idolatry, which threatened Israel with total ruin, was to be rooted out, it could not be done without violence. Moreover, we have to notice that Jehu, when Joram came to meet him, did not shoot him down at once, but, in answer to his question: "Is it peace?" declared that, so long as his mother, Jezebel, nourished shameful idolatry in Israel, there was no chance for peace and prosperity in the kingdom. Upon this absolutely true declaration of Jehu, Joram turned and cried "Treason," and took to flight, so that he took sides with his idolatrous mother. Not until this point did Jehu send the death-arrow after the flying king (who sought to reach Jezreel, and to join her), and give orders to pursue Ahaziah, who came with Joram, and who likewise took Jezebel's part. As Joram fell upon the very spot of ground which had been taken from the murdered Naboth, Jehu, who saw in this incident a dispensation of God, felt encouraged to proceed with his fierce task. So too, he did not slay Jezebel without further delay, but only when she put herself in opposition to him, and shouted down to him her impudent defiance, and insulted him as another Zimri, *i. e.*, as a murderer and traitor, did he call out to "throw her down."

[Jehu came to Jezreel on purpose to put to death the king and the queen-dowager. Of the particular circumstances in which he should meet them, or of the accident which was going to throw in his way the king of Judah, another member of the house of Ahab, he could know nothing beforehand. Ewald thinks that he had had half-formed plans in his mind ever since the time when he heard the prophet's denunciation of Ahab, but Bähr is more correct, according to the text before us, when he supposes that the visit of the prophet and his business took Jehu by surprise. Whether this incident only came to satify and bring to a definite determination half-formed plans which Jehu had long cherished, is a secret of his inner life which probably few or none, even of his contemporaries, ever learned. Whether it came at the very crisis of time when the commanders of the army were disgusted with the king, and excited with admiration of Jehu, to suggest to them an act which perhaps no one had yet proposed in words, is also uncertain, but it is a theory which is thoroughly consistent with the text. When Jehu had told them what the prophet had done, it was only a suggestion, something which might be neglected and allowed to fall and be forgotten. But the other generals caught at the idea enthusiastically, and proceeded to act upon it by proclaiming Jehu king with all the solemnity which the means at hand would allow. The affair had now entered a new phase. One of the prophets of Jehovah, who were, as a matter of course, hostile to the reigning house, might nominate a new king and anoint him, and the event might be passed by as only another declaration of hostility from a well-known and uncompromising enemy; but to proclaim the new king was an overt act of treason, and all who participated in it must know that there was no receding from it, and that the reigning monarch could never overlook or pardon it. Jehu's cunning and caution had been shown in the reply to the generals in ver. 11, in which he tried, in the first place, to see if they were really the instigators of this proposition. Now that he was committed to an overt act, his promptness, decision, and energy showed themselves. "If it be your minds, if you are determined to take this step, then we must go forward at once. Let no one go out of the city to take news to Joram of what we have done." He then set out himself for Jezreel. Between himself and the house of Ahab there was no possible compromise. He must gain the advantages of time and energy. He made no delay (this may be reckoned as a virtue on his part) in carrying out his purpose. He took circumstances as he found them, and carried out his intention as he best could. He unquestionably intended to destroy the whole house of Ahab when he returned to Jezreel. He could not tell what opportunities would offer, but it is clear that he meant to make opportunities if they did not come of themselves. He meant to get all the royal family into his hands and kill them. Bähr's idea that he waited until Joram had taken sides with Jezebel, and waited until Jezebel had insulted him, is suggested by a laudable desire to excuse him, but it is an invention. We can hardly repress some feeling of pity, even for Jezebel, in reading the bloody and tragical details, but pitilessness is a virtue in a man situated as Jehu was. He had a task to accomplish which led through blood, and he had to follow it. To waver from pity or from fear would have been equal treason to his calling. The sentimentality which forgets the crime in pity for the criminal is a modern and a "civilized" weakness. It is not a feeling which a man called to conduct great national or religious revolutions can allow to dim the clearness of his judgment, or to unnerve his determination.—

Jehu was, therefore, a cautious, crafty man, who was slow to commit himself to any irrevocable course of action, but energetic and unrelenting in prosecuting it when he had resolved upon it. He was a man of action, who did not hesitate or waver, and did not lose time in long plans, but struck quickly and surely where he had determined to strike. He did not shrink from difficulties, did not hesitate at harsh means of accomplishing his purposes, did not feel pity in striking down those who stood in his way, did not leave behind him anything which might, at a later time, rise up to mar or overthrow his work. This is not a lovely character. It does not present the amiable virtues, patience, pity, mercy, kindness. It is not a character to be imitated in modern, civilized, thoroughly regulated life, but neither ought it to be measured and judged by the standards of a society trained to peace and order, fearful of revolution, and encased in law. Its virtues must be sought in the use to which it put its strength, its energy, and its decision. It is a character, however, such as is needed to lead great movements, to give form, and purpose, and consistency of action, and perseverance, to a national effort, in times of discontent with existing institutions and tendencies, when all are convinced that the nation is going down, under depraved leadership, to ruin, but when no one seems able to step to the front and lead on the reformation. In the providence of God, such men are often raised up for great crises in Church and State. The man is swallowed up in the movement. It is impossible to tell whether the work has made him or been made by him. His personal virtues and faults are lost sight of in the stormy, tumultuous crisis in which he lived. We cannot, in justice, sit down in peace, when the storm is over, and lay the line of every-day standards to such a rugged character, and, from the stand-point of a time of order, peace, and quiet, condemn it in so far as it passed beyond the bounds of peaceful, domestic, citizen-like virtue. He was needed and was called; he responded, and accomplished his calling well. That is his place in the history, and that is the judgment on his career.—W. G. S.]

5. *The fall of the three heads of the house of Ahab* on one day is narrated with so much minuteness because it not only has simple historical significance, but also proves the inevitableness of the threats of God, and the certainty of His requital ("vengeance") (vers. 7–10, 26, 36). The sentence against the house of Ahab, which accompanied the anointment of Jehu, is almost literally the same as that which Ahija pronounced against the house of Jeroboam (1 Kings xiv. 10), Jehu against the house of Baesha (1 Kings xvi. 3), and Elijah against the house of Ahab (1 Kings xxi. 21). Its repetition shows that it was the established formula of condemnation against every royal house which sought to undermine the foundations of the Israelitish nationality, the covenant with Jehovah. Those whom God had set to be watchmen over His people, were to pronounce the same sentence for the same transgression, wherever it occurred. (On the peculiarly Old Testament form of the condemnation, see 1 Kings xiv. 1–20, *Hist.* § 1.) The day on which the three heads of the house of Ahab fell is, therefore, represented as a day of divine judgment. It has all the marks which belong to days of judgment in general, and to that one great general judgment at the last. It is a terrible day (Joel ii. 29); it comes unawares, like a thief in the night, and overtakes those who are its just victims when they are careless and contented (Zeph. i. 14; Luke xvii. 28 *sq.*; 1 Thess. v. 2 *sq.*); they cannot escape it either by flight or by resistance, they are brought to nought and come to a terrible end (Zeph. i. 18; Lament. ii. 22; Ps. lxxiii. 19; lxxxiii. 17; Jerem. ii. 26; Heb. x. 27, 31 &c.). It is to this day that the word of the apostle applies: "Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come" (1 Cor. x. 11).

6. *The story of the end of Jezebel* is given with particular detail, because therein the prophet's threat was fulfilled with especial frightfulness. As the sin of the house of Ahab was represented to the fullest extent in Jezebel, the originator and patroness of idolatry, so her terrible end forms the crisis of the divine punishment. Ahaziah is fatally wounded, and dies in a strange place. Although he was, as Josephus says: *πονηρὸς καὶ χείρων τοῦ πατρὸς αὐτοῦ*, yet he was buried by his subjects, because he was "the son (grandson) of Jehoshaphat" (2 Chron. xxii. 9). Joram falls dead, pierced through the heart, but is thrown upon the field of Naboth and not buried. Jezebel is thrown down from the window by her own attendants; as she lies weltering in her own blood she is trodden under foot by horses, and her corpse lies unburied "like dung upon the fields" (see note on 1 Kings xi. 14). She appears here in her last moments such as she had ever been, proud and impudent, arrogant and domineering, [defiant and insolent]. She places herself at the window, painted and grandly dressed, and presumes upon her assumed majesty. Instead of recognizing in the judgment, which is falling upon her house, the just recompense for her misdeeds, instead of sueing for grace, she, who had shed so much innocent blood, and had exalted herself against the God of Israel, insults the instrument of the divine vengeance as a murderer and a traitor, demands that he shall submit to her, and threatens him, relying upon her imagined power, with destruction, if he persists. Just here judgment overtakes her. Her nearest attendants forsake the hated queen and hurl her down from her position. She does not reach the rest of the grave, and remains, even in death, marked with infamy for all time, a proof of the truth of the words: "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God" (Heb. x. 31).

7. Modern historians represent the *elevation of Jehu to the throne of Israel* in a very different light from that in which it appears in the Scriptures. According to Winer (*R.-W.-B.*, i. *s.* 37, 600): "Elisha secretly anointed Jehu king of Israel (the prophets could not even yet forget the injuries they had received from Jezebel, the mother of this family!);" in consequence of the unfortunate campaign of Joram against Hazael of Damascus "a rebellion broke out in the Israelitish camp; Jehu killed his king, and, soon afterwards, Ahaziah also." According to Menzel (*Staats und Relig. Gesch. von Isr.*, *s.* 205 *sq.*): "The relation in which Elisha stood to Hazael was not without influence" on the overthrow of the house of Ahab; he (Elisha) was in communication with Hazael; Joram gave the command of the army to Jehu when he returned wounded to Jezreel, "without surmising that Jehu had already conspired with several of the other generals for his overthrow. The time

for the accomplishment of the change of dynasty planned by Elisha has come; Elisha sends one of his servants to the camp with the holy oil of anointment, commands that it shall be poured upon Jehu's head and that he shall be called upon to make himself king, and to root out the house of Ahab." According to Köster (*Die Proph.*, *s.* 94): "Hazael's accession to power is parallel with that of Jehu which immediately followed." Jehu had "conspired even before Joram was wounded, and, when he killed him," he gave to Elisha's prophecy against Ahab (1 Kings xxi.) an extension which made it subserve his plans. Finally, according to Duncker (*Gesch. des Alterthums*, i. *s.* 413), it was the "hostility of the prophets of Jehovah" which brought such a sad fate upon Joram and his house. [There can be no question that it was. Duncker, however, seems to criticize the history of the period from the stand-point of Ahab in 1 Kings xviii. 17 and xxi. 20 ("Art thou he that troubleth Israel;" "Hast thou found me, O mine enemy!"). It may be that he is led to it by a revulsion from the naïve method of reading the Scriptures which insists on making some characters saints and others demons, but it is simple perversity, and uncritical self-will to take the contrary side. Some of the old expositors seem to have felt that in reviewing the acts of one who is called "good" in the record, they must excuse and explain away and account, on all kinds of imaginary hypotheses, for any acts of his which were not good according to our standards. Also that, when a character is marked as "bad" in the record, they must interpret any good acts of his in an unfavorable manner. The modern critics, many of them, revolt with disgust from a notion, which is so manifestly unjust and unsound, into the other extreme. Many of them proceed as if they had adopted some such canon as this: Every person, who is made a hero or a saint in the record, was in reality a coward and criminal, and, *vice versa*, all who are represented as wicked and base, were, in fact, noble and good; the writers, from some prejudice, or for some partisan reason, represented them as we find in the record, therefore, to get at *the truth*, we must take them all by contraries.—W. G. S.] Elisha [Duncker goes on to say], "was the favorite attendant of Elijah, and stood at the head of the prophets of Israel." After the siege of Samaria (vi. 24 *sq.*) "he resided for a time among the enemies of his country in Damascus. Here, at his instigation, Benhadad, the king, was murdered by Hazael, one of his servants, who now ascended the throne, and recommenced the war against Israel, not without encouragement from Elisha. Joram was wounded at a battle in Gilead, and left the army in order to be healed at his palace in Jezreel. This moment seemed to Elisha to be favorable for the overthrow of the king of Israel also. Samuel had once favored David's rebellion against Saul, so also Elisha now succeeded in prevailing upon Jehu, one of the generals of the army, to rebel against Joram." It is not necessary, after the detailed explanations which have been given above, to refute at length this construction of the narrative. The biblical passage before us, which is the only authority we have for this history, contains no ground whatever for the suspicion that there was a connection between the murder of Benhadad by Hazael and the overthrow of the house of Ahab by Jehu. It is an assertion which is as false historically as it is revolting, that Elisha instigated Hazael to murder his master, then encouraged the attack of the national enemy upon his own country, and finally provoked Jehu to rebellion. What just reason is there for making such a vulgar intriguer, political agitator, instigator of rebellion and traitor, out of the "man of God?" The assertion that Jehu had formed a conspiracy with the other generals before Joram was wounded, and he was anointed, and that he brought about a rebellion in the army, is equally groundless and false. The text contradicts it distinctly. But the whole tenor of this conception of the history is to set aside the true reason for the overthrow of the house of Ahab, viz., the corrupting idolatry which had been introduced by this house, and which was destroying the character of the nation. Although this reason is perfectly clear, yet it is ignored, and instead of it, the true reason is said to lie in personal hostility, ambition, and other passions, so that finally the whole story appears only as a drama in which human interests are at stake and depraved forces are in play.—Ewald's conception of the history is far better and more probable. He explains (*Gesch.*, iii. *s.* 526; *cf.* also *s.* 382) [3d ed. 566 and 409 *sq.*] "The Great Revolution" by the conflict which had been maintained ever since the time of Solomon, "between the two great independent powers," the monarchy and the prophetical office as a national institution in Israel [prophethood, if one may coin a word, after the analogy of priesthood, for the prophetical office as an institution—*Prophetenthum.*] "Heathenism, fostered by the monarchy, threatened to displace the old religion, in both kingdoms at the same time. But just at this point the old religion stood desperately on its defence once more against the new one; in the first place, it is true, only spasmodically (! ?), and through *that* instrument only which had hitherto been its living fountain, and its most powerful force, viz., the prophethood." This explanation is based upon that idea on which Ewald's method of presenting the history rests, and which has been referred to several times above (see 1 Kings xi. 14–43, *Hist.* § 3), viz., that "violence" was a radical trait both of the monarchy and of the prophethood (*Gesch.*, iii. 13), and that, therefore, they stood in opposition to each other as "independent powers," and struggled for the supreme control—a theory which we cannot by any means regard as correct. The prophethood does not anywhere appear as an "independent power," parallel with the monarchy. The prophets never combated the monarchy as such, and never strove with it for the supremacy, as, for instance, the popes with the emperors. No prophet ever strove for royal authority, or endeavored to raise himself to the throne. The two great prophets, Elijah and Elisha, who had, most of all, to resist the kings who were their contemporaries, were farthest from all hierarchical tendencies and from all lust for power They remained poor and humble, and had, from all their strifes, neither advantage nor enjoyment. The office and calling of the prophets consisted in taking care that the covenant of Jehovah, the fundamental constitution of Israel, should be maintained in its integrity. They were not to rule by the side of the kings, much less over them, but to be the standing corrective to the royal power, when this departed from the Mosaic

constitution, according to which it was bound to rule (Deut. xvii. 19, 20). The prophets were not, therefore, in hostility to all the kings, but only to those who, in contradiction with their calling to be servants of Jehovah, despised, more or less, the covenant of the God of Israel. They must resist most earnestly of all those kings, who, like those of the house of Ahab, not only broke that covenant, but also introduced and fostered idolatry, or, at least, tolerated it. Nothing could be more perverse then, as Knobel himself has shown (*Der Proph. der Hebr.*, i. *s.* 11 *sq.*), than to make an "hierarchical party or caste" out of the prophets, or "to regard them as restless, innovating demagogues, who were continually plotting, striving to introduce arbitrary changes, and stirring up the people to rebellion against the government." [This, then, was the true hostility between the prophethood and the monarchy. A single reflection, however, will show how deep it was. The history of the foundation of the monarchy in 1 Sam. throws doubt upon the degree to which it was founded or approved by the prophetical authorities of the time. Under a king like David the prophethood, an institution which took its specific authority from direct and continual inspiration, and the monarchy, an institution founded it is true by God in the first instance, but deriving its continued authority from descent and tradition (in which sense they certainly were independent authorities, each claiming the right to direct and control), worked in sufficient harmony. In the case of another king, who departed from the standards of judgment which were maintained by the prophets, there would be opposition and hostility. The warnings of the prophets were resented, in such cases, as unwarrantable interference, by the kings. The actions of the kings were condemned and protested against by the prophets. Under a theocratic constitution, such as that of Israel always was in theory, where there was no possibility of a division of departments of activity into civil and religious, political and ecclesiastical, church and state, these collisions were inevitable, if the king departed from the prophetical standards. Thus these two authorities came into collision. They both sought to control the nation. It is very true that *neither one ever sought to usurp the peculiar functions of the other*, but that is little to the point. One sought to control by means of external authority (*i. e.*, in the last resort, by force); the other sought to control by moral influence. As long as the prophets approved what the monarch did there was no jarring: as soon as they did not thus approve, antagonism arose. They rebuked the king, which seemed like insubordination, and they denounced him to the people, which seemed like inciting rebellion. There is certainly no case of factious or ambitious or hierarchical opposition to the monarchy on the part of any of the prophets, but, as a matter of history, there were so few of the kings who came up to the standards which the spiritual authority maintained, that there was hostility between the two great authorities of the state during almost the entire duration of the monarchy. As for Ewald's opinion, he certainly does not mean to say that there was any such conflict for worldly and physical supremacy as has marked modern history (popes and emperors).—W. G. S.] The prophethood in Israel is a peculiar phenomenon, as the people of Israel is a peculiar phenomenon in the history of the world (Knobel, *s.* 1 *sq.*, De Wette, *Sittenlehre*, i. 1, 32). It cannot, therefore, be judged from a general historical, that is, from a natural and human, stand-point. This is especially true in the case before us of the overthrow of the house of Ahab and the elevation of Jehu to the throne. If we abandon here the theocratic stand-point of the author of these books, which is above distinctly maintained, the prophethood becomes a mere caricature of what it really was, and of what it was intended by God that it should be.

[8. If we refuse to consider the bearing of this story upon *the justifiableness of revolution*, we turn away from one of its most prominent practical lessons. We have here two cases of regicide in close juxtaposition — Benhadad by Hazael, and Joram by Jehu. Evidently we cannot measure them by two different standards of right. We have seen above that, so far as the history informs us, the former of these was one of those cases of palace-revolution which are almost the only articulating points in oriental history. Hazael slew his master in order to usurp his authority. Morally weighed, it was just as bad as the act of a highwayman who slays a man in order to take his purse. Of the state of the kingdom under Benhadad and of the comparative benefits or injuries which it received from Hazael, we know very little. As a military leader Hazael was the abler of the two. Beyond that we know nothing. Jehu's case was in many respects different. A family was on the throne which had introduced a licentious worship, had fostered it, and had persecuted the older and purer religion, which, if it had not succeeded in taking so firm hold of the people as to hold them to purity and virtue, at least had not been itself a deep corrupting influence. The mischief had spread so far that it was time to try the last and severest measures or to give up the contest entirely. The indictment was made out against the ruling house, of corrupting the national honor and undermining the national existence, of depriving the nation of a religion whose spirit was pure and elevating, and giving it one whose spirit was corrupting and licentious. It was time for every man to make the choice which Elijah put before the people in 1 Kings xviii. 21, and for those who were on the side of Jehovah to strike without pity, for their cause. Jehu was the chosen leader and representative of this party, and it was in its interest that he became a regicide. There is no ethical principle, therefore, which the chapter teaches more plainly than this, that a nation is not to let itself be robbed of its highest and best goods, its purest traditions, and its holiest inspirations, by any dynasty, however unimpeachable its legitimacy, for fear of "revolution." How terrible these national convulsions are, modern history shows clearly enough, and we shall see it also in the development of this history. They are terrible remedies for terrible diseases, and the chapter before us gives a test of when and how they are justifiable. They are justifiable as the last resort in the utmost danger, when religion, and liberty, and morality, and national honor can be saved by no other means.—Jehu was anointed by authority of a prophet of Jehovah, but we have to bear in mind that this authority was given also, if it was not executed, in the case of Hazael (1

Kings xix. 15). The one was just as much an instrument in the hands of God for carrying out his plans in history, according to the biblical representation, as the other. We may leave this important chapter with the following paragraph from Ewald (*Gesch.*, iii. 573), in which he reviews this revolution and points forward to its consequences: "The spirit of the ancient religion had, therefore, once more arisen in its might, in the kingdom of the ten tribes, against the intrusion of the foreign and heathen religion, and that was now accomplished which Elijah, in his labor and suffering, had never been able to accomplish. The nation was once more delivered, by means of a terrible and powerful revolution, from the mistakes and errors into which it had allowed itself to be plunged. It was once more forced back upon its own peculiar origin and foundation, so far, at least, as it is ever possible for an earthly kingdom to return to its own origin. He, whose warrior-hand was alone fit to be the instrument of such a revolution, Jehu, had shown himself to be, yet again, one of those unexpected and irresistible champions of the cause of Jehovah, such as the judges had once been, with this difference only, that he did not have to fight, as they did, against external, but against far more dangerous internal, foes of this cause. The horrors by which this revolution was marked were in truth scarcely to be avoided, partly on account of the character of the ancient national religion, partly on account of the deep roots which, at that time, heathenism and the authority of the house of Omri had struck in both kingdoms, but especially in Israel. Nothing can be more incorrect, therefore, than to say that, when Elisha caused Jehu to be anointed, he neither foresaw nor approved of these acts of violence and bloodshed. He could not have had such a dim vision of the future as not to foresee them, although he certainly did not designate the separate victims beforehand, after the fashion of a Roman proscriptor. Moreover, there is nothing which would render it probable that Elisha disapproved of those acts after they were committed. But the deeper and less apparent evils which lay in the horrible incidents of this, as they lie in the horrors of every, revolution, made themselves continually more and more apparent, and were continually more and more sharply felt, in the course of the history, as we shall see below."—W. G. S.]

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

Vers. 1–37. God's Judgment upon the House of Ahab: (*a*) The herald of the judgment, vers. 1–10; (*b*) the executor of it, vers. 11-20; (*c*) the victims of it, vers. 21–37.—Vers. 1–8. KRUMMACHER: Jehu. The approaching vengeance; the commission of God to Elisha; the sending of the prophet-disciple; Jehu's anointment and the object of it.—Vers. 1–3. WÜRT. SUMM.: The Lord God deposes kings and raises them up, Dan. ii. 21; Prov. viii. 15 *sq.* There is no established authority which is not from God. A calling to govern is the work of God, whether it comes through intermediate persons or not. Therefore, since rulers and governors are ordained and established of God, they ought to govern themselves according to God's will, and every one ought to respect and honor them for God's sake, and show them all due obedience, Rom. xiii. 1 *sq.* When kings and governors sin and do evil, and nobody dare lisp a word, or still less punish them, then God comes and raises up other rulers, and uses them as his executioners to punish such wicked rulers. Even though a long time passes, wickedness is not forgotten by God. He rises up at last and sends against wicked men those who will fulfil his sentence without pity. Therefore let all rulers guard themselves from all wrong, and especially from all persecution of the servants of God and just men. Also let not any one, without God's command, lay hand upon those in authority, lest he call down God's judgment upon himself.—What Elisha did, he did in the name and at the command of God, and he would have forsaken his duty if he had not done it. The prophets were not there to sleep and to lay their hands in their laps, when the ordinances of God were being trodden under foot, but God set them as watchmen over His people, that they might root up the weeds, and plant and cultivate what was good.—KRUMMACHER: None of the modern revolutions can appeal to any such revelations of the divine will; nay, the standard-bearers would smile if any one should demand of them to show any authority of this kind for raising a revolt. The modern revolutions have all sprung from another soil, either more or less apparently, and are condemned by God's words: Whosoever resisteth authority, resisteth God's ordinance. [This leaves the mutual relations and obligations of governors and governed very unclear. Governors must be good, governed must be obedient. For homiletical purposes a clearer definition of the limits and mutual interlacing of these duties is of prime importance. I have attempted a sharper analysis below, at the end of the "Homiletical" section.—W. G. S.]—Vers. 4–10. The Prophet-disciple: (*a*) His mission. (KRUMMACHER: He is one of the humblest in Samaria, a poor, insignificant boy, and he carries a kingdom to Ramoth! How great the Lord appears in this incident, but also with what cutting irony He meets all the arrogance of the self-made gods of earth!) Here also 1 Cor. i. 28 applies. (*b*) His obedience. (He raises no objections, although the task is hard for him. He might have said: "I am a child," &c., Jerem. i. 6. He is to go into a besieged city, to go before the generals of the army, to put his life and liberty at stake, yet he goes with no sword at his side; without a companion he ventures to go into the army of the king, to anoint another to be king. All human scruples and fears disappear before the duty of obedience. In obedience he does not fear, and lets no danger terrify him, for he knows and believes what is written in Ps. xci. 11–13 and Ps. xxvii. 1). (*c*) His fidelity. (He does no more and no less than he is commanded. He has a great commission entrusted to him, but he does not boast. He keeps the secret and departs as he came. He does not care what may be thought of him, or what people may say, whether they think him a "mad fellow" or not. So the Apostles also carried the secrets of God out into the wide world, and had no other interest than that they might be found true.)—Vers. 7–10. The world of to-day will not hear that: "The Lord will take vengeance on his adversaries," etc. (Nahum i. 2; *cf.* Deut. xxxii. 43), and declares that this is only an Old Testament notion, and that the Gospel knows only one God who is a God of love. It is true that

God does not seek revenge, but he is an holy, and therefore also a just, God, who requites men as they have deserved, and repays each according to his conduct (Job xxxiv. 11; Rom. ii. 6). A God without vengeance, *i. e.*, who cannot and will not punish, is no God, but a divinity fashioned from one's thoughts. The same gospel, which teaches that God is love, says also: "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God," and: "Our God is a consuming fire" (Heb. x. 31; xii. 29). The same law which says that God is an avenging God towards his enemies, says also that he is "merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth" (Ex. xxxiv. 6).—KRUMMACHER: "The blood of my servants:" Listen! He has indeed permitted them to lay violent hands upon His servants, but He has not overlooked or forgotten it. Nothing cleaves more irresistibly up through the clouds than the voice of the blood of persecuted saints. Nothing is better adapted to pour oil upon the flames of the divine wrath against the godless than the sighs which their cruelty forces from a child of God. The blood of the saints has often cried from earth to heaven, and what judgments it has called down! Let the persecutors of all centuries appear and bear witness. (Nebuchadnezzar, Belshazzar, Herod, Agrippa, Nero, Inquisitors of Spain, the Louises of France, Charles IX.): bear witness all, what a dangerous thing it is to lay hands upon the saints of the Most High!—This is not the only instance where God has raised the destroying axe over a dynasty which was morally rotten. He often makes use of royal families, which have fallen into moral decay, for the discipline of nations, but the time never fails to come when he passes sentence of destruction upon them, and brings speedy ruin upon the condemned. A family-tree does not stand firm in gilded parchments and registers; only when it is planted by the waters which flow from the sanctuary of God, will it continue to flourish vigorously.

Vers. 11-16. Jehu, the new King of Israel. He makes known to the generals his nomination to the crown; he is gladly hailed king by them; he enters vigorously and without delay upon his calling.—Ver. 11. Keep secret for a time that which occurs in thy chamber between thee and thy God. Do not proclaim it upon the housetops, but wait until Providence shows thee an occasion to make it known (Ps. xxxvii. 34). "Fools have their hearts in their mouths" (Sir. xxi. 28).—BERLEB. BIBEL: It was, then, a common thing at that time to regard the prophets and servants of God as fools, enthusiasts, and fanatics, and to look upon them with contempt (Acts xxvi. 24; 1 Cor. iv. 10; Acts xvii. 18).—Do not judge according to the external appearance, and the first superficial impression, in regard to persons and things which thou dost not know or understand. That which thou callest folly and nonsense is often the deepest wisdom (1 Cor. i. 23-25).—Ver. 12. If the generals, when they heard that God had anointed Jehu to be king, hastened, spread out their garments, and shouted: "Jehu is king," how much more should all shout Hosanna to him whom God has anointed with the Holy Ghost (Acts x. 38), and has seated at His right hand in heaven, who will rule until He has subdued all His enemies under His feet.

Vers. 15-37. The Day of Judgment. See above, the *Histor.* § 5.—Vers. 17-20. The Watchman on the Tower. He sees the approaching danger and reports it, but the secure and blinded kings will not be disturbed until it is too late. It is the duty of those whom God has made watchmen over souls, to make them aware of all dangers which threaten them, and to repeat continually the exhortation to watch (1 Cor. xvi. 13; Mark xiii. 37).—Ver. 20. OSIANDER: Dilatory and careless people do not accomplish anything. Only diligent and energetic persons succeed.—Test thyself to see what spirit moves thee. The right motive-power is the Holy Spirit, which never guides to folly. One may conduct spiritual affairs and manage the concerns of the kingdom of God with folly, want of judgment, and heat (Rom. x. 2). Those only are children of God who are moved by the Spirit of God (Rom. viii. 14); the fruits, however, which this Spirit causes to ripen in them, are love, joy, peace, &c. (Gal. v. 22).—Ver. 21. Observe the wonderful dispensation of the divine justice. Joram himself gave the order to "make ready," in order, without knowing or wishing it, to ride out to the place where Naboth's blood was crying for vengeance, and where ruin was prepared for him.—Ver. 22 (18, 19). "Is it peace?" BERLEB. BIBEL: So it is to-day also. A false peace is demanded of those who are sent to make known the stern truth, in order that hoary evils may not be exposed. Those who have not true peace, generally want an external, shameful peace at any price (Ezek. xiii. 16). Ask thyself first of all: "Is there peace in thy heart?" and seek peace from Him who is our peace (Eph. ii. 14).—There can be no lasting peace where there is apostasy from the living God and His word; licentiousness, injustice, and tyranny; there strife and war, with all their attendant miseries and horrors, must come. "Though His sword rests for a time, yet it does not rest in its scabbard" (Krummacher).—Vers. 23-29. The Death of the Kings of Israel and Judah. It was sudden, unforeseen, and fell upon them in their security and blindness. The proverb applies to Ahaziah: "*Mitgegangen, mitgefangen;*" hunt with the fox, and you will be hung with him. (WÜRT. SUMM.: Refrain from bad companions, if thou wouldst not be punished with them.) The one is thrown upon Naboth's field, and left without a grave; the other is brought indeed to the sepulchre of his fathers, but what is the use of a royal sepulchre to him who has lost his soul? (Luke xvi. 22).—Ver. 25 *sq.* WÜRT. SUMM.: All parents should take warning by this and not collect unrighteous wealth either for themselves or their children, for "treasures of wickedness profit nothing" (Prov. x. 2), and there is no blessing with them. They rather bring corruption to both parents and children (Jer. xvii. 11).

Vers. 30-37. What does the frightful end of Jezebel teach us? (*a*) The transitoriness and nothingness of human might and glory. (Jezebel relies upon her might; before her the people tremble. She controlled and directed three kings; she raged against all who did not submit unconditionally to her will; now she lies, thrown down from her height, like dung upon the field, so that no one could say: "That is the great and mighty queen Jezebel." Dan. iv. 34; Luke i. 51; 1 Peter i. 24.) (*b*) The certainty of divine retribution. (Gal. vi. 7 *sq.* Jezebel was an enemy of the living God and of His word; she seduced old and young to apos-

tasy; she persecuted all who still held firmly to Jehovah. Her terrible end proves that such a temper is certainly punished. Her end has no parallel in Israelitish history. It calls aloud to all unto this day: "Woe unto him that buildeth his house by unrighteousness" (Jer. xxii. 13), and it is a pledge of the truth of this assertion: "Only with thine eyes shalt thou behold and see the reward of the wicked" (Ps. xci. 8).—Vers. 30, 31. How Jezebel meets her end. (*a*) Her last action (ver. 30); (*b*) her last word (ver. 31). She died as she had lived.—Ver. 30. How accurately this description fits many of her sex! The highest occupation they can conceive of is to adorn themselves, to show themselves, to conquer, and produce effects. Thou fool! If God demands thy soul of thee to-day, what shall all paint and powder upon the face avail before Him who tries the heart and the reins? Can velvet and silk cover thine inner stains? (Isa. iii. 16 *sq.*) There could be no sterner reproof of vanity, pride, and coquetry, and no more severe warning to take to heart the Apostle's words 1 Peter iii. 3 *sq.* than the fate of Jezebel.—Ver. 31. What can be more perverse and pitiful than a man who boasts and puts on airs in the very face of death, and passes out of the world with abuse and insults against God, instead of begging for pity and crying: "God be merciful to me a sinner!"—Jezebel, who murdered the prophets and Naboth, who revolted against the Lord of Heaven and Earth, calls Jehu a murderer and a rebel. The blind and stubborn human heart always finds in others just those sins of which it is itself guilty in a far higher degree.—Vers. 32, 33. As the master is, so is the servant. Base men always cling to those who have power, and change their colors as the weathercock of fortune turns. He who is himself unfaithful cannot depend upon the fidelity of others. Ps. ci. 6 *sq.*—Ver. 37. *Cf.* Prov. x. 7; Job xviii. 17; xx. 4–7.

[The homiletical material of the chapter may be divided into two heads: the political; and the ethical or religious. The former here obtains especial significance, inasmuch as the record is primarily pure history, and not ethical or philosophical discussion. It has, therefore, the same utility which all history, sacred or profane, has for the instruction of succeeding generations. It shows certain institutions and certain human passions in play, and shows the consequences they produce. It is presented to us from a religious and moral stand-point, and its instruction is, therefore, great for the criticism of political institutions from the point of view of religion and morals. If we see here and in the succeeding chapters the horrors of revolution on the one hand, none the less do we see when and how revolution becomes a terrible necessity. All authority is a means, not an end. It is established, recognized, and obeyed, because it serves those ends. Its rights and privileges are correlative with duties, obligations, and responsibilities, viz., to accomplish the objects for which it was created. Its claims to obedience stand and fall with its fidelity in fulfilling its trust. If it fails in this, if it goes farther, and, in the pursuit of its selfish aims, and the gratification of its own self-will, threatens to crush and ruin the very interests it was created to serve, the time comes when obedience ceases to be a virtue and becomes complicity in a crime. In the absence of prophetical authority to fix the time and designate the leaders for renouncing allegiance, it is difficult to see who is to judge of these save the nation whose interests are at stake. This bears as complete application to republican institutions as to any other. God's judgment upon the political sins, the recklessness, the self-will, and the selfishness of constitutional authorities is as sure as his punishment of royal transgressors. It is as possible for a representative assembly to sacrifice the highest interests of a nation as it is for a despot. Though, in the progress of civilization, constitutional restraints are so much developed that rulers are under a strict and unremitting responsibility, and other correctives are at hand than violence and bloodshed, yet the principles and their application remain. The highest national interests must be watched over, guarded, and maintained by vigilance, and by wise resistance to anything which would impair them.—The ethical and moral lessons of the chapter lie in the character and the fate of the chief actors in the tragedy. Of Jehu we have spoken above. When his strength, his virtue, his calling, and his work are defined, their limitations are also pointed out.—Ahaziah seems to have been one of those weak men who float on in the direction which their education and family traditions have given them. He followed the family traditions down to the family ruin. Joram's wound seems to bear witness to some military effort, but in general he appears in the light of an oriental monarch, indolent, careless, luxurious, fond of ease. The sudden and hasty approach of the general of the army alarmed him in regard to the fortunes of the war in Syria, and he went out, without personal anxiety, to meet his fate. His death fulfilled a malediction upon his father. The two kings, therefore, appear to be, to a great extent, the victims of the sins of their ancestors, and as Jezebel had controlled Ahab, we are led back to her as the origin of all this individual, family, and national calamity. She was one of those strong, bold, wicked women, who have played such important *rôles* in history. She was of the Phœnician blood, reared in the luxury and licentiousness of oriental custom, and of a bloody and sensuous idolatry. The Mosaic ritual and the Israelitish constitution had been framed to form a barrier to preserve the people of Israel from the infection of those vices which characterized the heathen nations. By Ahab's marriage with this woman the barrier was broken through, and the licentiousness of the worship of Baal and Astarte, the freedom of manners of the Phœnician court, the luxury and sensuality of the heathen nations was imported into Israel. To a woman thus educated the religion, the traditions and customs, which prevailed even in the northern kingdom, must have appeared cold, austere, bigoted, narrow, and hateful. It became her aim, therefore, to override, and break down, and destroy all that was peculiar and national in Israel, but in so doing she was contravening all that belonged to and sustained God's plan for Israel in human history. She braved the conflict and reasserted it in her last hour, and she and her descendants went down in the catastrophe.—W. G. S.]

THIRD EPOCH.

FROM THE ELEVATION OF JEHU TO THE THRONE UNTIL THE DESTRUCTION OF THE KINGDOM OF ISRAEL.

2 Kings X.—XVII.

FIRST SECTION.

THE MONARCHY UNDER JEHU IN ISRAEL AND UNDER ATHALIA AND JOASH IN JUDAH.

2 Kings X.—XII.

A.—*The Reign of Jehu.*

Chap. X. 1-36.

1 And Ahab had seventy sons in Samaria. And Jehu wrote letters, and sent
to Samaria, unto the rulers of Jezreel [the city],[1] to the elders, and to them that
2 brought up [the guardians of] Ahab's *children*, saying, [2] Now as soon as this
letter cometh to you, seeing your master's sons *are* with you, and *there are* with
3 you chariots and horses, a fenced city, also, and armor [weapons]: look even
out the best and meetest of your master's sons, and [that ye may] set *him* on
4 his father's throne, and fight for[3] your master's house. But they were exceed-
ingly afraid, and said, Behold, two kings stood not before him: how then shall
5 we stand? And he that *was* over the house [palace], and he that *was* over the
city, the elders also, and the bringers up *of the children*, sent to Jehu, saying,
We *are* thy servants, and will do all that thou shalt bid us; we will not make
6 any [one] king: do thou *that which is* good in thine eyes. Then he wrote a
[second] letter the second time [*omit* the second time] to them, saying, If ye *be*
mine [on my side], and *if* ye will hearken unto my voice, take ye the heads of
the men your master's sons, and come to me to Jezreel by to morrow this time.
[(]Now the king's sons, *being* seventy persons, *were* with the great men of the
7 city, which brought them up[)]. And it came to pass, when the letter came to
them, that they took the king's sons, and slew seventy persons, and put their
8 heads in baskets, and sent him *them* to Jezreel. And there came a messenger,
and told him, saying, They have brought the heads of the king's sons. And he
said, Lay ye them in two heaps at the entering in [entrance] of the gate until
9 the morning. And it came to pass in the morning, that he went out, and stood,
and said to all the people, Ye *be* righteous [just]: behold, I conspired against
10 my master, and slew him: but who slew all these? Know now [therefore] that
there shall fall unto the earth nothing of the word of the Lord, which the Lord

spake concerning the house of Ahab: for the Lord hath done *that* which he
11 spake by his servant Elijah. So [And] Jehu slew all that remained of the house
of Ahab in Jezreel, and all his great men, and his kinsfolks [intimate friends],
and his priests [chief officers], until he left * him none remaining [no survivor].
12 And he arose and departed, and came to Samaria. *And* [On the way,] as he
13 *was* at the shearing house in the way [Shepherd's House of Meeting], Jehu met
with the brethren of Ahaziah king of Judah, and said, Who *are* ye? And they
answered, We *are* the brethren of Ahaziah; and we go down to salute the chil-
14 dren of the king and the children of the queen[-mother]. And he said, Take
them alive. And they took them alive, and slew them at the pit of the shearing
house [House of Meeting], *even* two and forty men; neither left he any of them.
15 And when he was departed thence, he lighted on Jehonadab the son of Re-
chab *coming* to meet him: and he saluted him, and said to him, Is thine heart
right [verily sincere], as my heart *is* with thy heart? And Jehonadab answered,
It is [Verily, verily, *it is*]. If it be [*said Jehu*], give *me* thine hand. And he
16 gave *him* his hand; and he took him up to him into the chariot. And he said,
Come with me, and see my zeal for the Lord. So they [he] * made him ride in
17 his chariot. And when he came to Samaria, he slew all that remained unto
Ahab in Samaria, till he had destroyed him, according to the saying of the Lord,
which he spake to Elijah.
18 And Jehu gathered all the people together, and said unto them, Ahab served
19 Baal a little; *but* Jehu shall serve him much. Now therefore call unto me all
the prophets of Baal, all his servants, and all his priests; let none be wanting:
for I have a great sacrifice *to do* to Baal; whosoever shall be wanting, he shall
not live. But Jehu did *it* in subtilty, to the intent that he might destroy the
20 worshippers of Baal. And Jehu said, Proclaim a solemn assembly for Baal.
21 And they proclaimed *it*. And Jehu sent through all Israel: and all the wor-
shippers of Baal came, so that there was not a man left that came not. And
they came into the house of Baal; and the house of Baal was full from one end
22 to another [wall to wall]. And he said unto him that *was* over the vestry, Bring
forth vestments for all the worshippers of Baal. And he brought them forth
23 vestments. And Jehu went, and Jehonadab the son of Rechab, into the house
of Baal, and [he, (Jehu)] said unto the worshippers of Baal, Search, and look that
there be here with you none of the servants of the Lord, but the worshippers
24 of Baal only. And when they went in to offer sacrifices and burnt offerings,
Jehu appointed [stationed] fourscore men without, and said, *If* [Whoso letteth
—*omit if*] *. any of the men whom I have brought into your hands escape, *he that
letteth him go*, his life *shall be* for the life of him [*he shall pay for it*, life for
25 life]. And it came to pass, as soon as he [they] had made an end of [completed the
preparations for] offering the burnt offering, that Jehu said to the guard and to
the captains [royal foot-guards and horse-guards], Go in, *and* slay them; let
none [not one] come forth. And they smote them with the edge of the sword;
and the guard and the captains [foot-guards and horse-guards] cast *them* out,
26 and went [pressed through] to the city [strong-hold] of the house of Baal. And
27 they brought forth the images out of the house of Baal, and burned them. And
they brake down the image of Baal, and brake down the house of Baal, and
made it a draught house [privy] unto this day.
28, 29 Thus Jehu destroyed Baal out of Israel. Howbeit, *from* the sins of Jero-
boam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin, Jehu departed not from after
30 them, *to wit*, the golden calves that *were* in Beth-el, and that *were* in Dan. And
the Lord said unto Jehu, Because thou hast done well [been zealous] in execut-
ing *that which is* right in mine eyes, *and* hast done unto the house of Ahab
according to all that *was* in mine heart, thy children of the fourth *generation*
31 shall sit on the throne of Israel. But Jehu took no heed to walk in the law of
the Lord God of Israel with all his heart: for he departed not from the sins
of Jeroboam, which made Israel to sin.
32 In those days the Lord began to cut [off parts from] Israel short [*omit* short]:
and Hazael smote them in all the coasts [along the entire frontier] of Israel;

33 from Jordan eastward, all the land of Gilead, the Gadites, and the Reubenites,
and the Manassites, from Aroer, which *is* by the river Arnon, even Gilead and
34 Bashan. Now the rest of the acts of Jehu, and all that he did, and all his might,
35 *are* they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Israel? And
Jehu slept with his fathers: and they buried him in Samaria. And Jehoahaz
36 his son reigned in his stead. And the time that Jehu reigned over Israel in
Samaria *was* twenty and eight years.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

[1] Ver. 1.—[For יזרעאל read הָעִיר אֶל. See *Exeg.*—אחאב אמנים, "Ahab's tutors." Since, however, they were not tutors of Ahab, but those whom he had appointed to instruct his sons, אמנים stands in a loose construction in the case absolute.

[2] Ver. 2.—[After the formal greeting and address of the letter, which are not given here, its substance began with וְעַתָּה. *Cf.* chap. v. 6.

[3] Ver. 3.—[עַל, *for.* Ewald, § 217, i. β.

[4] Ver. 11.—[הִשְׁאִיר is an infinitive. See *Text. and Gramm.* on chap. iii. 25.

[5] Ver. 16.—[All the versions but the Chaldee have the singular.

[6] Ver. 24.—[For יִמָּלֵט read יְמַלֵּט with Keil, Thenius, Bunsen, and others.—W. G. S.]

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

Ver. 1. **Seventy sons in Samaria,** &c. Ver. 3 shows ("Your master's sons") that the grandsons of Ahab are included, for the "master" cannot mean Ahab, who had been dead for twelve years, but Joram. We must understand the words as referring to all the male descendants of Ahab.—**To Samaria, to the rulers of Jezreel.** Ver. 5 shows who are meant, viz., he who was over the house (palace), and he who was over the city; and we may understand it to refer to Samaria, which was the capital and the residence of the king, and not to Jezreel, which only served as summer residence of the court. The governors, who were the highest officers in Samaria, cannot possibly have been the "rulers of Jezreel," for these could have had no authority in Samaria. The word יִזְרְעֶאל is entirely wanting in the Sept. and Vulg. The former have πρὸς τοὺς ἄρχοντας τῆς πόλεως καὶ πρὸς τοὺς πρεσβυτέρους; the latter has: *ad optimates civitatis et ad majores natu.* Keil, therefore, conjectures that יִזְרְעֶאל is an error for הָעִיר אֶל. This is favored by הַזְּקֵנִים, before which, since it cannot be taken as an apposition to שָׂרֵי, אֶל must certainly be supplied. This seems better than, with Clericus, Michaelis, and Ewald, to change יִזְרְעֶאל into יִשְׂרָאֵל, or, with Thenius, to adopt the conjecture that there stood in the original text: "He sent from Jezreel to the rulers of Samaria." The אֹמְנִים are the tutors appointed by Ahab for his sons.—Ver. 2. Only the main point of Jehu's letter is given (chap. v. 6). It is not necessary to understand that this letter was a "trick," or "irony," or "scorn," as is generally done; it rather expresses contrariness or perversity. Its meaning may be expressed thus: "I am king; but if you, who have chariots and horses and weapons in your power, want to put a prince of Ahab's house on the throne, commence a war with me." [The letter is very characteristic in its form. It is composed in that comprehensive satire which says much in a few words. It implies self-confidence so great that the writer can afford to tantalize the reader with an apparent command of the situation, and an apparent freedom of choice, which in reality he has not got. It implies also a threat of consequences if the readers are sanguine enough to choose the policy of resistance. If on the other hand they choose the policy of submission, they will find out what they have to do to please the new ruler. It is a satirical and scornful challenge.—W. G. S.] As Jehu was well known to them by reputation as one of the boldest and bravest generals, and no one of them felt competent to meet him, they became frightened, and surrendered at once; all the more readily when they heard what he had already done. It was very cautious of him not to go himself immediately, with his small force (chap. ix. 17), against the strongly fortified city of Samaria, but to first write them threatening letters, so as to find out what disposition he must expect to find in the capital.

Ver. 6. **Then he wrote a second letter,** &c. The reason why Jehu not only commands to put to death the sons of Ahab, but also to bring their heads, at the same hour the next day, to Jezreel, which was nine hours' journey from Samaria, is plain from vers. 9 and 10. It was important for him to be acknowledged by the people as king as soon as possible. The people were to be convinced by the sight of the heads that all who might eventually become pretenders to the crown were dead, and also that the rulers and the great men of the kingdom, who had sent these heads, had thereby broken utterly with the dynasty of Ahab.—The parenthesis in ver. 6 is not to be translated according to the massoretic punctuation: "The king's sons were seventy persons," for this would be an entirely superfluous repetition of ver. 1. It means rather that the sons, mentioned in ver. 1, resided with these important persons (אֶת is not a sign of the nominative, but a preposition: "with"), and that this

is the reason why the command was addressed to them.—Ver. 8. Jehu ordered the heads to be brought to the entrance of the gate, because the people were accustomed to assemble there. It is an old oriental custom to cut off the heads of slain enemies, and then to show these publicly, 2 Macc. xv. 30; 1 Sam. xvii. 54 (*cf.* Winer, *R.-W.-B.*, i. *s.* 681). Even now, in the Orient, the heads of those who are beheaded are placed upon the gate, in order that they may be seen by all.

Ver. 9 *sq.* **And said to all the people,** &c. The sight of the seventy heads very naturally produced consternation among the people, probably also dissatisfaction and complaints against Jehu, the supposed cause of their death. Thereupon he appeared before the people in order to soothe them. He does not attack them rudely, but appeals to their just judgment. **Ye are just;** *i. e.*, not, "Ye insist upon it that ye are right" (Luther); nor: "Ye are righteous," *i. e.*, "I declare you guiltless" (Richter); nor: "Now is the sin of the people atoned for, now are ye once more righteous before God; the punishment began through me, here ye see how it has gone on" (Gerlach). The sense is rather: "Ye are just, so judge yourselves; I have, it is true, made a conspiracy against Joram and killed him; but I did not kill these seventy. The rulers in Samaria, the friends of the house of Ahab, the tutors of the royal princes, killed these. If ye will lament and complain, ye have far greater reason to do so against them than against me, but consider that both I and they acted according to divine ordinance and in consequence of the sentence which Elijah, the great prophet, pronounced." In all this, Jehu carefully conceals the main point, viz., that the murders were committed by his command. Perhaps he saw a providential dispensation in the very fact that the rulers at Samaria yielded to him at once, and executed his further commands from fear. His speech had the desired effect. The people ceased their complaints and resigned themselves contentedly. He was thereby encouraged to go farther, and to put to death all the higher officers and friends of the house of Ahab, as is recorded in ver. 11. The מְיֻדָּעָיו are not Ahab's relatives (Luther, E. V.), but his friends and intimate companions. In like manner כֹּהֲנָיו are not his "priests" (Keil), but, as in 2 Sam. viii. 18 and 1 Kings iv. 5, his highest officers and servants. The turn of the idolatrous priests came later (ver. 18 *sq.*). Not until after this had all taken place, did Jehu go to Samaria, where he no longer needed to fear any opposition (ver. 12).

Ver. 12. **At the Shepherd's House of Meeting.** "The Chaldee version has בֵּית כְּנִישַׁת רָעַיָּא, the meeting-house of the shepherds, so that it was probably a house which stood alone, and which served the shepherds of the region round about as a place of assembling. The commonest interpretation is, binding-house (where the shepherds tied up their sheep for the shearing), but opposed to this is the fact that the shearing and not the binding is the main point in that connection, and moreover, that the shearing took place, according to Gen. xxxviii. 12; 1 Sam. xxv. 2; 2 Sam. xiii. 23, in the separate localities, and not at one place for an entire district" (Thenius).—Ver. 13. Instead of **Brethren of Ahaziah,** 2 Chron. xxii. 8 has: "Sons of the brethren of Ahaziah." Considering the comprehensiveness of the signification of אָח, this is no contradiction. We must understand in general cousins and relatives of Ahaziah. They undertook the journey to Jezreel, as they themselves say in ver. 13, לִשְׁלוֹם *ad salutandum*, in order to make a friendly visit at the court there. The fact that they came in such a large number shows clearly that Joram, at this time, no longer lay ill from his wound, but was already recovered, as we saw also from chap. ix. 21. They expected to enjoy a pleasant visit, and knew nothing of what had occurred since they last heard from the court of Joram. When Jehu heard who they were and whither they were going, he called to his retinue: **Take them alive;** *i. e.*, take them captives. Perhaps they would not submit to be captured, and undertook, as many suppose, to defend themselves, whereupon he caused them to be slaughtered. There is no ground whatever for the notion which Duncker adopts, that he did this in "the hope of getting possession of the kingdom of Judah also." There is no sign anywhere of any such intention on the part of Jehu. Evidently his purpose was, by slaying these relatives of Ahab, who, as their journey showed, were friends and retainers of the house of Ahab, to make every attempt at blood-vengeance, or at the overthrow of his royal authority, impossible.

Ver. 15. **He lighted on Jehonadab, the son of Rechab,** &c. No one doubts that this is the same Jehonadab who, according to Jerem. xxxv. 1–19, gave to the so-called Rechabites their stern, nomadic rules of life, and whom they there call their "father." Josephus says of him: *ἀνὴρ ἀγαθὸς καὶ δίκαιος*, Ἰωνάδαβος *ὄνομα φίλος αὐτῷ* [Ἰηοῦ] *πάλαι γεγονώς*. It is uncertain whether his meeting with Jehu was accidental, or whether Jehonadab came on purpose to meet him. According to the Hebrew text Jehu saluted him and said: **Is thine heart right,** &c. According to Josephus, Jehonadab saluted Jehu, and commenced to praise him, because he had done everything according to the will of God for the rooting out of the house of Ahab. Jehu called upon him to mount into the chariot, and to ride with him to Samaria, saying that he would show him how he would spare none of the wicked, but would punish the false prophets and priests and all who had misled the people to the abandonment of Jehovah, and to the worship of false gods. He said that it was the most beautiful, and, for an honorable and just man, the pleasantest sight to see the punishment of the wicked. Jehonadab, prevailed upon by this, mounted the chariot and came to Samaria.—Doubtless some such conversation preceded the words: "Is thine heart right," &c. At any rate, Jehonadab was a zealous servant of Jehovah, and, therefore, also an opponent of the house of Ahab. As he also stood at the head of a religious community, it was of great importance for Jehu to have him on his side, and to be accompanied to Samaria by him. It was a mark of high esteem to invite him to mount into the chariot.—אֶת before לְבָבְךָ [is used to form an accusative of specification, equivalent to a nominative absolute. "Is it right, as to thy heart," or "Thy heart, is it right"="Is thy heart right." The form gives peculiar emphasis], see Ewald, *Lehrb.*, § 277 *d.* "יָשָׁר here involves the idea of a

sincere agreement in feeling" (Thenius). Almost all the versions render וַיַּרְכִּבוּ, ver. 16, as if they had read וַיַּרְכִּיב, *i. e.*, "He made him ride." According to ver. 17, the first thing which Jehu did in Samaria was just what he had done in Jezreel (ver. 11). After the entire house of Ahab had been destroyed, he went on to overthrow the worship of Baal.

Ver. 18. **And Jehu gathered all the people together, &c.** The fact that Jehu was believed, when he said that he would serve Baal far more than Ahab had done, is explained by the consideration that his entire enterprise was regarded as a military revolution, like that of Baasha and Zimri, in which the thing at stake was the supreme power and the throne, not a religious reform and the restoration of the service of Jehovah. No one any longer thought of that as a possibility.—On the prophets of Baal, ver. 19 *sq.*, see note above on 1 Kings xviii. 19.—עֲצָרָה, ver. 20, is not "feast-day" (Vulg. *diem solemnem*) but a solemn festal assembly, as in Isai. i. 13; Joel i. 14; Amos v. 21.—The "House of Baal" is the one built by Ahab (1 Kings xvi. 32), which seems to have been a large and rambling structure, in which were 450 priests of Baal and 400 of Astarte.—פֶּה לָפֶה, ver. 21, strictly, mouth to mouth, or opening to opening, *i. e.*, as far as it was open, as much as it could hold. It refers to the outer court in which the altar of sacrifice stood, for the house, strictly speaking, that is, the sanctuary or shrine in which the statue of Baal was, was, as in all temple structures, very small.—מֶלְתָּחָה, ver. 22, occurs only here, but means, unquestionably, *vestiarium* (Ges., *Thes.*, p. 764). Thenius thinks, because the king here gave especial commands, that "we must understand it to refer to the stores of festal garments in the palace, not to the wardrobe of the temple of Baal, or to especial sacrificial dresses of all who took part in the ceremony." However, the king ordains everything here; it was he who planned the feast. Neither before this nor afterwards is there any reference to anything but the house of Baal, and certainly there were priestly garments in that, just as the dresses of the priests of Jehovah were preserved in the temple at Jerusalem (Braun, *De Vest. Sacerdot.*, ii. 26, p. 675). Clericus says that, in Ethiopic, אלתח, with which מלתחה is connected, means *vestis byssina*. Garments of byssus were the peculiar dress of priests in all ancient countries (*Symb. des Mosaischen Kult.*, ii. s. 87 *sq.*). According to Josephus, it was especially important for Jehu that all the *priests* of Baal should be there. They all received priestly garments, and became thereby all the more easily recognizable for the eighty men who were commanded to slay them before all others.

Ver. 23. **And Jehu went, and Jehonadab, &c.** When they came into the outer court of the temple, Jehu gave orders to examine carefully and see whether there were any of the servants of Jehovah there. He thereby gave himself the appearance of a strict adherent of Baal; but his object was to take care that no servant of Jehovah should be killed. There is no foundation for Ewald's representation of the incident: "Jehu gave orders that the feast should be celebrated with all pomp, just as a powerful man may show himself open-handed towards mysteries into which he desires to be admitted. He commanded that garments should be given to all who had not any such as were proper for the feast. When the time for the solemnity approached, he commanded with severity that any servants of Jehovah should be cast out. (It is well known what an importance the heathen attached to the *procul profani!* in their mysteries.) Finally he sacrificed with his own hand as if he were a most zealous worshipper of Baal." Eisenlohr, who always follows Ewald, thinks that ver. 22 refers to "the unchaste garments woven by the Kedeshoth" [women who prostituted themselves in the service of Astarte]. But we know nothing at all of any mysteries of Baal. There is no syllable of reference to any such thing here, much less of reference to any intention, which was even pretended, of initiating the king. Nor does the text say that Jehu himself sacrificed, and then gave the signal for the slaughter of all who were present.—Ver. 25, כְּכַלֹּתוֹ, cannot here be translated: "When he, Jehu, had finished," nor, with some of the Rabbis and Keil: "When he (the sacrificing priest), had finished the burnt-offering." The suffix וֹ is to be taken as equivalent to an indefinite subject, "one" (German, *man*) [commonly rendered in English by an indefinite plural, "they," or by a passive construction]: "When they had completed the preparations for the sacrifice," or, "When the preparations for the sacrifice were completed." The Sept. give this same sense: ὡς συνετέλεσαν ποιοῦντες τὴν ὁλοκαύτωσιν; and the Vulg. also, *cum completum esset holocaustum*. It is not therefore necessary to read כְּכַלֹּתָם as Thenius does (*cf.* Ew. § 294, *b*).

As soon as they had completed the preparations for offering. Not, when the sacrifice itself was over, for then the feast of Baal would have been at an end, but, at the moment when the sacrifice was just fully prepared, and was on the point of being offered, Jehu gave command to the "runners and riders," *i. e.*, to the royal body-guard and its officers (see note on 1 Kings i. 38; ix. 22; xiv. 28) to force their way in. Ewald translates וַיַּשְׁלִכוּ: "And threw the corpses aside unburied," but of course it is plain that they could not undertake to bury them at once. It did not need another sentence to tell us that they did not bury them as fast as they killed them. The interpretation: "They threw the corpses out of the temple," is somewhat better, but the athnach with חָרֶב and the express repetition of the subject ("the runners and riders") seem to indicate that a new sentence begins with וַיַּשְׁלִכוּ. This sentence does not, therefore, join immediately on to the preceding, but to what follows, and it is to be connected with וַיֵּלְכוּ. In this connection De Dieu translates: *proripuerunt se cum impetu et festinatione*, and Thenius: "And the guards pressed forward." שָׁלַךְ stands in this sense in 1 Kings xiv. 9. They threw the corpses behind them as they pressed forward, and forced their way through to the עִיר of the house. Under this we have not to understand a neighbor-

ing city (De Dieu and others), nor a particular district of the city of Samaria (De Wette, Maurer, and others), for this would not fit into the context. The fundamental signification of עִיר is *sepimentum, munimentum, locus circumseptus* (Fürst, *Concord.*, p. 805). It is then used for city, because every city, as such, was surrounded by a wall, and so formed a stronghold. In this place, however, it refers to that part of the entire sacred enclosure, which, in contrast with the outer courts, was firmly surrounded by a wall, the temple strictly speaking, in which was the chief image of Baal. This may have stood upon a base, and risen like a fortress from it, as the temple of Solomon did. On מַצְּבוֹת see note on 1 Kings xiv. 23. We cannot determine whether they were small images of Baal himself, or images of other and inferior divinities. Movers (*Rel. der Phönizier*, *s.* 674) thinks they were the πάρεδροι or σύμβωμοι of Baal. Thenius proposes to read מַצֶּבֶת in ver. 26, and מַצְּבוֹת in ver. 27, as the Sept. do, on account of the sing. suff. in יִשְׂרְפֶהָ. It is to be noticed, however, that the images were *burned* (ver. 26), so that they must have been of wood, while the chief image was "broken in pieces" (נתץ), as the *stone* temple-building was. This image was therefore probably of stone, as indeed we might presume that the large image would be of stone and the smaller ones of wood rather than *vice versa*. The old expositors translate the suffix by *unamquamque earum* (Piscator). According to Keil the singular suffix refers to מַצְּבוֹת, the plural being taken as an abstract, as in chap. iii. 3. [The latter is the correct explanation of the construction. *Cf.* Ew. § 317, a.] The destruction of this idol was perfectly in accordance with the law, Deut. vii. 5, 25; xii. 2, 3.—In order to make the destroyed temple a place forever unclean and abominable, they made it a sink or privy. (The Massoretes propose the word מוֹצָאוֹת, exits, as a euphemism.) *Cf.* Ezra vi. 11; Dan. ii. 5 (Rosenmüller, *Morgenland*, iii. *s.* 279).

Ver. 28. **Thus Jehu destroyed Baal**, &c. This is here once more emphasized as the chief act of Jehu, but it is added that he persisted in the sins of Jeroboam, viz., the worship of the golden calves in Bethel and Dan.—Ver. 30. **And the Lord said unto Jehu**, *i. e.*, by a prophet, but whether by Elisha (Thenius), is very uncertain. הֱטִיבֹתָ is correctly rendered by the Vulg. *studiose egisti*; Piscator: *quia strenuum te præbuisti ad faciendum*, etc. He had an earnest will to execute the purposes of God (2 Sam. xiii. 28; Ruth iii. 7, 10). The rooting-out of the house of Ahab and the attendant overthrow of idolatry, the latter of which not even Elijah had succeeded in accomplishing, were accomplished by Jehu. It was in truth an act of kindness toward Israel, which otherwise would, at this time, have gone to ruin. In so far Jehu had accomplished a great deed which is here recognized and acknowledged. The manner in which he carried it out, in all its details, is not, however, approved; especially is it recorded as unsatisfactory that he persisted in the worship of Jeroboam's calves. Therefore it was announced to him that his dynasty should not reign beyond the fourth generation (Ex. xx. 5; xxxiv. 7), *cf.* chap. xv. 12.—Ver. 31 is not to be connected with ver. 30 by "but," but rather with ver. 32. It states the occasion for what is narrated in 32 and 33. The threatened calamities from foreign foes came upon them through Hazael (chap. viii. 12), because Jehu did not walk in the ways of the Lord with all his heart. [If we hold to the massoretic verse-division,—and there is no reason to abandon it,—ver. 30 is a promise of the throne during four generations as a reward for the vigor with which Jehu had carried out the task which was laid upon him, and *not* a warning that he should not keep it *longer* than that because he had kept up the worship of the calves. The "but" at the commencement of ver. 31 is therefore quite correct. Although God commended Jehu and promised to reward him, *yet* Jehu did not walk perfectly with God. The origin of the calf-worship was political, and Jehu unquestionably kept it up for political reasons. While we certainly could not deny that the military misfortunes east of the Jordan were divine punishments, if the record said that they were such, yet in the absence of any such definite combination of the two things as cause and effect, we may leave that hypothesis aside, as something which we are not competent to decide. Such a revolution as this was certainly never accomplished without great internal commotion. Jehu found it necessary to consolidate his authority at home and could not give his attention to the foreign war. Hazael in the meantime was a very warlike and energetic king, and he pushed his conquests with vigor while his enemy was weak. We shall see below that this district was recovered when Israel once more was united and contented under a vigorous ruler (Jeroboam II.).—W. G. S.]

Ver. 32. **In those days the Lord began to cut off parts from Israel.** Instead of לְקַצּוֹת, *i. e.* to cut off parts of, the Chald. and Arab. read לְקְצוֹף *i. e.* to become enraged (Luther: *überdrüssig zu werden*; Vulg. *taedere super Israel*). There is no ground, however, for changing the text, which is sustained by the Sept. (συγκόπτειν).—**Along the entire frontier**, not "in all the coasts" (Luther, De Wette, E. V.). The frontier country is, in general, the land beyond the Jordan, which was divided among the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and Manasseh. Their territory formed the district which was also called Gilead. Aroer on the Arnon was the southern limit of the Israelitish territory east of the Jordan. These conquests of Hazael, therefore, extended to the frontier of the Moabites. The closing words: **Even Gilead and Bashan** [*cf.* Amos i. 3] are meant to show "that the land east of the Jordan, in all its extent, even to its farthest eastern limit, came into the hands of the enemy (Thenius). These conquests were made gradually, and they reached this extent at about the end of the twenty-eight years' reign of Jehu.—On גְּבוּרָה, ver. 34, see 1 Kings xv. 23.

HISTORICAL AND ETHICAL.

1. In regard *to the reign of Jehu* during the long period of twenty-eight years, the author gives only

the summary at the end of the passage before us, viz., that he retained the calf-worship which Jeroboam had introduced, and that he lost a large portion of his territory, piece by piece, to Hazael of Syria. For all else he refers to the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Israel. The destruction of the house of Ahab, and the abolition of idolatry, with which Jehu commenced his reign, are narrated with full details. It was these two things that made his reign remarkable, and that constituted it an epoch in the history of the Israelitish monarchy, and of the Old Testament theocracy. All other incidents or actions of his reign seem to this theocratical historian to be inferior in significance and importance to these. Duncker's assertion is astonishing and it is false (*Gesch. des Alt.*, i. *s.* 416): "The house of Omri, under which Israel had flourished and prospered, was overthrown and annihilated by a wild murderer whom the prophet of Jehovah had instigated. . . . Jehu was a good assassin, but a bad ruler and a bad general. . . . Although the prophets of Jehovah did not oppose him as they had opposed Ahab and Joram, but, on the contrary, Elisha's authority and influence were lent to his support, yet Israel, under his reign, became weaker and weaker." Under the house of Ahab, of which the shameless and fanatical Jezebel was the soul, the kingdom of Israel, so far from being elevated and prospered, had been shattered to its very foundations. Under this house Moab revolted, and Ahab and his successors never succeeded, even with the assistance of Judah, in completely conquering the Syrian arch-enemy, who continually threatened Israel and even brought it near to ruin (chap. vii. 24). No fact can be cited from the record to prove that Jehu reigned for twenty-eight years wickedly, still less that he was a bad general; if he had been this latter, his fellow-commanders would never have proclaimed him king. Moreover, the record mentions his גְּבוּרָה with especial emphasis (ver. 34), even adding כָּל, which is not found elsewhere except in 1 Kings xv. 23, and 2 Kings xx. 20, and which Ewald correctly takes as referring to "his great and inexhaustible manly courage." It is true that he saw himself compelled to give up to Hazael land after land on the east of the Jordan, but this may have been due partly to the superior strength of the Syrians, partly to the lack of assistance from Judah, such as Ahab and Joram had enjoyed, partly to the state in which the kingdom had been left by the house of Ahab. [It is a simple truism to say that he was defeated partly because his enemy was stronger than he, and partly because he did not have more help. It is not at all certain that Joram left the kingdom weak *in material respects.* If it was shattered morally, as it undoubtedly was, it would not long prosper materially, but, for a time, moral decay and material prosperity might co-exist. The fact that Joram's last act was to collect an army and go into Gilead to try to recover Ramoth, even by a conflict with a general like Hazael, is certainly strong evidence that Israel was not weak in material and military force under his rule. A far more natural ground for Jehu's inactivity (for all we know to the contrary) while Hazael was making these conquests, is the one suggested above in the note on ver. 30 under *Exegetical.* That is, that the revolution was not accomplished so quickly as one might suppose on reading the only details of it which are here given, and that it was not accomplished by those few great and terrible blows which are alone mentioned here. To kill the royal family and mount the throne, to kill the priests of a certain religion, and put an end to the public performance of its rites, were comparatively easy things. We may be sure, however, that the house of Ahab had friends and supporters, and that Baal had worshippers who saw with sorrow his joyous worship give place to the austere religion of Jehovah. These elements of discontent had to be watched and time had to be spent in healing the wounds which the revolution had inflicted, before the state could be made docile, contented, and loyal at home, and reliable for campaigns abroad. It was during this interval that Hazael probably made his conquests.—W. G. S.] The author sees in the misfortunes east of the Jordan a divine judgment, because Jehu had persisted in the sins of Jeroboam, and had not fulfilled his appointed task. [See *Exeg.* notes on ver. 31. Bähr connects vers. 31 and 32, but it is more correct to begin a new paragraph with ver. 32 as the English translators do.] We do not learn in what relation the prophet Elisha stood to Jehu during his reign. Elisha's name does not occur, as has been said above, from chap. ix. 1 to chap. xiii. 14, where his death, in the reign of Joash, is mentioned.

2. *The rooting-up of the house of Ahab, and the destruction of the worship of Baal*, ought not to be measured by the New Testament standards, and ought not to be judged from a modern, humanitarian stand-point. As for the slaughter of Ahab's family, it was customary in the Orient from the earliest times for the founder of a new dynasty to put to death, not only the deposed monarch, but also his descendants and relatives, especially all the males. We have several examples of this in these very books (1 Kings xv. 29; xvi. 11; 2 Kings xxv. 7). Similar instances occur in the East even in our own day. This cruel conduct was connected, not only with their ideas of the solidarity of all blood-relations in one family, but also with the universal custom of blood-vengeance, according to which it appeared to the relatives of a murdered man to be their right and their duty to pursue and slay the murderer. Not seldom their vengeance extended to the whole family of the murderer (Gen. xxxiv. 30; 2 Sam. xiv. 7; 2 Kings xiv. 6). How wide-spread and deep-rooted the custom of blood-vengeance was, may be seen from the fact that the Mosaic law could not abolish it, but only limit it and restrain it, as was the case also in regard to polygamy (Winer, *R.-W.-B.*, i. *s.* 189). When, therefore, Jehu put to death all the adherents of the deposed dynasty, he did not commit an unheard-of crime, but only "followed the example of other founders of new dynasties" (Ewald). What is more, Ahab's house had introduced and fostered idolatry, and it was not to be hoped that it could be absolutely rooted out, as long as there were still members of this family alive. The case is similar as regards his conduct toward the worship of Baal. The Israelitish constitution knew nothing of freedom of religion or of worship, but assigned the death-penalty for all idolatry (see 1 Kings xviii., *Hist.* § 5). Jehu acted as little contrary to the law when he caused the servants of Baal to be put to death, as Elijah did in 1 Kings xviii. 40. Nevertheless his mode of action is to be condemned, even from the Old Testament stand-

point. He allowed himself to be carried away by his fierce, violent, soldierly, despotic disposition. He proceeded to extremes, and observed no limits. When he had once spilled blood, he thirsted for more, and thought that this thirst for blood was zeal for Jehovah. Especially did he fail in the matter of the cunning and deceit and falsehood which he employed. In Jezreel he pretended to the people that he was innocent of the murder of the seventy descendants of Ahab, although he had himself ordered it. In Samaria he declared that he was a zealous servant of Baal, in order that he might get all the servants of Baal into his power, and slaughter them all at once. Therefore also the prophet Hosea speaks of the "blood of Jezreel" which Jehovah will avenge upon the house of Jehu (Hosea i. 4). Krummacher asserts, in opposition to this prophetical declaration, as well as to the fact before us (*Elisa*, iii. *s.* 152): "Nevertheless he (Jehu) comes out from this horrible massacre *pure*, because he did not draw the sword in obedience to his own thirst for blood, but in the name of Him who 'maketh his angels spirits; his ministers a flaming fire' [Ps. civ. 4, where the translation is incorrect. It should read, "maketh winds his messengers, and flames his ministers."—W. G. S.], and who had chosen Jehu as His executioner." Lilienthal observes correctly (*Die gute Sache der göttl. Offenbarung*, iv. *s.* 410): "An executioner does what is right when he takes the life of an evil-doer, at the command of the civil authority, and receives for this service his proper wages. But when he purposely torments and tortures the culprit, he deserves to be especially punished for it. Therefore blood-guilt is ascribed to Jehu, because it was a gratification to his fierce disposition to spill the blood of those who had indeed merited death, but who ought not to have been slain at the instigation of private hate." Every attempt to wash Jehu clean from blood-guilt becomes, in spite of itself, a defence of falsehood and deceit *in majorem Dei gloriam*. Jehu was indeed a "Scourge of God," but he certainly was not a "man of God," as appears in the fact that, with all his pretended zeal for Jehovah, he nevertheless did not desist from the "sins of Jeroboam" as long as he ruled. The instruments of the divine punishments are not made "pure" by the fact that they are God's instruments, but they are, in their turn, punished for their own sins; *cf.* Isai. x. 5–7, 12.

[Would it not be a hard fate to be chosen to be an instrument of God's vengeance, and then to be held to a strict account, if one's human infirmities of judgment led one to overdo or to fall short in some points of the just execution of the task? The trouble is that Jehu in the first place gets credit for far more pure and hearty zeal for the restoration of the Jehovah-religion than he deserves, and then has to be correspondingly under-estimated. If we attempt, with all the light given us by the text, to estimate Jehu's personal feeling in regard to this revolution, we shall reach the following conclusion: Jehu was a military man to whom the crown presented itself as an object of earthly ambition worth some effort. Supposing him to have been, by conviction, an adherent of the religion of Jehovah, the call to him to put himself at the head of a reaction in favor of the Jehovah-religion, and the anointment to the royal office by a prophet of Jehovah, might move him to make the attempt. The adherence of the army determined him. When he had won his victory, he carried out faithfully the policy to which he was bound as leader of the Jehovah-party. He put an end to the worship of Baal. The crown, however, was his reward. It was a political reward, and he took political means to secure it. He slew all the possible pretenders to the crown from the house of Ahab, according to the oriental custom in such cases, as a means of securing himself on the throne. He stopped short with his religious reforms and did not destroy the golden calves; he left them for the same political reasons for which Jeroboam erected them, *i. e.*, that the northern kingdom might have its own religious centres outside of Jerusalem. He saw in the revolution principally a gratification of his own ambition. He was willing to be the instrument of the overthrow of a wicked dynasty and a corrupt religion, and he stopped just where his personal interests were in danger of being impaired. It is not strange that his contemporaries rejoiced so much at the rescue of their ancestral religion that they were indifferent to the excesses by which Jehu tried to establish his royal power, nor that later and calmer judges, on the contrary, raised his bloodshed into prominence in judging of his career (Hos. i. 4).—See further, below, § 5.—W. G. S.]

3. In connection with the violent and bloody conduct of Jehu, *the religious and moral condition into which the kingdom had been brought, under the dominion of the house of Ahab*, is thrown into distinct relief. "What a shocking picture of demoralization, vulgarity, and slavery" (Eisenlohr) presents itself to us in the rulers, the elders, and the tutors of the royal princes, that is to say, among the highest officials and the most familiar frequenters of the court! Although the fortified city, with all the necessary means of defence, chariots, horses, and weapons, were still in their possession, yet not one energetic man could be found who would put himself at the head. Upon Jehu's first letter, which did not even contain a command, but only a question, or, in a certain sense, only a challenge to resist, they all yielded timidly, like cowards. No one of them thinks of even moving a finger in behalf of the royal house, whose confidants, favorites, and servants they have been. They change their disposition with the change of events, and place themselves as instruments without will at the disposal of the new ruler, who had killed their king and master. Jehu would hardly have addressed this challenge to them if he had not been sure of their utter want of principle, and had not known that he had not the least independent opposition to fear from them. Then when he demands of them the very highest crime, the murder of the scions of the royal house, who have been entrusted to their care and their protection, they do not hesitate a moment; they slaughter the whole seventy in one night, and send their heads the next morning to Jezreel, in order to win the favor of the new ruler. If the conduct of the elders at Jezreel, when they slew Naboth at the command of Jezebel, testified to the deep corruption of the time (see 1 Kings xxi., *Hist.* § 3), how much more does this behavior of those of the highest rank and office bear witness to the same. The religious decay was as deep as the moral decay. In the capital of the kingdom there was no sanctu-

ary of Jehovah, but a fortress-like temple of Baal which Ahab had built (1 Kings xvi. 32), furnished with idols of wood and stone, and surrounded by large courts. In spite of the great day on Mount Carmel, where the people had solemnly declared for Jehovah, and had slain 450 priests of Baal (1 Kings xviii. 21 *sq.*), this temple remained standing, and the worship of idols continued to be, as it had been before, the prevailing religion of the kingdom. It appears, it is true, that Joram, at his accession, removed the statue of Baal (chap. iii. 2), but he did not put a stop to the worship of Baal; and the feast of Baal which Jehu ordained, at which so many worshippers of the god were present from all parts of the kingdom that the extended courts of the temple were packed full, shows how numerous the worshippers of the god had already become again. To this point had Israel come, under the rule of the house of Ahab; since there had been any people of Israel, such a state of things had not existed.

4. The only facts in regard to *Jehonadab, the son of Rechab*, which can be deduced from this passage, are, that, at the time of the great apostasy under the house of Ahab, he was one of the most earnest opponents of that dynasty, and of the idolatry which it introduced; that he was a firm adherent of Jehovah, and moreover a man who was held in honor by the people, and highly esteemed by Jehu. From the xxxvth chapter of Jeremiah, we learn further that he stood at the head of a community, the so-called Rechabites, to which he had given peculiar rules of life, according to which they were not to live in houses, not to possess farms or vineyards, and not to drink wine. They held so firmly to these rules that Jeremiah, 300 years later, could present them to the people, who were disobedient to the commands of Jehovah, as models of obedience. This is sufficient to prove that Jehonadab, although he was a contemporary of Elisha, and probably also of Elijah, yet stood in no direct connection with the prophet-communities which they managed (chap. ii. 3 *sq.*), since these did not probably have any special rules of life, and certainly did not have those of the Rechabites. Neither is there any indication anywhere that he acted in concert with Elijah, who had caused Jehu to be anointed. This fact is what makes him important for the history of redemption. Ewald (*Gesch.*, iii. 504 *sq.* [3d ed. 543]) explains this phenomenon by the theory that, after Elijah's death, "new institutions of influence for the old religion" had been formed, viz., on the one hand, the so-called schools of the prophets, which prosecuted the objects which had been set before them by Elijah, and, on the other hand, "a society of those who despaired of being able to observe true religion undisturbedly, in the midst of the nation, with the stringency with which they understood it, and who, therefore, withdrew into the desert, and preferred, as all Israel had once done under Moses, the hardships of life in tents to all the fascinations of city-life. They borrowed from the Nazarites the principle of abstention from wine and all food connected with wine, and the ancient Kenites were their models for their tent-life." He goes on to say that they were called Rechabites from the father of their founder, Jehonadab; that their oath was extended and made more stringent at a later time; that they only returned into ordinary social life at long intervals and under compulsion, etc. This theory, to which Eisenlohr and Thenius give their adhesion, is contradicted, first of all, by the fact that Jeremiah calls them גֵּרִים, *i. e.*, strangers and sojourners in the land in which they dwelt. "They were not of the race of Israel, but were an offshoot of the family of the Kenites (1 Chron. ii. 55), which is traced back to Moses' father-in-law (Numb. x. 29; Judges iv. 11), and which migrated to Canaan (Judges i. 16), in friendship and alliance with Israel (1 Sam. xv. 6). In this passage in 1 Sam. they appear as still unsettled. According to Judges iv. 11, 17 *sq.* they continued to be nomadic, as Rechab was also, even before Jehonadab's regulation. . . . It is an established historical fact, which is further confirmed by the part. גרים, that they were already nomadic. . . . Jehonadab only fixed by law what he already found as a generally observed usage, and thereby cut off beforehand all possible temptations to adopt a settled life" (Hitzig). The Rechabites call Jehonadab their "father" (Jerem. xxxv. 6, 8), but they do not thereby designate him as their *ancestor* (Winer and others). They only mean that he was their teacher and lawgiver, just as the prophet-disciples called Elijah their "father" (2 Kings ii. 12). If they had originated with Jehonadab, they would have named themselves after him and not after his father. Moreover, it is certain that Rechab was not, strictly speaking, the father of Jehonadab, but the ancestor of the family to which he and the other Rechabites belonged. We must understand by this name, therefore, a national and nomadic community, and not simply a religious organization. It was much older than Elijah, and not directly or indirectly an outgrowth of his activity. There is no hint in the history that other communities than the schools of the prophets were formed, after Elijah's death, for the conservation of "true religion." The most extraordinary feature is this, that a family, which did not belong to the race of Israel, maintained itself in separation and independence in the midst of this people from the entrance into Palestine until the fall of the kingdom, and was more completely devoted to the service of Jehovah than Israel itself. Jehonadab may have been led to give them fixed regulations of life by the growth of the idolatry which Ahab had introduced, and against which he desired to fortify them by a strict exclusion. The result was that he accomplished his object. He saw in Jehu a deliverer from the tyrannical and idolatrous dynasty, and he willingly accepted his invitation to accompany him to Samaria. He must have known of Jehu's dissimulation in proclaiming the feast of Baal, and must have approved of it, for he was present with Jehu at it (ver. 23). Clericus justly observes: *conscius rei erat, nec laudandus est hoc in negotio.* Hess thinks that he belonged to the number of those who "hardly regarded it as an error in Jehu, that, in his zeal, he went too far, on account of their joy at the overthrow of the idolatrous dynasty." It is worth noticing that Elisha, who had been the prime mover in raising Jehu to the throne, took no part in this proceeding. It seems that Jehu purposely did not call for his assistance, because he could not expect from him any approval of his falsehood and dissimulation. Jehonadab certainly does not appear here in the fa-

vorable light in which Krummacher represents him: "In fact, we hardly know what to praise most in this person, whether the soul, elevated and carried heavenward by divine inspiration, or the rare wisdom, which, in its rich measure, is so peculiar to him, or the clear, unwavering insight with which he commands everything, and which enables him to pass spiritual judgment upon all, or the foresight and care, as enlightened as tender, which we see him employ in behalf of his family and its interests for centuries to come." Neither the passage before us nor Jerem. xxxv. mentions with a syllable these grand characteristics. The further delineation is still more arbitrary and unfounded: "So they (Jehu and Jehonadab) sit together—a dark thunder-cloud softly enfolded in a rainbow of promise, as if Law and Gospel had been personified in living allegories: Jehu, the woe of God's condemnation upon all godlessness; Jehonadab, the divine director to point upward to the throne of grace. . . . Jehonadab, the Church, which lives in heaven; Jehu, the State, which protects," &c.

5. *The continuance of the worship of the calves* under Jehu shows that he was not fully in earnest in the zeal for Jehovah, of which he boasted to Jehonadab, otherwise he must have destroyed the golden calves in Bethel and in Dan, as well as the idols in the temple of Baal at Samaria. He did not let them stand because he considered that what he had done was enough "to satisfy the obligation (?) which he had undertaken towards the prophet of Jehovah" (Menzel). The reason was rather the same one which had led the founder of the kingdom of Israel, Jeroboam, to introduce the worship of these images (1 Kings xii. 26 *sq.*, and *Hist.* § 1). By abolishing the worship of the calves, Jehu would have torn down the partition between the two kingdoms and would have endangered his throne. His zeal for Jehovah did not go so far as this. His royal authority was more important to him than the law of Jehovah. Political and dynastic interests restrained him after he had extinguished the house of Ahab and abolished the worship of Baal. The manner in which he conducted himself in this matter showed that "he did not walk in the law of the Lord with all his heart" (ver. 31), and this became still clearer when he was firmly established on the throne. He is, therefore, it is true, praised for his zeal in rooting out and destroying the worship of Baal, but is, at the same time, declared guilty of the "sins of Jeroboam," and this is given as the reason why Jehovah began, in his reign, to cut off provinces from Israel, and why his dynasty should have no firm duration. This criticism of his reign by the author of the history (who was probably one of the prophets) shows that the prophets of the time opposed the worship of the calves [although it was intended, in a certain way, as a worship of Jehovah], and did not simply, as Ewald asserts (see above, Pt. II. p. 35), combat the worship of false gods. [The view of these things entertained by the prophet-author of the Book of Kings, who lived at a much later period and under very different circumstances, cannot be regarded as any indication of the views of "the prophets of the time," in regard to them.—W. G. S.] The great and bloody revolution of Jehu had, therefore, a merely negative result, namely, the abolition of the worship of false gods; the positive results, the restoration of the constitution, *i. e.*, of the covenant of Jehovah, was prevented by political considerations, *i. e.*, by personal ambition and love of power. It is another proof that a religious reformation can only fail of its objects and come to naught, so soon as political and dynastic interests get control of it, or, indeed, are involved in it.

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

Vers. 1–27.—The two Chief Acts of King Jehu: (*a*) The destruction of the entire family of Ahab, vers. 1–17; (*b*) the abolition of the worship of Baal, vers. 18–27 (see the *Hist.* notes).—Ver. 1. WÜRT. SUMM.: Though a large family of children is a blessing of God (Ps. cxxvii. 3), yet we must not rely upon them, or be self-willed on that account, as if the family could not die out, but we must fear God, must not stain ourselves with sin against our consciences, and must bring up children in the fear of God, else He will take them away and destroy the entire family. Ps. cxii. 1, 2.—Vers. 1–7. The Governors and Chief Men at Samaria: (*a*) Their cowardice, (*b*) their blind slavishness, (*c*) their unfaithfulness.—Moral decline among the highest ranks of a nation generally proceeds from a corrupt court which sets the fashion (Ahab and Jezebel). As is the master, so is the servant.—He who has the power in his hands always finds instruments among the great and those of high rank, who shrink back from no demand which is made upon them, however much it may conflict with honor and duty.—Those who no longer fear God, must fear men. Fear of men may become the cause of the greatest crimes. Therefore the Lord says: (Matt. x. 28).—Vers. 6, 7. WÜRT. SUMM.: Here we have an example of unfaithful tutors and governors and friends, who look, in their actions, not to the interests of the orphans, but to their own advantage, and let the orphans and their cause be ruined. As Jehu nevertheless destroyed them all (ver. 17), so will the just God also bring upon the heads of false friends and trustees, all the unfaithfulness which they inflict upon orphans: therefore, let such be warned against all violation of their trust.—KYBURZ: The children of this world become traitors to one another, as we see in the case of these guardians of the royal children. How they probably promised with all zeal to guard the life, the honor, and the rights of these princes! Now, they themselves become their murderers. Let no man trust the golden words of him who fears man more than he fears God.—Unfaithfulness ruins those who practise it. Jehu must infer from the treason of these guardians towards their wards that they would still less be faithful to him. He, therefore, treated them as they treated those who had been entrusted to them.—Though the crime which these men perpetrated against their wards could hardly occur in our day, yet instructors and guardians are not wanting who become murderers of the souls of their pupils, in that they mislead them by example and precept into apostasy from the living God and disbelief in His holy word, instead of educating them in "the fear and admonition of the Lord." (*Cf.* Matt. xviii. 6.)—KRUMMACHER: What is the worth of all the friendship and favor and trust of this world! It is like a tree in soft, loose ground, which, so long as thou holdest it

upright, covers thee pleasantly with its shadow, but which, when the storm roars through its top, and it is overthrown, no longer takes account of thee, but crushes thee in its fall.—Vers. 8–11. Jehu's Words to the People: (*a*) He says to the people just what they like to hear: "Ye are just;" (*b*) he throws the guilt off from himself on to others: "But who slew all these?" (*c*) he represents something which he had done himself as a divine dispensation: "The Lord hath done that which he spake," &c.—He who has a good conscience may alone appeal to God's word. Guard thyself from the great mistake of glossing over and justifying thy sins and errors by citations from the word of God.—Human sins are not justified by the fact that they are made means in the hand of God for accomplishing his judgments.—Vers. 12–16. Jehu's Journey to Samaria: (*a*) His meeting with the brethren of Ahaziah, vers. 12–14; (*b*) his meeting with Jehonadab, vers. 15, 16.—Vers. 12, 13. The quiet and peaceful house of the shepherd becomes a house of terror and of death. Destruction overtakes the self-assured on their way to pleasure and joy!—WÜRT. SUMM.: When we go out of the house, let us commit ourselves into the hands of God, for much may happen on our journey to prevent us from coming in life or happiness homeward (James iv. 13–15).—Ver 15. Jehonadab, son of Rechab, chief of the Rechabites (Jer xxxv.), is a type of faithful adherence to the faith and the customs of the fathers in the midst of an apostate, wavering people.—Decided and firm faith, combined with a strict and earnest life, compels respect even from those who themselves follow another course.—Where there is agreement in the highest and most important interests, there one may find a speedy and easy basis of intercourse, whatever may be the difference of rank or nationality.—KYBURZ: Jesus says to me and thee what Jehu said to Jehonadab: If thine heart is right with mine, as mine with thine, then come up to me upon my throne (Rev. iii. 21).—Ver. 16. Zeal for the Lord is a great and rare thing, when it is pure. It forfeits its reward, however, when it aims to be seen (Matt. vi. 1–6). How many a one deceives himself with his zeal for the Lord, and for His kingdom, when, at the bottom, he is zealous only for himself, for his own honor and fame, his own interest and advantage.

Vers. 18–28. The great Feast of Baal at Samaria: (*a*) The preparation of it; (*b*) its finale.—A work which is in itself pure and holy loses its value when it is accomplished by falsehood and dissimulation. One cannot battle for the truth with the weapons of falsehood (Rom. iii. 8).—BERLEB. BIBEL: What things one may do by outward acts, and yet be internally a hypocrite! Jehu dissimulated in order to circumvent the hypocrites and idolaters, and never recognized the hypocrite and idolater in himself.—Jehu destroyed the worship of false gods by the sword, and by external violence. He had full justification for this in the Law, for, under the old covenant, idolatry was the worm at the root of the Israelitish nationality; it was high treason to the Israelitish state. Under the new covenant, it is not permitted to make use of fire and sword against heresy and superstition. No other weapon may here be used than that of the spirit, that is, the word of God. Christianity is not bound to any people; as it was not brought into the world by violence, so it cannot be extended and nourished by the sword.—Even now every civil power has the right and the duty to proceed to extreme measures against a cultus like that of Baal, which is interwoven with licentiousness and abominations.—Ver. 21. The house of Baal was full from wall to wall. The houses in which worship and sacrifice are rendered to the deities of this world, to the lusts of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, are full, also now-a-days, from wall to wall, while the churches, in which the word resounds: "Repent and be converted that your sins may be forgiven," are empty.—Ver. 26 *sq.* J. LANGE: The destruction and desecration of the temple of Baal was a genuine physical preaching of repentance through the entire country, by which many a one may have been awakened from the sleep of sin, and many a faithful soul may have been strengthened in goodness. As the German hymn says: "Bring all false gods to shame! The Lord is God! Give to our God the praise!"

Vers. 28–33. Jehu is a type of those who show great zeal in tearing down and destroying superstition and false worship, but do nothing to build up the faith, because they themselves have no living faith, and do not walk before God with all their hearts.—Jehu did indeed destroy idolatry, but he did not touch the chief sin of Israel, because he considered it the chief support of his own authority. So many a one renounces gross, external sins, but will not think of denying himself, of sacrificing his own interests, and of turning his heart to the living God.—He who remains standing half-way, goes backward in spite of himself. Jehu would not desist from the sins of Jeroboam, because he thought that it would cost him his crown, but on that very account he lost one province after another.

B.—*Athaliah's Reign and Fall.*

Chap. XI. 1–20. (2 Chron. XXII. 10—XXIII. 21.)

1 And [But] when [*omit* when] Athaliah the mother of Ahaziah [—when she][1]
saw that her son was dead, [then] she arose and destroyed all the seed royal.
2 But Jehosheba, the daughter of king Joram, sister of Ahaziah, took Joash the
son of Ahaziah, and stole him from among the king's sons *which were* [who were
to be][2] slain; [,] and they hid him, *even* [*omit from* and *to* *even: read* and put][3]
him and his nurse, [*omit* ,] in the bed-chamber [store-room, and hid him] from
3 Athaliah, so that he was not slain. And he was with her hid in the house of the
Lord six years. And Athaliah did reign over the land.
4 And the seventh year Jehoiada sent and fetched the rulers over hundreds,
with the captains and the guard [centurions of the life-guards and of the run-
ners][4] and brought them to him into the house of the Lord, and made a covenant
with them, and took an oath of them in the house of the Lord, and shewed them
5 the king's son. And he commanded them, saying, This *is* the thing that ye
shall do; A third part of [those of] you that enter in on the sabbath shall even
6 be keepers of the watch of the king's house; And a third part *shall be* at the
gate of [*omit* of] Sur; and a third part at the gate behind the guard [runners][5];
so shall ye keep the watch of the house, that it be not broken down [to prevent
7 entrance]. And two parts of [*omit* two parts of] all [those of] you that go forth
on the sabbath [—of both sorts of soldiers—][6], even they shall keep the watch
8 of the house of the Lord about the king. And ye shall compass the king round
about, every man with his weapons in his hand: and he that cometh within
[breaketh through] the ranges [ranks][7], let him be slain: and be ye with the
9 king as he goeth out and as he cometh in. And the captains over the hundreds
did according to all *things* that Jehoiada the priest commanded: and they took
every man his men that were to come in on the sabbath, with them that should
10 go out on the sabbath, and came to Jehoiada the priest. And to the captains
over hundreds did the priest give king David's spears[8] and shields, that *were* in
11 the temple of the Lord. And the guard stood, every man with his weapons in
his hand, round about the king, from the right corner [hand wall] of the temple
[house] to the left corner [hand wall] of the temple [house] *along* by [towards]
12 the altar and the temple. And he brought forth the king's son, and put the
crown upon him, and *gave him* the testimony; and they made him king, and
anointed him; and they clapped their hands, and said, God save the king [*lit.*
Live the king].
13 And when Athaliah heard the noise of the guard[9] *and* of the people, she
14 came to the people into the temple of the Lord. And when she looked, behold,
the king stood by a pillar [was standing on a platform] as the manner *was*, and
the princes and the trumpeters by the king, and all the people of the land re-
joiced [were rejoicing] and blew [blowing] with trumpets: and Athaliah rent
15 her clothes, and cried, Treason, treason. But Jehoiada the priest commanded
the captains of the hundreds, the officers of the host, and said unto them, Have
her forth without the ranges [through the ranks]; and him that followeth her
kill[10] with the sword. For the priest had said, Let her not be slain in the house
16 of the Lord. And they laid hands on her [made room for her on either hand];
and she went by the way by the which the horses came into the king's house:
and there was she slain.
17 And Jehoiada made a [the] covenant between the Lord and the king and the
people, that they should be the Lord's people; between the king also and the
18 people. And all the people of the land went into the house of Baal, and brake
it down; his altars and his images brake they in pieces thoroughly, and slew
Mattan the priest of Baal before the altars. And the priest appointed officers

19 over the house of the Lord. And he took the rulers over hundreds, and the
captains, and the guard, and all the people of the land; and they brought down
the king from the house of the Lord, and came by the way of the gate of the
guard [runners] to the king's house. And he sat on the throne of the kings.
20 And all the people of the land rejoiced, and the city was in quiet: and [but]
they slew [had slain] Athaliah with the sword *beside* [at] the king's house.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

[1] Ver. 1.—[The chetib, וראתה, is to be retained. Athaliah is put in independent construction at the head of the sentence, as general subject, and then what she did is stated in detached sentences. The construction is made smoother if we take away the ו, but the style then loses some of its liveliness. So Thenius and Keil.

[2] Ver. 2.—The keri הַמּוּמָתִים is confirmed by 2 Chron. xxii. 11. The chetib הַמְּמוֹתִים [should be punctuated הַמְּמוֹתִים.—W. G. S.] *mortes*, cannot without violence be translated as Keil proposes: "Those who were doomed to death."—Bähr. [Ewald raises the question whether the chetib cannot be punctuated מְמוֹתִים and explained as a participle hofal, in which the chief vocal force has been concentrated in the second syllable. He cites several cognate instances of considerable force, § 181, d, note.—On the use of the participle for a preterit future, see Ewald, § 335, b, and *cf.* Gen. xix. 14; Ex. xi. 5; Judges xiii. 8.

[3] Ver. 2.—[After הממותים supply וַתָּשֶׂם from 2 Chron. xxii. 11; *cf. Exegetical.*

[4] Ver. 4.—[The chetib, מְאָיוֹת is only a longer and more original form for the keri, מֵאוֹת, "since מֵאָה is contracted from מְאָיָה." Ewald, § 267, d.—לְ here forms a periphrasis for the genitive.

[5] Ver. 6.—[*I. e.*, before which the runners generally kept guard.

[6] Ver. 7.—[יָדוֹת does not mean "parts" in the same sense as הַשְּׁלִשִׁית מִן means *a fraction of.* Its first meaning is *hands*, and so *parts like hands*, that is, two branches of one subject, as the two hands are parts of one person. It refers to the two military divisions, life-guards and runners, of which the squad which retired on the Sabbath was composed. The preposition בְּ after it marks these as component or essential parts. See further the *Exegetical* notes on the verse.

[7] Ver. 8.—[*I. e.*, any one who strives to break through the cordon of guards thus posted so as to penetrate either into the palace or the temple.

[8] Ver. 10.—[We must read the plural הַחֲנִיתִים, as in Chron. "The sing. in a collective sense is not a probable construction in prose" (Thenius).

[9] Ver. 13.—[The Aramaic form of the plural in ־ִין (רָצִין) is very rare in Hebrew prose. It occurs in 1 Kings xi. 33; 2 Sam. xxi. 20 (chetib). In poetry it is more frequent. Ewald, § 177, a.

[10] Ver. 15.—[הָמֵת, inf. abs. for imper.—W. G. S.]

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.—The parallel account in the Chronicles is, in some places, word for word the same as the one before us. It cannot, however, have been copied from this record, for it not only varies in particular details, but also contains additions, and those such as the Chronicler cannot possibly have invented himself, *e. g.*, the names of the five centurions and their fathers (2 Chron. xxiii. 1). It is, therefore, very generally admitted that the two accounts are derived from one and the same original record, from which the author of the books of Kings and the Chronicler each took different extracts according to the stand-point of each. The record before us is not only older, but it is also clear and definite, so that when it is regarded by itself simply it presents no difficulties. These do not present themselves until we turn to the story in Chronicles, which is, it is true, in some cases more full and detailed, but which is, on the whole, far less clear. In any attempt at reconciliation, therefore, we must not, as Keil does, make the Chronicles the standard, but must start from the record which here lies before us. Noteworthy as the additions and variations in the Chronicles may appear, they can only be accepted in so far as they are not contradictory to this account.

Ver. 1. **But Athaliah, &c.** We may suppose that she had carried on the government as queen-regent (גְּבִירָה *cf.* 1 Kings xv. 13 and xi. 19), [In the latter place it is applied to a queen-consort, as in Jerem. xiii. 18; xxix. 2. In 1 Kings xv. 13 and here it is applied to the queen-mother. It is a title which implies more actual political power and influence than מַלְכָּה. The queen-mother has always been, and is, a personage of influence in oriental countries. For the importance of this rôle in the Israelitish monarchy, and for the influence exerted on the history by some of the individuals who filled it (Bathsheba, Maacah, Athaliah, Jezebel), see Stanley's *Lectures*, 2d ser. p. 432], during the absence of her son at Ramoth and at Jezreel (chap. viii. 28 and 29), and now she took the royal authority directly into her own hands. In order to establish herself on the throne, she proceeded in the usual manner of oriental usurpers (see above, on chap. x.). She slew all the "seed royal," *i. e.*, all the male members of the royal house who might eventually become pretenders to the throne. The forty-two "brethren of Ahaziah," who were slain by Jehu (chap. x. 13 *sq.*), were not, therefore, all the princes there were, but a certain portion of them, especially those who were grown up.—Ver. 2. Jehosheba

was the sister of Ahaziah, but not the daughter of Athaliah. She was the daughter of another wife of king Jehoram. According to 2 Chron. xx. 11, she was the wife of Jehoiada, the priest—a statement the truth of which Thenius unjustly questions. It explains Jehoiada's conduct most satisfactorily. The Chronicler has וַתִּתֵּן, after הַמּוּמָתִים, and this word must here be supplied. חֲדַר הַמִּטּוֹת is not the "bed-chamber" (Luther, E. V.) either of the royal princes (Clericus), or of the priests and levites (Vatablus), but the room of the palace in which the beds, mattresses, and coverlets were stored, and where no one lived. The child, who was an infant at the breast, was temporarily hidden here, and then he was brought, for greater security, into the house of Jehovah, *i. e.*, into a room adjoining the temple, or into one of the temple chambers, so that he was under the care of the high-priest. **With her,** *i. e.*, with the wet-nurse, whose care he yet needed; not, "with Jehosheba" (Thenius), for *she* could not remain concealed for so long a time. The nurse remained with him, after he was weaned, as his attendant until his sixth year. Instead of אִתָּהּ the Chronicler has, less precisely, אִתָּם, with them, *i. e.*, in their family. The priest and Jehosheba kept him in concealment. The Sept. translate אִתָּם, in Chronicles, by μετ᾽ αὐτῆς, which they also give for אִתָּהּ in Kings. We cannot infer, with Keil, that he was concealed "in the house of the high-priest, in one of the courts of the temple," for there is no hint anywhere that the high-priest and his family lived in any part of the temple-building (*cf.* Nehem. iii. 26 *sq.*, from which the contrary seems more probable).

Ver. 4. **And the seventh year Jehoiada sent, &c.** For שָׁלַח the Chronicler has הִתְחַזַּק, *i. e.*, "he took courage." It seemed to Jehoiada doubtful whether he ought to keep the prince any longer in concealment. Perhaps also the government of Athaliah had become more and more unendurable. In vers. 15 and 18 he is called simply הַכֹּהֵן, whereby he is designated as high-priest. *Cf.* xii. 11. *The centurions* were the commanders each of a hundred men of the life-guards and the runners (see notes on 1 Kings i. 38 and xiv. 27). The Chronicler gives the names of these centurions and of their fathers, which he can only have obtained from the original document which served as authority both for him and for the writer of this history. As there are five names given we may infer that the entire life-guard consisted of 500 men. It is to be noticed that their agreement is not called a שֶׁקֶר, as in the case of Baasha, Zimri, &c., but a בְּרִית. Only Athaliah calls it שֶׁקֶר, ver. 14. The oath which Jehoiada took of them in the holy place can only have been to this effect, that they would bring about the elevation of the prince to the throne, but, for the present, would keep the intention to do so secret. He then showed the prince to them. In the account in Chronicles the words: "And took an oath of them in the house of Jehovah, and showed them the king's son," are wanting. Instead, we read there: "And they went about in Judah, and gathered the levites out of all the cities of Judah, and the chief of the fathers of Israel, and they came to Jerusalem. And all the congregation (*i. e.*, the collected representatives of the people) made a covenant with the king in the house of God. And he (Jehoiada) said unto them, Behold, the king's son shall reign as the Lord hath said of the sons of David." There is no contradiction here, for we may well suppose that Jehoiada at first only admitted the five chiefs into the secret, and won their adhesion, but that they, before they proceeded to carry out the plan proposed (ver. 5 *sq.*), sought to assure themselves of the support of the levites and of the representative family chiefs, and invited them to one of the three great yearly festivals, at which they were accustomed to visit Jerusalem according to the law, so that their presence there would not attract attention. [See appendix to this section for a detailed comparison of the two accounts.]

Ver. 5. **And he commanded them, &c.** Jehoiada's plan was to take military possession of the two places, which here were of prime importance, the palace and the temple. In the latter was the young prince, who was then to be crowned and anointed; in the former was the throne, of which he was afterwards to take possession. Vers. 5 and 6 treat of the taking possession of the palace; vers. 7 and 8 of that of the temple. It should be particularly observed that Jehoiada's words are addressed to the centurions of the life-guard and of the runners (ver. 4). Therefore when he says (ver. 5): **A third part** מִכֶּם; and (ver. 7): **both sorts** בָּכֶם, he means of course no other than the soldiers under the command of these captains, who are distinctly mentioned, in ver. 9, as their "men," so that it is simply impossible to understand by it, "levites." The entire body of men at their disposal consisted, therefore, of those who had to undertake guard-duty on the sabbath, and of those who were released from service on that day. Those who entered upon service at that time were to hold control of the palace at three points; one third at the בֵּית הַמֶּלֶךְ, by which we have to understand here the royal residence proper, in distinction from the less important accessory buildings connected with it (ver. 5, in which, it may be remarked in passing, וְשָׁמְרוּ must be read instead of וְשֹׁמְרֵי. The Sept. add after φυλακὴν οἴκου τοῦ βασιλέως, the words: ἐν τῷ πυλῶνι.) The second third-part was to hold the gate סוּר. No gate by this name is mentioned elsewhere. According to the signification of the stem סוּר, *to depart from the way*, it can refer only to the exit or side-door of the palace. The third third-part received the charge בַּשַּׁעַר אַחַר הָרָצִים, or, as it is called in ver. 19 simply, שַׁעַר הָרָצִים. [The "runners" were probably couriers whose line of duty was to act as the king's messengers. This gate was probably so called, because it was the one before which they were usually stationed, either on guard-duty, or awaiting commands which were directed to their department of the service, or both.—W. G. S.] Since the new king held his solemn entry into the palace through this gate (ver. 19), it must have been the chief gate, through

which there was the most direct approach to the royal residence. It was "behind" the runners, since their usual station was before it. The word מַסָּח is not a proper name (Luther: Massa; Vulg.: *Messa*), but means *repulse, defence, that which wards off*, from נסח, *to ward off*, and it is in apposition to מִשְׁמֶרֶת. It may be referred to all three of the third-parts, since all three were intended to ward off and expel every one who might desire to gain admission to the palace. This was the duty assigned to those who commenced duty on the sabbath. Those who were released on that day were to guard the temple (ver. 7). They were not to be divided up into subdivisions to do duty at separate posts, but their two יָדוֹת were to form שְׂדֵרוֹת and to take the young king in their midst (ver. 8). By יָדוֹת are meant, in distinction from שְׁלִשִׁית (vers. 5 and 6) the two different sorts of soldiers, according to their weapons and duties, *i. e.*, the life-guards and the runners. שְׂדֵרוֹת are the ranks, in which they were to arrange themselves, between which the king went out of the temple into the palace. Any one who broke through them and ventured inside was to be slain (ver. 8). "Let it be observed with what accuracy בָּכֶם is used in ver. 7, where the reference is to a distinction of functions, and מִכֶּם in ver. 5, where the reference is to merely numerical subdivisions of the force" (Thenius). The final words of ver. 8: **And be ye with the king as he goeth out and as he cometh in,** belong to the directions which Jehoiada gave for the division of the numbers and of the functions of the soldiers for this especial case. They cannot, therefore, be taken as of general signification, referring to all the life of the king, under all circumstances: "In all his business, or, in all his movements" (Keil), as in Deut. xxviii. 6; xxxi. 2. but they refer to the execution of this plan, and are to be understood of the movement of the king from the temple to the palace (Thenius). In ver. 9 *sq*. follows the actual execution of the commands of Jehoiada which have been imparted in the preceding verses.

Ver. 10. **And to the captains over hundreds did the priest give,** &c. Instead of the sing. הַחֲנִית, the Chronicler has the plural הַחֲנִיתִים, and all the ancient versions present the plural in the verse before us. It seems that it stood originally הַחֲנִיתוֹת (Isai. ii. 4; Micah iv. 3), and the last ת was lost by an error in copying (Keil). We must understand that these were not David's own weapons, but some which he had captured, and placed in the temple as an offering. According to Ewald, whose opinion Thenius approves, Jehoiada gave these weapons to the captains, "in order to begin and consecrate the enterprise on which they were about to enter, of restoring the family of David to the throne, by using the weapons of the great ancestor of that family." But perhaps his only reason for distributing these arms among them was, that those who had retired from service at the palace had left their weapons there. The centurions divided these weapons among their soldiers, as ver. 11 expressly mentions, among the "runners," not, therefore, among levites. When the men were thus armed, they were stationed: "From the right-hand side of the house to the left-hand side of the house, along towards the altar and the temple," so that they surrounded and covered the person of the king. The meaning is that they shut off the space from the temple-building proper to the altar, and that the king stood in the midst of this space. Whether one row stood across the front from side to side, and two others parallel, along the side (Bertheau), or whether one row stood from the right-hand corner of the temple to the altar, and the other from the altar to the left-hand corner (Thenius), must be left undecided. Not until after the troops had been thus arranged, did Jehoiada lead out the young prince into the midst of the open space (ver. 12). הָעֵדוּת does not mean the *insignia regia* (Clericus), or the phylacteries (Deut. vi. 8, Grotius), but, the Law, and, if not the whole Pentateuch, at least the Decalogue, which is so often called the "Testimony" (Ex. xxv. 21; xvi. 34, &c.). This was probably given into his hands as a symbol of what is declared to be the law for the king in Deut. xvii. 19, whereas the diadem was placed upon his head (2 Sam. i. 10). He was then anointed (1 Kings i. 39). To clap the hands was a sign of delight and approval (Isai. lv. 12). Besides the armed force, the priests, and the levites, a multitude of people was also present (ver. 14), which denotes that the coronation took place on a feast-day, when the people collected in Jerusalem from all parts of the country. The acclamations of the people are in the same words as in 1 Kings i. 25.

Ver. 13. **And when Athaliah heard the noise,** &c. As worshipper of Baal, who, at that time, had his own temple in Jerusalem (ver. 18), Athaliah took no part in the feasts of the worshippers of Jehovah, in the Jehovah-temple, and, on this day, she paid the less heed to what was going on in the temple, inasmuch as the change of the guards in the palace had taken place as usual, and nothing indicated any unusual disturbance. The great outcry, which she either heard herself, as she well might in view of the short distance from the palace to the temple, or which was reported to her by her attendants, aroused her suspicions, so that she betook herself thither. Josephus states that she went out of the palace with her own troops (μετὰ τῆς ἰδίας στρατιᾶς), and that, when she came to the temple, the priests allowed her to enter, but the guards prevented her guards from following; that Athaliah, when she saw the crowned boy, cried out, and commanded that he who had dared to try to usurp her authority should be put to death, and that thereupon Jehoiada gave orders that she should be led out and executed outside of the temple. [That the queen should have gone down in person into the temple, *without guards or attendants*, to quell what must have appeared to be a mere vulgar riot, is certainly an astonishing incident.—W. G. S.] The words הָרָצִין הָעָם cannot be translated: "Of the people who flocked to the spot" (Luther, after the Vulg.). "The text must have read originally הָרָצִין וְהָעָם, and the ו must have fallen out by a copyist's error" (Thenius, Keil). The Chronicler transposes the words: הָעָם הָרָצִים, and adds: וְהַמְהַלְלִים אֶת־הַמֶּלֶךְ, *i. e.*,

the people who were flocking together and hailing the king. The רָצִים are, however, in this context, always the "runners" who formed a part of the royal guards (vers. 4, 6, 11, 19), so that the word can mean nothing else in ver. 13, and the text of the Chronicles cannot, with any good reason at all, be preferred.—Ver. 14. **The king stood** עַל־הָעַמּוּד, *i. e.*, not "at the column" (Luther) [or, "by a pillar" (E. V.)], but at the appointed, traditional place, which was reserved for the king, by established usage (כַּמִּשְׁפָּט), as in chap. xxiii. 3; 2 Chron. xxxiv. 31. Thenius understands by it "the top step of the stairs which led up to the temple," but this would not be any especial position, because the priests passed and stood there every day. Evidently a particular place is meant, an elevated dais or platform (Vulg.: *tribunal*), which was reserved for the king alone, for, when Athaliah saw the prince standing there, she knew at once what the transaction was which was being accomplished. The people, who stood in the fore-court, could not have seen the king, if he had stood on the top of the temple-steps, on account of the altar ten cubits high which stood in the court of the priests. The platform in question must have stood before the altar, at the entrance to the inner fore-court (בַּמָּבוֹא 2 Chron. xxiii. 13), so that the king, when he stood upon it, was the first object to strike the eye of Athaliah as she entered. Solomon had caused just such arrangements to be made (2 Chron. vi. 13; see *Exeg.* on 1 Kings viii. 22).—The Vulg. incorrectly renders הַשָּׂרִים by *cantores*, the Sept. by *οἱ ᾠδοί*, and Luther by "singers," as if the word were הַשָּׁרִים. They are the centurions, as in vers. 4 and 9. The word is correctly translated in the Sept. and Vulg. versions of Chronicles by *οἱ ἄρχοντες*, and *principes*.—הַחֲצֹצְרוֹת, trumpets, for trumpeters. Since the word occurs in chap. xii. 14, in the enumeration of the utensils of the temple, and is also used in Numb. x. 2 to designate the trumpets or horns of the priests, and since, moreover, 1 Chron. xv. 24 (xiii. 8), the priests appear as מַחְצְרִים בַּחֲצֹצְרוֹת, we can think here only of levites or priests as the persons who were blowing the trumpets.—**And all the people of the land,** *i. e.*, "the multitude which was present" (Bertheau), as in ver. 13, not, "the entire force of militia, which was present in Jerusalem" (Thenius).—**Athaliah rent her clothes,** not so much in grief as from terror, like Joram, chap. vi. 30.

Ver. 15. **But Jehoiada the priest commanded, &c.** The centurions of the life-guard are here designated as commanders of the army in general. "The readers are to be reminded by this addition that the military forces were willing to obey Jehoiada" (Bertheau).—**Have her forth through (or between) the ranks,** לַשְּׂדֵרֹת, *i. e.*, within the ranks, "so that she was led through the ranks, and was hindered from taking any measures in accord with her adherents" (Bertheau). Any one who might desire to take her part, or to assist her, was to be slain.—יָשִׂמוּ לָהּ יָדַיִם (ver. 16), *i. e.*, not, as Luther [and the E. V.] translate, following the Sept. (*ἐπέβαλον αὐτῇ χεῖρας*), and the Vulg. (*imposuerunt ei manus*), "They laid hands on her," but, as the Chaldee version renders it, and as almost all the expositors understand it: "They made for her two sides," *i. e.*, they made room for her, opening the ranks on both sides, "formed in rank and escorted her out" (Keil). By מְבוֹא הַסּוּסִים, the entrance-way for horses into the royal stables is to be understood, so that it is not the "horse-gate" (Nehem. iii. 28), as Josephus understands, for this was a gate of the inner city, and led into the city, not into the palace. She was not to be conducted by the way into the palace, because the new king was to make his solemn entry into the palace by this. It does not follow, however, that Athaliah was "to die shamefully and disgracefully by the stables" (Thenius), for the royal stables were not, as such, a shameful or unclean place.

Ver. 17. **And Jehoiada made the covenant, &c.** Not *a* covenant (Luther), but *the* covenant, *i. e.*, the covenant of Jehovah with Israel, which had been broken by the false worship of Jehoram, Ahaziah, and Athaliah. This covenant was solemnly renewed. It attached primarily to the relation between the king and people on the one hand, and Jehovah on the other (they were to be Jehovah's people and belong to Him, Deut. iv. 28), then, also, to the relation between the king and the people. The people was to be, from that time on, once more the people of God; it was to worship and serve Him alone. The king was to rule according to the "testimony," *i. e.*, the Law of Jehovah, which had been solemnly put into his hands, and the people were to be loyal to the legitimate king of the family of David. The immediate and necessary consequence of this renewal of the covenant was the destruction of the temple of Baal, with its altars and idols (ver. 18). When and by whom this temple was built is nowhere stated. It is most probable that it was erected by Jehoram, under the influence of Athaliah (chap. viii. 18), as the one in Samaria was built by Ahab, under the influence of Jezebel (1 Kings xvi. 32). Thenius is wrong in inferring from 2 Chron. xxiv. 7, that this temple was erected "in the enclosure of the temple of Jehovah," for that passage says only that Athaliah and her sons had plundered the Jehovah-temple of all which they could use in the worship of Baal. There can be no doubt that we must understand it to refer to a building on another elevation. It is certain also that Mattan, the priest of Baal who was slain, did not perform his functions in the same place with Jehoiada. [The grounds which lead Bähr to believe that the temple of Baal was not on Mount Moriah are not satisfactory. Every indication which we have in regard to it goes to show that it was there. Mount Moriah is just the spot which would have been chosen for the site of a temple by any nation of ancient times which might have lived at Jerusalem. There was no other elevation near or convenient. The "old city" was perhaps in some places a little higher than Mount Moriah, but it presented no sharp and clear elevation, such as those which ancient nations always chose as sites of temples, if there was one in the neighborhood. The other hills were too far away. It would be little in accord with the character of Athaliah to suppose that she gave up the best site,

which was, at the same time, one of the grandest in the world, according to the taste in those matters, to the Jehovah-religion, and sought another for her own favorite deities. The Jehovah-religion may have been strong enough in Judah to force a compromise, and maintain a joint possession of the mountain. 2 Chron. xxiv. 7 says that Athaliah and her sons had "broken down" or "torn down (פָּרְצוּ) the house of God." Just how much that means we cannot perhaps determine, but the temple was standing and available for worship, &c., at this time, as we see, and it may well be meant that they broke down such portions of the walls of the courts, &c., as was necessary to get room for the temple of Baal. See also chap. xii. 5 (*Exeg.*) and 2 Chron. xxiv. 7. Still farther, if ver. 18 is in its proper *chronological* position *before* ver. 19, and is not, as Thenius thinks, to be taken as belonging *after* it in order of time, then it gives a strong ground for believing that the temple of Baal was on Mount Moriah. They stayed to tear it down before they formed the procession, and left the temple-mountain to "go down" and escort the king into the palace. It cannot be regarded, therefore, as "beyond doubt" that Mattan and Jehoiada did not perform their functions in the same place. That the latter did not like the juxtaposition, we may well believe, but if the question was whether to share Mount Moriah with the worshippers of Baal, or to remove the Jehovah-worship from it, or to give up the Jehovah-worship altogether, we may easily imagine what course he would have chosen.—W. G. S.]—Duncker, whom Weber again follows, deduces from the sentence: **The priests appointed** פְּקֻדֹּת **over the house of the Lord,** the arbitrary conclusion that, in spite of the victory of the priestly party, "Nevertheless the number of the servants of Baal was so great, and their courage was so little broken, that it was necessary to protect the temple of Jehovah against their attacks by especial guards." Thenius also thinks that there is reference here to a kind of temple-officers which had not existed before, "by whom a new desecration of the temple by the worship of false gods was to be prevented." We must understand by it, as is expressly stated 2 Chron. xxiii. 18, the overseers who were appointed by David (1 Chron. xxv.), and who, during the time that idolatry prevailed, had not been regularly kept up, or perhaps had not been appointed at all. That the article is wanting cannot be decisive to the contrary. [So Keil. Ewald, Thenius, and Bunsen, on the contrary, think that they were intended to protect the temple against the attacks of the heathen. The Chronicler develops this short note into an elaborate statement, as he does all the notices of the origin of any ritual formalities or hierarchical organizations. It is not clear, however, that it should have been thought necessary, just at the time when the Jehovah-religion could once more count on the support of the throne, to appoint new and permanent officers to protect the temple from heathen attacks and desecrations. Moreover, this clause, thus understood, makes the position of ver. 18 before ver. 19 probably incorrect as regards the order of time. Shall we understand that they stayed to appoint temple-officers before completing the inauguration of the king? It would be most reasonable to understand it to state simply that they appointed a guard to stay and protect the temple from any sudden attack of the enraged worshippers of Baal, while all the rest went to escort the king into the palace, and see him mount the throne.—W. G. S.] According to ver. 19, the centurions mentioned in ver. 4, with their troops, the life-guards and the runners, escorted the king down (וַיּוֹרִידוּ) from the House of Jehovah in a solemn procession arranged (וַיִּקַּח) by the priest Jehoiada. Escorted him *down*, it is said, because there was a ravine between Mount Moriah and Mount Zion, over which at that time there probably was no bridge. They came through the "Gate of the Runners" (the Chronicler gives בְּתוֹךְ instead of דֶּרֶךְ, by way of explanation) into the palace, where the throne stood, upon which the king seated himself. The Gate of the Runners belonged therefore to the palace. The Sept. take בֵּית הַמֶּלֶךְ as a direct genitive, οἶκον τοῦ βασιλέως. It was unquestionably the chief gate, for the solemn entry would not take place through any other (Thenius). Ewald, Thenius, and Bertheau connect וְהָעִיר שָׁקָטָה with the following, in opposition to the massoretic punctuation: "And the city remained quiet when they slew Athaliah with the sword:" that is to say, her adherents remained peaceful and did not venture to make any movement to save her. But, in that case, the words "with the sword" would be unnecessary. The correct interpretation of the words is rather that the concluding sentence is intended to append to ver. 16 an emphatic statement of the manner in which she was put to death, and, at the same time, to call attention to the fact that, by her death, the last member of the house of Ahab was removed, and the legitimate authority of the house of David was restored. In this interpretation this sentence brings the account to a well-rounded close.

Appendix.—In the exegetical explanations which precede, only the less important variations of the Chronicles have been noticed, and no account has been taken of the grand divergence of the two narratives in their general conception of the occurrence, in order that the continuous elucidation of the text before us might not be too much interrupted, and in order that no confusion might arise. The chief variation now, one which runs through the entire account, is, that, according to the Chronicler, it was not the centurions of the royal guards, but the priests, the levites, and the family-chiefs, by whose aid Jehoiada accomplished his reformation (2 Chron. xxiii. 2); furthermore, that the first third of the priests and levites who entered upon service on the sabbath were appointed לְשֹׁעֲרֵי הַסִּפִּים, *i. e.*, to be gate-keepers of the threshold, the second to guard the king's house, and the third to keep the gate הַיְסוֹד (vers. 4, 5); finally, that the two classes of priests and levites, those who entered upon, and those who were released from, service, remain together (ver. 8), so that, in general, it is only the temple, and not the royal palace at various points, which is guarded. Modern criticism explains these variations as "ar-

bitrary alterations" of the Chronicler, which he adopted "out of preference for the tribe of Levi, in order to ascribe to the priest-caste an honor which belonged to the prætorians" (Thenius, De Wette). This assertion is, to say the very least, exaggerated. No suspicion of falsehood can attach to the idea that the priests and levites participated in the coronation and inauguration of the new king, especially seeing that the main object to be gained by this was the abolition of idolatry (ver. 17 *sq.*). The plan of the enterprise, according to the account before us, did not proceed from the centurions of the prætorian guard, but from the head of the priest-class, and it would be astonishing and unnatural if the high-priest had excluded all his comrades in rank, office, and family, from participation in a transaction which was not only political, but also religious, and which took place in the temple. This participation was a matter of course, all the more seeing that the act, according to all the indications (see notes on vers. 4, 13), took place on a feast, at which priests and levites were bound to be present. The author does not, therefore, exclude them, he rather takes their participation for granted, as we see distinctly from ver. 14. Still less does the Chronicler exclude the prætorian guard from participation; he even gives what this author does not give in regard to them, viz., the names of the centurions and of their fathers, and thereby he shows how important their part in the work appeared to him, and also shows that he had not forgotten them, but desired that they should be kept in honorable remembrance. He could not, therefore, have had any intention of robbing them of any honor which belonged to them, and conferring it upon the levites. But while this author permits the participation of the levites to remain unemphasized, as something which was a simple matter of course, the Chronicler, who certainly looks at the history more from the priestly, levitical standpoint, feels bound to give it greater prominence. There is no contradiction between the two accounts in this respect. The case is somewhat different, however, in regard to the other detailed variations. The three localities which were to be held, each, according to the Chronicler, by one third of the priests and levites, cannot possibly have been all in the temple, for the בֵּית הַמֶּלֶךְ, the guard of which is entrusted (ver. 5) to the second third, can only be the king's house or palace, not "the place in the temple where the young king was (in concealment)" (Keil). The "Gate יְסוֹד," which was entrusted to the third third, was, as no one doubts, the same which is called in Kings (ver. 6) the "Gate סוּר." It appears there distinctly as a gate of the palace. Probably יְסוֹד is only another reading for סוּר. A temple-gate with this name is not mentioned anywhere else. The סִפִּים, which the first third are to guard (ver. 4), might, according to 1 Chron. ix. 19, be a locality in the temple, but it is utterly impossible that they should be identical, as Keil assumes, with the "Gate of the Runners" in the account here before us (ver. 6), for this gate is distinctly mentioned in ver. 19 as the one through which the king, after the procession had left the House of Jehovah, was conducted into the palace. According to this account, that gate was guarded by the third third of that portion of the troops under the command of the centurions which entered upon duty on that day, and not by priests and levites, who, of course, never mounted guard at the palace. *These* variations of the two accounts cannot be reconciled, and we are absolutely forced to admit that the Chronicler, although he made some more detailed extracts from the original document than the author of the Book of Kings, nevertheless did not accurately discriminate between the priests and levites and the military life-guard, and did not keep separate the shares of the two in the transaction. Keil asserts, in order, in spite of this, to bring the two accounts into accord: Jehoiada "determined to carry out the project chiefly by the aid of the priests and levites, who relieved each other, in the service of the temple, on the sabbath, and he entrusted the chief command of these forces to the captains of the royal life-guard, that they, with the force of priests and levites under their command, might take possession of the approaches to the temple, in order to repel any attempt of the military to force an entrance, and might protect the young king. These captains came into the temple without weapons in order not to attract attention, therefore Jehoiada gave them the weapons of king David, which were laid up in the temple." But the account of the Chronicler says nothing of any commission of the command over the priests and levites to the centurions, and this account directly contradicts any such notion (see above, on ver. 5), [not to say anything of the very great intrinsic improbability that any such arrangement—putting military leaders in command of priestly forces—would ever have been adopted, or that, if it had, it would have worked well.—W. G. S.] According to the account before us it is impossible to exclude the troops ordinarily under the command of the centurions from a share in the transaction. It was almost *more* necessary to get possession of the palace than of the temple, because the king was to make his solemn entry into it, and mount the throne after his coronation. It is not an argument against the notion that a guard was set over the palace, that Athaliah came down out of it to the people in the temple. There was no object in preventing her from coming out; the guard was set to prevent any one from getting in (מַסָּח ver. 6). There is no force in the citation of Josephus (*Antiq.*, 7. 14, 7): "Each of the twenty-four classes of priests took charge of the worship for eight days from sabbath to sabbath," or in the observation that "it is not known that any such arrangement was observed with respect to the life-guards or any other portion of the army," for of course all regular guards had to relieve each other at definite times, and the record says distinctly that this was the custom of the troops who were under command of the centurions.

HISTORICAL AND ETHICAL.

1. *The elevation of Joash to the throne of Judah* has great importance in the history of redemption, inasmuch as God's guidance and protection of the house of David appears in it, and as it is a con-

firmation of the promise given to this house that it should never be extinguished, and that its light should never fail (2 Sam. vii. 13 *sq.*; 1 Kings xi. 36; xv. 4; 2 Kings viii. 19; *cf.* Ps. cxxxii. 17). In the kingdom of Israel the dynasties changed; one overthrew the other and destroyed it; with Jehu the fourth had already begun. In the kingdom of Judah, on the contrary, the house of David had maintained itself until this time. But now, when Jehu had killed Ahaziah and forty-two of his relatives, and all the remaining royal seed had been destroyed by Athaliah, it appeared that the line of David also was at an end. But God wonderfully ordered it so that an infant of this house escaped the massacre and was saved. He remained concealed for years, and it must have been believed that David's lamp had gone out forever, when suddenly the sole remaining offshoot of the house of David ascended the throne, and, with the murderess Athaliah, the last survivor of the house of Ahab perished. As the fulfilment of the promise to protect the house of David must have been recognized in this event, there was in it at the same time, for every faithful servant of Jehovah, a pledge that the God of Israel would protect this house also for the future in any calamities; and so He did, until finally, according to the promise, the great "son of David" came, who was not only the "lamp" of David, but the light of the world, whose kingdom shall have no end (Luke i. 32, 33, 69).

2. All the mischief which the relationship contracted by Jehoshaphat with the house of Ahab (1 Kings xxii., *Hist.* § 1) had brought upon Judah, culminated in the *reign of Athaliah*, which brought Judah and its royal house to the verge of ruin. Athaliah was a faithful copy of her mother Jezebel, fanatical, idolatrous, imperious, and cruel. As her mother had controlled Ahab, so she controlled Jehoram and her son Ahaziah. It was she who transplanted idolatry into Judah, which had, until then, been faithful to Jehovah. Under her influence a temple of Baal was built in Jerusalem itself. She plundered the temple of Jehovah and took all the sacred implements for use in the service of Baal (2 Chron. xxiv. 7). After the death of her son she usurped the royal authority, so that a *woman* came to sit upon the throne, a thing which had never taken place before and never took place afterwards, and which not only was in direct contradiction with one of the essential duties which devolved upon a king of Israel, who, as such, was to be a "servant of God," but also was contrary to the express provision of the law. Maimonides, in the tract *Melachim*, draws this inference, thus: "They place no woman on the throne, for it is said (Deut. xvii. 15): 'Thou shalt in any wise set him king,' not *queen*. So also, in all positions of dignity and authority, they place only men." Athaliah's usurpation of the throne was the dissolution of the Israelitish monarchy. In order to maintain herself in her usurped authority, she put to death, not, like other usurpers, her opponents, but those who were connected with her own family, her own nephews and grandchildren. The ground for this "senseless crime" (Ewald) cannot be sought in the fact that she desired to annex Judah to Israel, for Jehu was reigning there, but only in the blind and passionate love of power of this "wicked" woman (2 Chron. xxiv. 7), and in her raging hate against the house of David, to which all true servants of Jehovah adhered. For six years she pursued her own courses undisturbed, and believed herself secure, when finally the legitimate heir to the throne, who had escaped the massacre by God's evident protection, appeared and was anointed king. As her mother Jezebel had stood upon her majesty in her dealings with Jehu, and had believed that she could command, so *she* came, proud and insolent, into the house of Jehovah, and, forgetting the illegitimacy of her own authority, founded, as it was, solely upon violence, she cried out: "Treason, treason!" But again, as her mother had heard her doom pronounced: "Throw her down!" so she hears the command: "Have her forth! and him that followeth her kill with the sword." As there was no one who took the part of the hated woman, she died, abandoned by all her servants, a just and disgraceful death. Thereby Judah and its royal house were saved. Racine concludes his tragedy *Athalie*, with these words:

> *Par cette fin terrible, et due à ses forfaits,*
> *Apprenez, roi des Juifs, et n'oubliez jamais,*
> *Que les rois dans le ciel ont un juge sévère,*
> *L'innocence un vengeur, et l'orphelin un père.*

3. *The high-priest Jehoiada* is, for his time, a very remarkable character. Although, through his wife Jehosheba, he was connected with the idolatrous court, and although he was entrusted with an office which, under the circumstances, was doubly difficult, yet he held firm and true to the God of Israel, and to the legitimate dynasty. The Lord had given the last heir of this line into his hands, and, at the peril of his life, he protects him for years in concealment, guarding him as his own child, and waiting in faith and patience until Jehovah shall give means and ways to restore the apparently exterminated royal house. As the yoke of the tyrannical woman became more and more unendurable, he "strengthened himself" [*i. e.*, took courage, made up his mind] (2 Chron. xxiii. 1), and put his hand to the work. He did not wish to open the way to the throne for the young heir by deceit or craft, by cruelty and bloodshed. In the first place he admits the captains of the military guard into the secret, and makes sure of their assistance; then he causes the priests and levites, and the heads of all the families, *i. e.*, the representatives of the people, to be summoned to Jerusalem for a public festival. He does not wish to do anything by himself alone, but with the consent of the different classes among the entire people. His plan bears witness, not only to his wisdom and prudence, but also to his patriotism. He takes all his measures in such a way that the end is accomplished without tumult or violence, but yet without chance of failure. It is not selfishness and love of power, but pure and disinterested love to Jehovah and to His people which is his motive. Only when Athaliah stigmatizes the restoration of the legitimate order of things as treason and insurrection, puts herself on the defensive, and calls for armed opposition to the movement, does he give orders to lead the crowned monster, as Dereser justly calls her, out of the sanctuary, and deliver her over to her well-deserved fate. His next care then is to renew the covenant between the king and people, exhorting the former to fidelity to the law, and the latter to fidelity to the king. Then finally he leads the king to the throne, and the people put an end to the idol-worship. If ever a

man stood pure and blameless in the midst of such a bold, difficult, and far-reaching enterprise, then Jehoiada, the ideal Israelitish priest, did so here.

4. Our modern historians see, in *the elevation of the descendant of David to the throne of his fathers*, a priest-revolution, just as they see, in the elevation of Jehu, a prophet-revolution. So Duncker (*Gesch. d. Alt.*, *s.* 417), whom Weber (*Gesch.*, *s.* 241) follows, states it thus: "The priests of the temple at Jerusalem had yielded to the foreign worship much more easily than the prophets in Israel. The example and the success of the latter gradually exercised an influence upon Judah. After the prophets of Israel had brought about the ruin of the house of Omri, the priests tried to overthrow the last remnant of this family in Judah also. . . . The fall of Joram of Israel, and perhaps also the hope of finding in Joash, the son of Ahaziah, whom the priests held in concealment from Athaliah in the temple, an easy tool for priestly influence, induced the high-priest Jehoiada to undertake the overthrow of the queen." Winer (*R.-W.-B.*, i. *s.* 111) also presents the incident in a similar manner: "The priests saved her (Athaliah's) grandson, Joash, with the help of a princess, in the temple. When he had grown up he was secretly anointed king, and Athaliah was put to death in a popular insurrection excited by the priests." Here we have another specimen of that history-making which ignores what the text says, and states, as assured historical fact, that which it does not say. That the priests in Judah gave way more easily to the Baal-worship than the prophets of Israel; that they, encouraged by the example and success of the latter, dethroned and murdered Athaliah, and regarded Joash as one who would probably prove an easy tool in their hands; that the priests saved Joash and hid him in the temple; that he was secretly anointed king, and that then a popular rising was instigated by the priests; of all that, there is nothing in either record. On the contrary, both agree in stating that the sister of king Ahaziah, without any assistance from the priests, took away the infant, and hid him in the palace itself, in the bed store-room, and that she then hid him, for greater security, in the temple, which was under the charge of her husband, the high-priest. These two near relatives of the prince were, for six years, the only ones who knew of his existence. Not until the seventh year did Jehoiada admit any one to the secret, and then not the priests, but the captains of the military guard, and he took of them an oath of secrecy. They it was who summoned the chiefs of the people, and the priests, and the levites, to the festival at Jerusalem, and who took the lead in carrying out the plan. The young prince was not anointed "secretly," but as openly as possible. Not only the priests, but also the captains of the royal guard, the representatives of the people, and the people themselves, shouted their acclamations to the new king. The coronation took place without violence, without any scene of public disturbance. The city is quiet, and the people joyful (ver. 20). How can any one then speak of a "popular rising instigated by the priests?" Criticism here comes into contradiction with itself. It declares the record in Chronicles unreliable and unhistorical, because it gives such prominence to the participation of the priests and levites, whereas the record in Kings only mentions the captains of the guard, and yet it says that the entire enterprise was conducted by the priests. But it is radically perverse and false to regard the incident as a revolution or a revolt. That Athaliah, as even De Wette expresses it, "usurped the throne of David," that she took the royal authority into her own hands, that she destroyed all the remaining seed-royal, *that* was a revolution. What Jehoiada undertook, not by himself, but in harmony with all ranks, and with the representatives of the people, was a repeal of the revolution, and a restoration of the constitutional, divine as well as human, order. It would have been contrary to conscience and to duty, if Jehoiada had gone down to the grave with the secret that there was yet living a legitimate heir of the throne of David. It was most natural that he should take the initiative in the restoration of the legitimate monarchy, because he had the prince under his care, and no one knew anything about him but Jehoiada and his wife. Moreover, it was doubly his duty, as chief of those whose calling it was to guard and teach the law, *i. e.*, the covenant of God with Israel (Mal. ii. 7; Deut. xxxiii. 10; Levit. x. 11), to labor to the end that the organic law of the kingdom, which was a theocracy, should be maintained; and, when this law was trodden under foot by the usurping sovereign, no one was so much bound as he to restore it, that is, to renew the covenant. In the kingdom of Israel, where, since Jeroboam, there was no longer any lawful priesthood (2 Chron. xi. 13 *sq.*), it was the prophets who had to watch over the covenant of Jehovah and to fight for it. In Judah, on the contrary, "the diminished and weakened priesthood, together with the true Jehovah-prophets, had to form the opposition to the patronage of paganism" (Ewald). Jehoiada's enterprise did not aim to bring about the dominion of the priesthood, but that of the legitimate theocratic dynasty. He, therefore, turned first to the servants of the crown for assistance—aimed to have the new king inaugurated by their power. After this was accomplished, he restored the priestly offices. He aimed at nothing more and nothing less than the restoration of the original theocratic constitution.

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

Vers. 1–3. Queen Athaliah. (*a*) Her wicked plans, ver. 1. (Idolatrous and fond of power, like her mother Jezebel, she takes the royal authority into her own hands, in self-will and contrary to right, and murders all the male seed, in order to put an end forever to the house of David. WÜRT. SUMM.: We see here whither ambition and love of rule may lead men. Athaliah does not spare her own innocent grandchildren, but causes them to be put to death, only in order that she may be called queen, and may remain such. Sir. iii. 29 *sq.*). (*b*) The frustration of her plans, vers. 2 and 3. (Job v. 12; Ps. ii. 4; xxxiii. 10. WÜRT. SUMM: No one can tread down him whom God sustains. Thus, Pharaoh would have been glad to destroy Israel; Saul would have slain David; Herod, the child Jesus; they could not accomplish it, however; they only injured themselves and perished, just as Athaliah did also.)—Ver. 1. Jehoshaphat's marriage of his son with a daughter of the house of Ahab, although he brought it about

in a good intention, produced the result that Athaliah ruled over Judah, and brought the dynasty of David to the brink of ruin. NEUE WÜRT. SUMM.: So, many a quiet, humble, God-fearing family has been brought into calamities, affecting both body and soul, by a thoughtless marriage. The hope that those who are brought up by godless parents will themselves reform and turn to the fear of God has very slight foundation. — Vers. 1–4. KRUMMACHER: King Joash. (*a*) The great danger which threatened him; (*b*) but how gloriously he was protected, and (*c*) how high he was elevated.—Ver. 1. **When she saw,** &c. That which should have made her hesitate and bow in humility to God's judgment, only made her insolent and blood-thirsty. That is the judgment which obstinacy and wilfulness bring upon themselves. —Ver. 2. CALW. BIB.: We have an instance in Jehosheba how, even in the midst of godlessness in a family, any one who will can make an exception.—Jehosheba stole him. That was not "stealing" the child, but saving him. What can a woman do better and nobler than to save an infant child from danger of soul and body, and take him under her protection for the sake of God and His promises?—Ver. 3. "He that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep." He watches over helpless infants, and holds His protecting hand over them (Matt. xviii. 10; Ps. xci. 11–13).— KRUMMACHER: Joash is a voiceless, yet a mighty, preacher of the security of the elect of God.— When the godless appear to have succeeded in the attainment of their objects, and believe that they have conquered, the very moment of their victory is the unperceived commencement of their ruin. The cross of Christ was the victory of His enemies, but this very victory was what brought about their total defeat.

Vers. 4–12. Joash's Elevation to the Throne. (*a*) How it was determined upon and prepared, vers. 4–8. (Jehoiada took the initiative in it, for it was his right and duty. It was no rebellion and conspiracy against a just authority, but a fact by itself. Rebels violate law and right in order that they may rule; Jehoiada restored law and right, and did not wish to rule; he remained what he was. He conducted himself with courage, but also with wisdom and prudence. See *Historical*, § 3). (*b*) How it was carried out and accomplished, vers. 9–12. (With the participation and approval of the different classes of the entire people, without conspiracy, bloodshed, or violence; in the house of God, whose servant the king was; the crown and the law were given into his hands; he was anointed; significant symbols of his calling as king of the people of God.) —Ver. 4. Jehoiada, a faithful priest, such as is pleasing to God (1 Sam. ii. 35). It is not hard to proclaim the word of God, when the mighty and great of this world hold to it, but the faithfulness which is needed in the stewards of God's mysteries is that which will not be stayed or impaired, when the great of this world despise and persecute the word; which will sail against the wind of courtly or popular favor, and will persevere in patience (1 Cor. iv. 1, 2).—WÜRT. SUMM.: The servants of the Church in the New Testament have not the same calling as the high-priests in the Old, so that they have not to meddle with worldly affairs.—Where spiritual and worldly authority go hand in hand, where both unite for the sake of God and for His cause, there the Lord gives blessing and prosperity.—Ver. 5 *sq.* KYBURZ: Jehoiada teaches us by his example that we ought not to shun either danger or labor in a just cause, but also that we should go prudently to work.—Ver. 9 *sq.* To take weapons in hand and risk one's life for one's country, redounds to the glory and honor of any nation.—Ver. 12. The word of God says: "By me princes rule, and nobles, even all the judges of the earth" (Prov. viii. 16). Therefore kings should be crowned in the house of God. STARKE: The crown and the law of the Lord belong together. God give to Christendom princes who love His Word!

Vers. 13–16. Athaliah's Fall. (*a*) Her last appearance, vers. 13, 14. (She comes boldly and impudently into the midst of the people, blinded to their disposition towards her. Insolently relying upon her imagined majesty, she commands resistance to the movement which is in progress—a faithful type of many tyrants. Pride goes before a fall.) (*b*) Her terrible end, vers. 15, 16. (Abandoned, despised, and hated by all the people, who rejoice over her fall, she goes to meet her doom, and receives the fate which her deeds deserve. "All they that take the sword," &c. Matt. xxvi. 52. She is punished by that by which she had sinned.)—And all the people rejoiced. That was no forced joy, produced at command, but a natural and sincere joy. It is great good fortune for a people when its dynasty is preserved. It may and ought to rejoice in the house of God, when God has released it from tyranny and usurpation.—KYBURZ: Sedition! treason! is the cry of Joram, Jezebel, and Athaliah, and of all those who are themselves most to blame for it (Acts xxiv. 5).

Vers. 17–20. The Results of Athaliah's Fall. (*a*) The renewal of the covenant, ver. 17; (*b*) the destruction of the Baal-worship, vers. 18, 19; (*c*) the rest and peace of the land.—Ver. 17. The abolition and extermination of all which is bad and perverse is necessary, but it is beneficial only when the construction of what is true and good is added to it (Jer. i. 10). The reformers of the sixteenth century not only denied and protested, but at the same time they also laid the foundation, other than which none can be laid, and on this they built the Church.—The covenant which Jehoiada renewed. (*a*) The covenant of the king and the people with God. (The basis and fountain of all national prosperity. An irreligious state is a folly and an impossibility; it is no-thing.) (*b*) The covenant between king and people. (It is built upon the former. There is prosperity in a country only when the prince rules before and with God, and the people is obedient through obedience to God. Without this fundamental condition all constitutions, laws, and institutions, however good they may appear, are useless.) LANGE: No relation of subjects and rulers is sound if it has not the covenant with God as its basis on either side. —Ver. 18. "The zeal of thine house" (John ii. 17). That applies here to an entire people. (CALW. BIBEL: It is a grand national event when a people destroys its idols.) He who stands by God and His word tolerates neither gross nor refined idolatry. Where there is decided faith in the living God, the altars of the false gods fall of themselves.—The offices in the House of God. God is a God of order, therefore these offices are neces-

sary (Eph. iv. 11, 12).—Vers. 19, 20. WÜRT. SUMM.: Where there are pious and faithful rulers, the people should rejoice, should thank God for them, and pray fervently to him for their prolonged life, so that they may lead a peaceful and godly life under their government.—Ver. 20. STARKE: Governments which are founded in blood always end disastrously.

C.—*The reign of Joash (or Jehoash).*

CHAP. XI. 21–XII. 21 (2 CHRON. XXIV.).

21 SEVEN years old *was* Jehoash when he began to reign.
XII. 1 In the seventh year of Jehu, Jehoash began to reign; and forty years
2 reigned he in Jerusalem. And his mother's name *was* Zibiah of Beer-sheba. And
Jehoash did *that which was* right in the sight of the Lord all his days wherein [be-
3 cause] Jehoiada the priest instructed him. But the high places were not taken away:
4 the people still sacrificed and burnt incense in the high places. And Jehoash said
to the priests, All the [consecrated] money [*omit* of the dedicated things] that is
[wont to be] brought into the house of the Lord, *even* the money of every one that
passeth *the account* [current money, *both*], the money that every man is set at, *and*
all the money that cometh into any man's heart to bring into the house of the
5 Lord, let the priests take *it* to them, every man of his acquaintance: and let them
repair the breaches of the house, wheresoever any breach [every defect which][1]
6 shall be found. But it was *so, that* in the three and twentieth year of king Je-
7 hoash the priests had not repaired the breaches of the house. Then king Jehoash
called for Jehoiada the priest, and the *other* priests, and said unto them, Why
repair ye not the breaches of the house? now therefore receive no *more* money
of your acquaintance, but [save that ye] deliver it for the breaches of the house.
8 And the priests consented to receive[2] no *more* money of the people, neither to
9 repair the breaches of the house. But Jehoiada the priest took a chest,[3] and
bored a hole in the lid of it, and set it beside the altar, on the right side as one
cometh into the house of the Lord: and the priests that kept the door put
10 therein all the money *that was* brought into the house of the Lord. And it was *so*,
when they saw that *there was* much money in the chest, that the king's scribe and
the high priest came up, and they put [it] up in bags, and told the money that
11 was found in the house of the Lord. And they gave the money, being told,
into the hands of them that did the work, that had the oversight of the house
of the Lord: and they laid it out to the carpenters and builders, that wrought
12 upon the house of the Lord, and to masons, and hewers of stone, and to buy tim-
ber and hewed stone to repair the breaches of the house of the Lord, and for all
13 that was laid out for the house to repair[4] it. Howbeit there were not made for
the house of the Lord bowls of silver, snuffers, basins [for sprinkling], trumpets,
any vessels of gold, or vessels of silver, of the money *that was* brought into the
14 house of the Lord: but they gave that to the workmen [commissioners], and
15 repaired therewith the house of the Lord. Moreover they reckoned not with
the men, into whose hand they delivered the money to be bestowed on work-
16 men: for they dealt faithfully. The trespass-money and sin-money was not
brought into the house of the Lord: it was the priests'.
17 Then Hazael king of Syria went up, and fought against Gath, and took it:
18 and Hazael set his face to go up to Jerusalem. And Jehoash king of Judah
took all the hallowed things that Jehoshaphat, and Jehoram, and Ahaziah, his
fathers, kings of Judah, had dedicated, and his own hallowed things, and all the
gold that was found in the treasures of the house of the Lord, and in the king's
house, and sent *it* to Hazael king of Syria: and he went away from Jerusalem.

19 And the rest of the acts of Joash, and all that he did, *are* they not written
20 in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Judah? And his servants arose,
and made a conspiracy, and slew Joash in the house of Millo, which goeth down
21 to Silla. For Jozachar the son of Shimeath, and Jehozabad the son of Shomer,
his servants, smote him, and he died; and they buried him with his fathers in
the city of David: and Amaziah his son reigned in his stead.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

[1] Ver. 5 (6 of the Hebrew text).—[בֶּדֶק at the end is a predicate defining אשׁר, *all which shall be found* . . *defective*, *i. e.*, all the defective places which shall be found. *Cf.* chap. viii. 12.

[2] Ver. 8 (9).—[קַחַת for קחת, the fem. inf. shortened before makkeph. *Cf.* Ewald, § 218, a.

[3] Ver. 9 (10).—[אֲרוֹן אֶחָד—אחד is commonly adjective, but is sometimes used as a dependent substantive, as here. Ew. § 286, d.

[4] Ver. 12 (13).—[חָזְקָה, fem. abstract subst. In verbs which denote a state we find that the infin. is often supplanted by the subst. which expresses the abstract of the verbal idea. "For repairs" = *to repair*, with which, however, the object must be supplied (Böttcher, § 277, 3).—W. G. S.]

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

Ver. 21. **Jehoash was seven years old, &c.** The parallel record in 2 Chron. xxiv. is indeed more detailed than the one before us, and supplements it in some essential particulars, but it is not by any means an "actual transmutation" of it (Bertheau). Both accounts may well have been drawn from the same original document, since they are word for word the same in some parts.—The name of the mother of Jehoash is given, as is usual in regard to the kings of Judah throughout the history. On Beersheba see note on 1 Kings xix. 3.—The words in ver. 2: **All his days that Jehoiada the priest instructed him,** cannot have the sense that Jehoash did, his whole life long, that which was right in the sight of God (Thenius, Ewald), for this was not true in view of what is related in 2 Chron. xxiv. 17–25, which is confirmed by Matt. xxiii. 35, and which Thenius himself admits must have "historical foundation." The Chronicler writes: "All the days of Jehoiada the priest," *i. e.*, so long as Jehoiada lived. The sense is, therefore, that Jehoash did what was right because, and so long as, Jehoiada was his instructor. Hence the Sept. translate; πάσας τὰς ἡμέρας, ἃς ἐφώτιζεν αὐτὸν Ἰωαδὲ ὁ ἱερεύς; and the Vulgate: *cunctis diebus, quibus docuit eum Jojada sacerdos;* so also De Wette and Luther [and the E. V.]. Keil: "All his days that, *i. e.*, all that part of his life in which Jehoiada instructed or guided him." For the use of אשׁר he refers to Ew. § 331, c, 3. [The suffix is repeated after אשׁר except in general expressions of time, place, and manner.] For the suffix in ימיו he refers to chap. xiii. 14. The athnach cannot be held to be decisive in this case. For the rest, it does not follow, when we translate: "All his days, because Jehoiada instructed him," that he continued to do well even after Jehoiada's death. Grotius remarks on the statement: "*Sic bonus Nero, quamdiu Seneca usus est magistro.* [If the suffix in ימיו is retained, then the massoretic punctuation is correct; the athnach has its ordinary force; אשׁר must be translated "because;" and the sense is that he was a good king all his life long, because of the good instruction which he received in his youth from Jehoiada. That is the simple grammatical statement of the book of Kings. If the ו at the end of ימיו can be sacrificed, then the athnach must be removed and Jehoiada is a genitive depending on ימי. Let it be observed that this suffix is neglected in the versions of the Chron., Sept., and Vulg., quoted above. The sense then is that he was good as long as Jehoiada lived. This last has in its favor that it is consistent with the account in Chron. Bähr translates by "because," preserving the suffix in ימיו, and tries to interpret the other meaning into this translation. The words: "He did well all his days, because Jehoiada was his instructor," would never suggest that he ceased to do well after his teacher died. This attempt is fruitless, and we must make choice between the alternatives presented above—either to sacrifice the suffix in ימיו, and bring the account here into consistency with that in Chron., or to hold to the text and admit the discrepancy. It is a proceeding which a sound criticism cannot approve, to alter the text in the interest of supposed reconciliations. The rendering of the E. V. saves the suffix, and still produces the other sense by translating אשׁר, "wherein," but this is entirely contrary to the usage of the language. It would require a prep. and suffix after אשׁר, referring back to ימיו.—W. G. S.] On sacrifices on the high places, see note on 1 Kings iii. 2.

Ver. 4. **And Jehoash said to the priests, &c.** The temple had fallen out of repair, not so much on account of its age (it had only been standing for 130 years) as because it had not been properly preserved under the previous reigns, nay, even had been injured by Athaliah and her sons, and the money intended to keep it in repair had been misappropriated to the worship of Baal (2 Chron. xxiv. 7). The king therefore called upon the priests, whose calling it was, to take measures for the restoration and repair of the building, and, to this end, to collect the same tax which Moses had once laid for the purpose of building the tabernacle (2 Chron. xxiv. 6). כָּל כֶּסֶף הַקֳּדָשִׁים וגו, *i. e.*, all the silver which was wont to be brought into the sanctuary, and to be given for its purposes. This is now de-

fined more particularly by the following words, כֶּסֶף עֹבֵר, *i. e.*, not "floating money," irregular income, money from mere accidental gifts (Ewald), but current money (Luther: *das gang und gebe ist. Cf.* Gen. xxiii. 16, where the expression cannot be taken in any other way). It does not mean *coined* money, for the Hebrews had no coined money before the exile, so far as we know, but pieces of silver which had a fixed weight, and which were weighed out from man to man in the transaction of business. The reason why this kind of money was called for was, that "it was to be paid out at once to mechanics for their labor" (Thenius). Keil, following the rabbis, insists upon the translation: "money of the numbered," referring back to Ex. xxx. 13 *sq.* (כָּל־הָעֹבֵר עַל־הַפְּקֻדִים); but against this translation there is the decisive consideration that it does not say: "money of him who passeth among the numbered," but simply: "money which passes over," that is, which passes from hand to hand in the transaction of affairs. The special cases are then mentioned in which this kind of money usually came into the treasury. The first is the one mentioned and ordained Lev. xxvii. 2 *sq.* (*cf.* Numb. xviii. 15), when any one fulfilled a vow. In this case, the priest had to fix the sum to be paid according to the sex, age, &c., of the one who had made the vow. This ransom was appropriated in the time of Moses to the support of the sanctuary. The second case was where any one brought money as a gift to the sanctuary of his own free will.—According to the account in 2 Chron., the king ordered the priests to go out through the cities of Judah, and to collect the tax year by year. This does not contradict the statement before us, but rather serves to explain the words in ver. 5: "every man of his acquaintance." The dependence was upon free-will offerings, as was the case in reference to the tabernacle (Ex. xxxv. 21); the priests and levites were to exert themselves to collect these, each one in his own city and in his own circle. It is to be observed that the king did not demand of the priests that they should give up, for the repairs of the temple, any income which properly came to themselves, but that he only laid claim, for this purpose, to the funds which Moses had ordained should be used in this way.

Ver. 6. **But it was so, that in the three and twentieth year,** &c. According to 2 Chron. xxiv. 5, the king had commanded the priests to hasten, "but they did not hasten." Even in the 23d year of the reign of Jehoash, *i. e.*, in the year in which there was a change of occupant of the throne of Israel (chap. xiii. 1), the priests had not yet attended to the repairs of the temple, or, at best, had only attended to them very imperfectly. We cannot tell how long before his 23d year he had commanded them to see to it, but it was certainly not in his first year, when he was only seven years old. He now proposes that he will take the matter into his own hands, and adopt other measures for accomplishing it, to which they agree. This interpretation is enforced by וַיֵּאֹתוּ, ver. 8: "they consented" (Sept., *συνεφώνησαν*, *cf.* Gen. xxxiv. 15, 22, 23), which cannot possibly mean: "They were obliged to yield to the determination of the king" (Thenius). תִּקְחוּ and the following words, ver. 7, "It was placed בְּשַׁעַר of the House of the Lord, do not contain a strict command, but rather a proposal: *nolite ergo amplius accipere* (Vulg.), otherwise the corresponding statement would be that they "obeyed," not that they "consented." Only after the king had taken the matter into his own hands did he give orders (2 Chron. xxiv. 8) to make a chest, &c. [The commentators differ widely in their judgment of the conduct of the priests in this matter, some seizing eagerly upon an incident which reflects discreditably upon them, others insisting upon a construction which shall exonerate them entirely. Bähr does not take up the point distinctly in this place. Yet ver. 8 is very obscure, and it is important for its elucidation to understand the attitude of the priests. The disposition of the priests is the key to the situation, and the correct conception of that point is the key to the correct exegesis of the verse. The impression is unavoidable that the first effort failed *because* it was in the hands of the *priests*. The payments in liquidation of vows were appropriated to the support of the worship. According to the Chronicler an especial demand was made for free-will offerings for the repairs, and "that which it came into the heart of any man to give" must be understood of offerings for this special end. Otherwise we might think that it referred simply to pious gifts, which the priests were wont to retain for themselves, and which the giver expected that they would retain. If we adopt the statement of the Chronicler, then, it is clear that the priests could not have used the money for themselves without embezzlement. In any case the re-appropriation to the repairs of the temple of sums which they had probably been using for some time (especially during the prevalence of idolatry) for their own support, must have curtailed their resources. That they gave them up willingly, is not to be supposed. Sums thus appropriated, but left in the administration of persons all whose interests were opposed to this use, would not probably be found to suffice for an energetic prosecution of the work. This would also check the zeal, and stop the offerings, of the people. The systematic revenue of the priests under the Mosaic constitution had been broken up during the time of apostasy; they had been obliged to make use of all the revenues of whatever kind for their own support; and the incident does not seem, when viewed fairly, to prove any extraordinary selfishness on their part. The king now, seeing that the measures he had taken to accomplish his object had only served to frustrate it, ordered them not to receive any more money for themselves, but to devote all they received to this object. Between vers. 7 and 8 a discussion must be understood in which the priests explained the defects in the practical workings of this scheme, and the result was an agreement that they should neither serve as collectors of the money nor be responsible for the repairs. They put the whole matter out of their hands. (See *Histor.* § 3.)—W. G. S.]

Ver. 9. **But Jehoiada the priest took a chest,** &c. The king did not even now exclude the priests from all share in the work, but took his measures in conjunction with the chief-priest, and also appointed "the priests that kept the door" to receive the money. The chest had a hole in its lid, into which the money was dropped. It was locked, and was only opened when it was full. Its position was by the side of the altar, on the right as one entered the temple. Instead of this we read in Chronicles:

חוּצָה, *i. e.*, "outside." It did not, therefore, stand in the middle of the priests' court (Thenius), but outside of it, at the entrance-gate which was on its right. According to 2 Chron. xxiv. 9 and 10, the king caused this arrangement to be proclaimed throughout the whole country; it was joyfully heard, and the people now gave abundantly. [The most reasonable explanation of this is, that, under the new arrangement, a man saw his gift placed in the chest. He knew that this was inaccessible to all except the appointed officers, and that his gift was, therefore, sure to be applied to the object for which he gave it. The share of the priests was reduced to the mechanical duty of receiving the money and placing it in the chest.—W. G. S.] When the chest was full, the priest sent his scribe, *i. e.*, a civil secretary, and, in his presence, the chest was opened. This "was done, not out of distrust of the priests, but because the repairs were a matter of state interest, and not merely an affair of the priests. The temple was the chief sanctuary of the nation, of the theocracy, and it was under the supervision of the king" (Lisco). The money was bound up in bags and counted (*cf.* 2 Kings v. 23). (The Chronicler has וַיְעָרוּ for וַיָּצֻרוּ, *i. e.*, they emptied out. So the Vulg. also on the verse before us: *effundebantque et numerabant pecuniam.*) "The binding up in bags is mentioned before the counting because the pieces were not counted separately. They were bound up in bags and these were weighed in order thus to estimate the sum which had been received" (Keil).—**Them . . . that had the oversight of the House of the Lord,** to whom the money was given (ver. 11), are those who had to oversee the building. According to 2 Chron. xxxiv. 12, they were levites. The keri המפקדים is supported by 2 Kings xxii. v. The sense remains the same. These overseers then paid the wages to the artisans of different kinds, and purchased the necessary building materials.—The statement in vers. 13 and 14 does not contradict 2 Chron. xxiv. 14. It is there stated that, when the building was finished, and still some money remained, this was placed at the disposition of the king and the high-priest, who used it to procure gold and silver utensils. On these utensils, see 1 Kings vii. 50.—No accounts were demanded of the overseers of the building, we are told in ver. 15, because they were implicitly trusted. 2 Kings xxii. 7 shows that there is no reference here to a presumed infidelity of the priests, for the same words are used there, where the priests had not had anything at all to do with the work. It is only intended to call attention to the conscientiousness with which this work was taken in hand, inasmuch as the most trustworthy men were charged with it. The remark in ver. 16 has a similar object, viz., to show that the priests did not suffer on account of the new arrangement, but that the revenues which properly belonged to them, those from the trespass-offerings and the sin-offerings, were still given to them. On the trespass-offerings, see Numb. v. 8 *sq.*, and Levit. v. 16. According to the law, the priest received no money from the sin-offering. We must, therefore, suppose that it had become customary to give them a voluntary gift of money besides the flesh of the sacrifice (Levit. vi. 24).

Ver. 17. **Then Hazael, king of Syria, went up, &c.** This expedition belongs to the time when Jehoiada was already dead, and Jehoash had fallen into sin, as is clear from 2 Chron. xxiv. 15–22. As Gath, one of the five cities of the Philistines (Josh. xiii. 3), lay much farther south than Samaria, and was almost due west of Jerusalem towards the sea-coast, this expedition against it forces us to assume that Israel had been already conquered by Hazael (chap. xiii. 3). We must leave undecided whether Gath at that time belonged to Judah, or had fallen again into the possession of the Philistines. As Jerusalem was not far off, the conqueror was led to attack it next, but he was induced, by the surrender of the treasures, to withdraw. It is certain that 2 Chron. xxiv. 23 *sq.* does not refer to another, earlier expedition, as Thenius asserts. That account does not contradict the one before us; on the contrary it supplements it "most fittingly, for it is very improbable *à priori* that Jehoash purchased peace by this heavy sacrifice, until after he had suffered the shameful defeat of which the Chronicler gives an account. Moreover, the fact that the Syrians withdrew without prosecuting their victory farther is explained by this peace thus purchased" (Bertheau).

Ver. 18. **And Jehoash . . . . . took all the hallowed things,** &c. Clericus answers the question why, if there was such a store of these valuable articles, they were not used for the repairs, instead of collecting taxes and offerings, as follows: *Credibile est, res consecratas, quarum hic fit mentio, vasa fuisse sacra, quae vendere aut in monetam constare et cudere nolebant, ut servarentur in extremae necessitatis casus, qualis hic erat, ubi Jerosolymæ et totius regni agebatur.* In regard to the implied statement that offerings had been dedicated by Jehoram and Ahaziah, who walked in the way of the house of Ahab (chap. viii. 18, 27), let it be observed that these kings did not formally abolish the worship of Jehovah, but only introduced the worship of Baal by the side of it, and, in order not to come into an open conflict with the people and the influential priesthood, they even made offerings to the temple of Jehovah. The utensils which, according to 2 Chron. xxiv. 7, Athaliah and her sons had taken from the temple, and misappropriated to the service of Baal, "had no doubt been restored to their original purpose before the occasion mentioned in chap. xi. 18" (Thenius).

Ver. 20. **And his servants arose,** &c. The Chronicler here gives a very essential addition to the narrative. He states in detail the reasons for the conspiracy, and the occasion of it. The conspirators murdered the king in his bed, where he was confined by wounds, probably by those received in the war with the Syrians.—בֵּית מִלֹּא Thenius translates: "In the castle-palace." Millo was a castle or tower, it is true (see above, note on 1 Kings ix. 15; *cf.* 2 Sam. v. 9), but בֵּית can hardly refer to a particular building inside this castle. If it did, we should need to have הַמִּלֹּא, with the article, as in the other places. As a complete fortress in itself, Millo might be called בֵּית. The more definite description הַיֹּרֵד סִלָּא is itself obscure. No one of the explanations proposed deserves decided preference to the others. All the old versions take סִלָּא as a proper name,

and this certainly seems more correct than to consider it identical with מְסִלָּה, a *street*, as Grotius and Thenius do, or with סֻלָּם, *slope* or *ascent*, as Ewald does.—In ver. 21, instead of: "Jozachar, the son of Shimeath, and Jehozabad, the son of Shomer," the Chronicler has: "Zabad, the son of Shimeath, an Ammonitess, and Jehozabad, the son of Shimrith, a Moabitess." We must give the preference to this latter statement as the more complete, for the designation of the two mothers instead of the two fathers, as an Ammonitess and a Moabitess, cannot be an invention of the Chronicler, but is taken from the original document. Perhaps it is stated to show that the murderers were not of Jewish descent, but came from foreign mothers. "זָבָד is a mistake for זָכָר, and this is a shorter form for יוֹזָכָר" (Keil), and שֹׁמֵר may have arisen from the defective form שִׁמְרִת by dropping the ת. ["Although the names (as given in Kings) are certainly historical, yet it is very remarkable that the etymology of them, *Jehovah-remembers*, son of *Hearing*, and *Jehovah-awards*, son of *Watcher*, suggests the last words of Zechariah: 'Jehovah sees it and will requite it'" (Thenius).] The further statement of the Chronicler: "and they buried him in the city of David, but they buried him not in the sepulchres of the kings," does not contradict this record. "He was buried in the city of David, where his fathers were buried, but not in the sepulchres of the kings" (Bertheau), probably on account of the action mentioned in 2 Chron. xxiv. 17 *sq.*

HISTORICAL AND ETHICAL.

1. The author chooses out of the history of *the forty years' reign of Jehoash* the restoration of the temple, of which he speaks particularly, and passes over the other incidents which the Chronicler narrates. He would hardly have done this if he had seen in this restoration nothing more than a matter of ordinary business routine, a necessity which had arisen in the course of time. The temple, as the dwelling of Jehovah in the midst of His people, is the visible sign and pledge of the covenant (see *note* on the *Temple* after the *Exeg.* section on 1 Kings vi.). The covenant of Jehovah was solemnly restored and renewed at the elevation of the rescued scion of the house of David to the throne, and the temple, the sign and pledge of this covenant, which had become dilapidated, and had been plundered, under Jehoram, Ahaziah, and Athaliah, could not be left in that condition. On the contrary, it must be the chief task of the new king of the dynasty of David, who had sworn to the covenant on his accession, to restore the temple during his reign. As David was the founder, and Solomon the builder, of the House of Jehovah, so Jehoash, with whom the House of David recommenced, as it were, was the restorer of the sanctuary. We have here, therefore, a theocratic action, a physical confession of faith, and a seal upon the renewal and restoration of the covenant. This is why it is so especially mentioned as the most important incident in the reign of Jehoash. The reason why Jehoash, when he undertook the restoration of the temple, unquestionably at the instigation of Jehoiada, did not carry out the work at the expense of the royal treasury, but called upon the whole people to contribute, as Moses had once done for the tabernacle (Exod. xxv. 2–9), was not that "the crown was not then by any means able, as it had been in Solomon's time, to carry out such works by itself" (Ewald), but rather, in order that the entire people might give a physical proof that it had renewed the covenant with Jehovah (chap. xi. 17).

2. *King Jehoash* was not by any means a ruler who was distinguished for intellect and strength. Lack of independence, and moral weakness, were the most noticeable features of his character. He had in Jehoiada the support which he needed. After the death of this counsellor and guide, he became, although he was already advanced in life, vacillating, and fell into evil courses. It was a great weakness on the part of one who had renewed the covenant with Jehovah, and rebuilt the temple, to yield to the entreaties of the chiefs of Judah, who flattered him by their cringing submissiveness, and to allow them (2 Chron. xxiv. 17 *sq.*) the forbidden, lascivious worship of Astarte (see *Exeg.* on 1 Kings xi. 5). It was something more than weakness that he caused Zechariah, the son of his former counsellor, to be stoned, when he condemned this mistaken course, and predicted calamity (2 Chron. xxiv. 20 *sq.*). No less weak was his conduct in his dealings with Hazael. Instead of making a vigorous opposition to him, trusting in God, as Hezekiah did (chap. xix.), he surrendered to him, although he had only a small force, all the consecrated offerings which his ancestors had made to the temple, and all those which he himself had dedicated up to this point in his reign, in order to induce him to withdraw (ver. 18 *sq.*; 2 Chron. xxiv. 24). [Observe, however, the *Exegetical* note on ver. 17, quotation from Bertheau, at the end.—W. G. S.] It is very possible that he had embittered the people against him by all this, and thus given occasion for the conspiracy, as a result of which he fell. "He was the first king of Judah who came to a violent end at the hands of his own subjects, and the discontent was so great that he was not even buried in the royal sepulchres. Such was the disgraceful end of one whose childhood was marked by such wonderful providences" (Schlier). He shows us, by his example, whither weakness in a prince may lead. It is not only a something wanting, but it is the weightiest sin. Ewald contradicts himself when he says, basing the statement upon כָּל־יָמָיו, ver. 2: "He adopted the principles of his teacher with such docility that he remained true to them even after he came of age," and then says again, a few pages further on: "Heathenism may indeed have gained a footing again under his weak rule." This view also contradicts the statement in 2 Chron. xxiv. 22, whose historical truth is admitted. Thenius also forces the words כָּל־יָמָיו in such a way that he calls Jehoash a "praiseworthy king," and speaks of his "good reign," and of his "continuous good conduct." In regard to the narrative of the Chronicler, which is inconsistent with this view, he remarks, giving it a strained and unnatural construction: "Probably this command (to stone Zechariah) was given by Jehoash in a moment of rage,

and was forced from him, as it were, by Zechariah's enemies." But, even if we let this pass, the "purchase of a peace from Hazael by a shameful surrender" was not the act of a "praiseworthy king;" and the murder of Jehoash was not a "mere act of revenge." The pains which are taken to present this king in any other light than that in which he appears in these two biblical records, are all spent in vain. The opinion that "Psalm li. contains a prayer of Jehoash in deep penitence for his error" (Thenius), must be regarded as very mistaken. Neither can it be inferred from these historical records, as it is by Vaihinger (in Herzog, *Real-encyc.*, vi. *s.* 717), that the prophet Joel belongs to the time of this king, and that his prophecies apply to the events of this reign.

3. In regard *to the conduct of the priests* in reference to the restoration of the temple which the king had commanded, the opinions are very divergent. The assertion of J. D. Michaelis and De Wette, that the priests had embezzled the funds collected for this object, is to be summarily dismissed. Thenius goes still further, and says: "They (the priests) did nothing towards carrying out the project, because the royal command appropriated a part, probably no insignificant part, of the revenues of the priests, in the intention of diminishing their arrogance. . . . The priesthood may have fallen greatly in a moral point of view since Athaliah's influence had brought the Jehovah-religion into neglect, and their attention may have been exclusively directed to their own selfish interest. . . . Probably the priests had kept the free-will offerings, which were intended for the repairs of the temple, entirely for their own use, contrary to law." But the text does not say that the king intended to restrict the revenues of the priests; on the contrary, it is expressly stated (ver. 16) that this was not done. Neither is there any hint of any moral decay in the priesthood. [The idea that the priests were guilty of any arrogance which needed curbing is certainly imported into the case. It is *à priori* very unlikely that they would be guilty of this fault on emerging from the circumstances in which they had been during the previous years. Arrogance is the sin of long and great prosperity. The *à priori* probability that the priesthood had suffered in *morale* during the prevalence of idolatry is great, also that their revenues had been greatly impaired.—W. G. S.] The king would never have commissioned them to undertake the management of this work, if they had had the reputation of being dishonest in money matters. Still less, if unfaithfulness and cheating on their part had been the cause that the contributions did not flow in in sufficient abundance, would he have "asked these priests for their consent (ver. 8) to the change of his first arrangements, and to the new measures which he proposed. Moreover, he would not have charged the priests who guarded the door to receive the money and put it in the chest, which arrangement still left them an opportunity for dishonesty" (Keil). [The circumstantial description of the box, its arrangement and position, show that it was intended to free the priests from any suspicion, just or not, which attached to them. If the suspicion was unjust, they were most interested in a public arrangement for the reception of these contributions which should free them from it. It is enough to suppose that, when all the money, that intended for themselves and that intended for the repairs, came into their hands, the distribution of it according to the intentions of the givers may have been uncertain and imperfect. At any rate, the givers could not be certain that their money would reach its destined object. Any such popular distrust would, according to all experience, speedily reduce the contributions to a very languid flow. The chest-arrangement now accomplished two objects. It permitted the giver to divide his offering for the temple from the offering for the priests, and to see for himself that it was at once put where it could not be applied otherwise than as he intended. The true force of ver. 16 is that, at this time, the revenues of the temple were divided and definitely appropriated, and that the sorts of revenue there mentioned were specifically set apart for the support of the priests. When the priests' share in the transaction was limited to the reception of the money and its immediate deposition in a receptacle, which is expressly declared to have been in the most public place in the temple enclosure, it was impossible to suspect them any longer of dishonesty, unless they were most accomplished rogues. There is no express mention of any dishonesty in the record, but this arrangement with the chest has unquestionably suggested a suspicion which has always been felt by readers of the passage. See also bracketed note under *Exegetical* on ver. 8.—W. G. S.] On the other hand, the reason for the new scheme was not "simply this, that the first plan had proved inadequate for the purpose," because the king "had not appropriated any definite sum for the repairs of the temple, but had left it to the priests to pay for the repairs out of the gross sum received" (Keil). The text itself gives the true reason in clear and definite words (2 Chron. xxiv. 5): "The levites hastened it not," as the king had commanded them. [If this were the only reason, the pertinency of the arrangement with the chest would not be apparent.—W. G. S.] The reason was not, therefore, dishonesty and embezzlement on the part of the priests and levites, but their lack of zeal, their indifference and neglect in an affair in which they, as servants of the sanctuary, ought to have been most interested. It is as impossible to acquit them of all blame as it is to convict them of dishonesty. When a chest was placed in the temple for the sole purpose of receiving the offerings for this purpose, and when particular officers were designated to take charge of the fund, there was an end of the languid activity of the priests and levites in the collection of the contributions. Each one who came to the temple brought his gift cheerfully, as is distinctly stated in 2 Chron. xxiv. 10. De Wette's assertion that the Chronicler "smoothed over" the matter, out of his well-known affection for the priesthood, is entirely arbitrary, for the record does not contain a syllable about unfaithfulness; it states, on the contrary, that it was the priests who received the money and placed it in the chest, under the second plan.

[From the note on ver. 8 and the inserted remarks in the above section, it will be seen that this delineation of the "conduct of the priests" in this matter is not satisfactory. If we look at the record without unfair partisan feeling either against or in behalf of the priests, we cannot avoid the conviction that their fault was not lim-

ited to a want of zeal in the collection of funds, but that it was connected with their administration of the money. In ver. 4 the king charged them to take certain moneys and use them for the repairs of the temple. He addressed them because they were the proper parties to be commissioned to do this work. It was not until they proved incompetent, in some way or other, that it was taken out of their hands, or that they gave it up. The revenues which are specified in ver. 4 are, 1, that at which "every man is set," which is to us very obscure, but is probably correctly explained in the *Exegetical* note on the verse; and 2, free-will offerings which the priests were to solicit of their acquaintances. In the king's twenty-third year the work had not been done. There was fault somewhere. In ver. 7 the king's address distinctly implies that the work had not been done because *the money* which had been received from the "acquaintances" of the priests had not been appropriated to this purpose. Various reasons for this are suggested in the translator's note on ver. 7, which are sufficient without assuming that the priests had dishonestly taken for themselves what had been intended for another use. It is very probable that the revenues had never been distinguished in a manner sufficiently definite, or that, if they had formerly been definitely distinguished and appropriated, they had been used indiscriminately for the support of the priests, during the troubles of the last two reigns, and had not all together more than sufficed for this purpose. Ver. 16 implies that the various revenues were now definitely appropriated, and one of the advantages of the chest-plan was that it served to distinguish them. The reply of the priests to this reproach and command (ver. 7) is not given, but they consented to yield up the entire work and the entire responsibility. This gap between vers. 7 and 8 is the place at which the various inventions, more or less derogatory to the priests, find entrance. It is as fair as any supposition which can be made, and accords as well with ver. 8, to suppose that they denied the imputation, pointed out the difficulty in distinguishing the revenues intended for the temple from those intended for the priests, and surrendered the responsibility both for the money and for the work. The plan then adopted, which put this money by itself, and out of the control of the priests, proves conclusively that the work had not been accomplished because the money intended for it passed through their hands. Their administration of it had been defective, to say the least; it is not necessary to conclude that it had been intentionally dishonest.—W. G. S.]

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

(2 Chron. xxiv. is to be compared throughout as a supplementary record.) Vers. 1–21. The Reign of King Jehoash. (*a*) During Jehoiada's life-time, vers. 1–16; (*b*) after his death, vers. 17–21.—Vers. 1–4. KYBURZ: Woe to thee, O land, when thy king is a child! (Eccl. x. 16) but blessed is the nation, the youth of whose prince is in just and holy guidance. Such good fortune had Judah under the guardian care of the wise and experienced Jehoiada.—That which appears to be the greatest misfortune for a child, to be left fatherless and motherless at an early age, often becomes a great blessing in the gracious Providence of God. What would have become of Jehoash if he had been brought up at the court of his idolatrous father and his depraved mother? God gave him in Jehoiada far more than he had lost in his father and his mother.—There is no greater blessing possible for a young prince, who comes to the throne in his youth, than to have a wise counsellor. Would that God might give to every prince a Jehoiada! The first duty of a prince is to pray God for such an one, and to listen to his counsel.—None need instruction more than those who are called to govern; there is no more responsible calling than that of instructing those who will have to rule. Unfortunately this task is rarely entrusted to those who, like Jehoiada, are fitted for it by age, learning, experience, and piety. WÜRT. SUMM.: We ought to pray to God for wise counsellors, to thank Him for them, to pray for long life for them, and to regard it as a heavy divine punishment when He takes them away (Jer. iii. 4).—Ver. 3. THE SAME: Rulers ought not to allow themselves to be restrained from carrying out what is good and right from any fear of persons, lest they may possibly incur the disfavor of the people. There never was a prince who was not himself guilty of faults and errors, as we see here from the example of Jehoash, who did not abolish the sacrifices on the high places.

Vers. 4–16. The Restoration of the Sanctuary. (*a*) The king's command to undertake it; (*b*) the conduct of the priests in the matter (see *Historical*, § 3). It is true that God does not dwell in temples made with hands (1 Kings viii. 27; Acts vii. 48); we can worship Him as well in a ruin as in the most magnificent church. But when the building, in which a congregation assembles to worship God, to hear His word, and to receive the means of grace, is left ruinous, God does not receive the honor which belongs to Him. Where the churches fall to ruins, there religion and piety also fall into decay; but where there is love of God and joy in His word, there no ruinous churches are seen. A time in which magnificent palaces, theatres, and ball-rooms are repaired or built at great expense, but in which the houses of God are left small, wretched, dirty, and ruinous, is a time of religious decay, and resembles the time of Athaliah in Judah.—The apostle says of the Christian church: "For ye are the temple of the living God" (2 Cor. vi. 16). This temple also may in time become ruinous through unbelief, worldly life and behavior, and immorality. Where are the congregations in which there is nothing ruinous or decayed, in which nothing could be improved? How many are in ruins and are ready to fall! He who destroys the temple of God, or allows it to be destroyed, him will God destroy (1 Cor. iii. 17). We cannot indeed repair these breaches by money. They can only be repaired by coming to the living stone, which is rejected of men, but which is chosen of God (1 Peter ii. 4–6).—Vers. 4 and 5. The congregation ought to be called upon to contribute to religious objects, which can only be accomplished by expending money. How long a time often elapses before means enough are collected even for the most necessary objects, not to mention that many give unwillingly (2 Cor. ix. 7).—Vers. 6–8. Works which are pleasing to God cannot be accomplished by careless hands. They are only accomplished

where zeal is united with perseverance, patience, and fidelity.—There have always been such careless, indifferent priests and pastors, and there are such yet. They execute their traditional, official duties, but only by routine, and from a sense of duty, not with zeal and enthusiasm. No zeal for the kingdom of God (John ii. 17) and for the salvation of souls can be noticed in them. How many a congregation has fallen into decay and remained so, because those who were appointed to be the builders of it, who ought to have repaired and built it, have not raised their negligent hands (Hebr. xii. 12). "Cursed be he that doeth the work of the Lord deceitfully" (Jerem. xlviii. 10). Although no earthly king may ever call them to account, yet the heavenly king, before whose judgment-seat they must appear to give an account of their office, will ask: "Why repair ye not the breaches of the house?"—Ver. 10 *sq.* WÜRT SUMM.: In former times, under the papacy, the church authorities excluded all secular persons from the affairs which belonged to the clergy: under the gospel, in some places, secular persons aim to exclude the clergy from all participation in church affairs, and claim to rule alone; so the matter is always wrongly treated, and men go from one mistake to another; this should not be so.—Public account should be rendered of all moneys and gifts which are collected for religious or benevolent purposes, in order that it may be known that they are applied as was designed, and that the giver may be encouraged to further liberality.—Vers. 11 and 12. The laborer is worthy of his hire. Wages ought to be given punctually to diligent and faithful workmen (Jer. xxii. 13; Levit. xix. 13).—Vers. 13 and 14. What is necessary and useful is always to be preferred to what is beautiful; only when the former is provided may the latter be thought of. How often the contrary course is pursued.—Ver. 15. What a proud thing it is for builders and workmen when they can be trusted, and it is not necessary to oversee them. When work is carried on honestly and faithfully, then God's blessing follows.—Ver. 16. STARKE: To every one his own, to God what is God's, to the priests what is theirs (Sir. vii. 32; 1 Cor. ix. 11).—Let not anything which justly belongs to any one be taken from him.

Vers. 17-21. The Fall of King Jehoash and its Consequences. (*a*) As long as Jehoiada lived, Jehoash did what was right: when he had lost this support he fell (2 Chron. xxiv. 15-22). "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall" (1 Cor. x. 12). "It is a good thing that the heart be established with grace" (Hebr. xiii. 9). How many have begun in the spirit and ended in the flesh (Gal. iii. 3). The best instruction cannot preserve against a fall, if the heart is not firm and strong. Only he who endures unto the end shall be saved, therefore: "Be thou faithful," &c. (Rev. ii. 10). The noblest commencement is vain, if the end is perverse and wicked; on the contrary: "All is well that ends well." (*b*) At the time when Jehoash had sinned so grievously, one calamity after another came upon him; first, the great defeat (vers. 17 and 18), by which he lost all his treasures, then, the conspiracy which cost him his life (vers. 20 and 21). So the words of the dying prophet (2 Chron. xxiv. 22) were fulfilled: "The Lord look upon it and require it!" (2 Chron. xxiv. 22). So Jehoash was taught what calamities it brings to abandon the Lord God (Jer. ii. 19). The Lord rewards every one according to his works, whether in this or the next world. What a man soweth, that shall he also reap. Jehoash was marvellously preserved as an infant (chap. xi. 2, 3), he ends his life wretchedly.—STARKE: This is an example how near the ruin of a man is when he abandons the good to which he was educated from his youth up, nay, even is glad to be rid of those who annoy him by their warnings.—Ver. 18. A man may buy with money his acquittal from a human tribunal, but not from the just judgment of God; nothing helps here but repentance and a new life (Ezek. xviii. 26-28).—Vers. 20 and 21. All the people shouted to the child-king: "Long live the king!" and rejoiced and blew the trumpets. Conspiracy and murder were the end of his forty-years' reign. *Sic transit gloria mundi.*

SECOND SECTION.

THE MONARCHY UNDER JEHOAHAZ AND JOASH AND JEROBOAM II. IN ISRAEL, AND UNDER AMAZIAH IN JUDAH.

2 Kings XIII.—XIV.

A.—*The Reigns of Jehoahaz and Joash.*

Chap. XIII. 1–25.

1 In the three and twentieth year of Joash the son of Ahaziah king of Judah,
Jehoahaz the son of Jehu began to reign over [became king of] Israel in Sama-
2 ria, *and reigned* seventeen years. And he did *that which was* evil in the sight
of the Lord, and followed the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, which made
3 Israel to sin; he departed not therefrom. And the anger of the Lord was kin-
dled against Israel, and he delivered them into the hand of Hazael king of Syria,
and into the hand of Ben-hadad the son of Hazael, all *their* [the] days [of Jehoahaz].
4 And Jehoahaz besought[1] the Lord, [.] [(] And the Lord hearkened unto him:
for he saw the oppression of Israel, because [that] the king of Syria oppressed
5 them. ([*omit* (] And the Lord gave Israel a saviour, so that they went out
from under the hand of the Syrians: and the children of Israel dwelt in their
6 tents, as beforetime.[2] Nevertheless they departed not from the sins of the house
of Jeroboam, who made Israel sin,[3] *but* walked therein: and there remained
7 [stood] the grove [statue of Astarte] also in Samaria.) Neither did [For] he
leave [had left] of the people to Jehoahaz but fifty horsemen, and ten chariots,
and ten thousand footmen; for the king of Syria had destroyed them, and had
8 made them like the dust by threshing [beneath one's feet].[4] Now the rest of
the acts of Jehoahaz, and all that he did, and his might, *are* they not written in
9 the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Israel? And Jehoahaz slept with
his fathers; and they[5] buried him in Samaria; and Joash his son reigned in his
stead.
10 In the thirty and seventh year of Joash king of Judah began Jehoash
the son of Jehoahaz to reign over Israel in Samaria, *and reigned* sixteen years.
11 And he did *that which was* evil in the sight of the Lord; he departed not from
all the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel sin: *but* he walked
12 therein. And the rest of the acts of Joash, and all that he did, and his might [,]
wherewith [how] he fought against Amaziah king of Judah, *are* they not writ-
13 ten in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Israel? And Joash slept with
his fathers; and Jeroboam sat upon his throne: and Joash was buried in Sa-
maria with the kings of Israel.
14 Now Elisha was fallen sick of his sickness whereof he died [was to die].[6]
And Joash the king of Israel came down unto him, and wept over his face, and
said, O my father, my father! the Chariot of Israel, and the Horsemen thereof!
15 And Elisha said unto him, Take bow and arrows. And he took unto him bow
16 and arrows. And he said to the king of Israel, Put thine hand upon the bow.
And he put his hand *upon it:* and Elisha put his hands upon the king's hands.
17 And he said, Open the window eastward. And he opened *it.* Then Elisha
said, Shoot. And he shot. And he said, The [an] arrow of the Lord's [*omit* the
Lord's] deliverance [for Jehovah], and the [an] arrow of deliverance from
[against] Syria: for thou shalt smite the Syrians in Aphek, till thou have con-
sumed *them.*[7]

18 And he said, Take the arrows. And he took *them*. And he said unto the
19 king of Israel, Smite upon the ground. And he smote thrice, and stayed. And
the man of God was wroth with him, and said, Thou shouldest have smitten[8]
five or six times; then hadst thou smitten Syria till thou hadst consumed *it:*
20 whereas now thou shalt smite Syria *but* thrice. And Elisha died, and they
buried him. And the [marauding] bands of the Moabites invaded the land at
21 the coming in [commencement] of the year. And it came to pass, as they were
burying a man, that, behold, they spied a band *of men* [marauders]; and they
cast the man into the sepulchre of Elisha: and when the man was let down
[came], and touched the bones of Elisha, he revived, and stood up on his feet.
22 But [Now] Hazael king of Syria [had] oppressed Israel all the days of Je-
23 hoahaz. [,] And [but] the Lord was gracious unto them, and had compassion
on them, and had respect unto [turned towards] them, because of his covenant
with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and would not destroy them, neither cast he
24 them from his presence as yet. So Hazael king of Syria died; and Ben-hadad
25 his son reigned in his stead. And Jehoash the son of Jehoahaz took again out
of the hand of Ben-hadad the son of Hazael the cities, which he had taken out
of the hand of Jehoahaz his father by [in the] war. Three times did Joash beat
him, and recovered the cities of Israel.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

[1] Ver. 4.—[חִלָּה אֶת־פְּנֵי. See 1 Kings xiii. 6.

[2] Ver. 5.—[כִּתְמוֹל שִׁלְשׁוֹם, "as yesterday and day before," *i. e.*, as before. *Cf.* Gen. xxxi. 2, 5; Ex. v. 7, 14 1 Sam. xxi. 6.

[3] Ver. 6.—[The א is omitted in the chetib on account of the א which immediately follows. *Cf.* 2 Sam. v. 2 1 Kings xxi. 21. Böttcher, §§ 414, and 1080, 1.

[4] Ver. 7.—[כֶּעָפָר לָדֻשׁ, literally "like dust to tread upon."

[5] Ver. 9.—[וַיִּקְבְּרֻהוּ,—the plural, as in English, for the passive, equivalent to the active singular with indefinite subject. (Germ. *man*, Fr. *on*). *Cf.* chap. vii. 18; 1 Kings i. 1; ix. 9; xviii. 10.

[6] Ver. 14.—[The imperfect tense in יָמוּת has its proper force of the future, and is equivalent to the perfect of the Latin periphrastic conj. in *rus*. Ewald, § 136, d.

[7] Ver. 17.—[עַד־כַּלֵּה, lit. "until consuming," gerund form, = until thou consume, finish destroying, them.

[8] Ver. 19.—[לְהַכּוֹת; the infinitive is used like the Latin participle in *dus:* "It was to be smitten," *i. e.*, thou shouldest have smitten. Ewald, § 237, c. In the conclusion we have a perfect in the sense of the pluperfect conjunctive. *Cf.* Gen. xviii. 12; 1 Sam. xiii. 13. Böttcher, § 947, d.—W. G. S.]

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

Ver. 1. **In the three and twentieth year of Joash.** This chronological statement is not consistent with the one in ver 10: "In the thirty-seventh year of Joash." For, if Jehoahaz began to reign in the twenty-third year of Joash, and reigned for seventeen years, his son Jehoash cannot have followed in the thirty-seventh, but in the thirty-ninth year of Joash of Judah. Again, if Jehoash of Israel became king in the thirty-seventh year of Joash of Judah, then his father Jehoahaz must have come to the throne in the twenty-first, and not in the twenty-third year of Joash of Judah. The old expositors sought to do away with this difficulty by assuming that Jehoash of Israel shared the throne for two years with his father Jehoahaz. This assumption, however, is untenable. both for the general reasons assigned above (Pt. II., p. 88, *e*) and because it is clearly shown in vers. 9 and 10 that Jehoash did not ascend the throne until after the death of Jehoahaz, and that he had not shared his authority before that. Only one of the two numbers, 23 and 37, can be correct, as is now generally admitted; but the question, which is correct? receives various answers. We start again, as we did above (Pt. II., p. 86), from the established chronological starting-point,* 884 B. C., when Jehu became king of Israel, and Athaliah became queen of Judah. Jehu reigned 28 years (chap. x. 36), that is, from 884 to 856; his son Jehoahaz 17 years (chap. xiii. 1), from 856–839; Jehoash, 16 years (chap. xiii. 10), 839–823. Athaliah ruled 6 years, and Joash became king in the "seventh year" (chap. xi. 3, 4), that is, 884–877; Joash, 40 years (chap. xii. 2), 877–837; Amaziah, 29 years, 837–808. It follows that the twenty-third year of Joash of Judah, in which Jehoahaz became king of Israel, according to ver. 1, was the year 854, but this cannot be correct because his father Jehu ruled

* See the *Appendix on the Chronology*. For the purpose of the calculation here made, it is immaterial whether this date is correct or not, but it is certainly wrong to call it "an established chronological starting-point."—W. G. S.

28 years, and so died in 856. This would bring Jehoahaz' accession into the twenty-first, not the twenty-third, of Joash. This is the statement of Josephus: εἰκοστῷ δὲ καὶ πρώτῳ ἔτει τῆς Ἰωάσου βασιλείας. The thirty-seventh year of Joash of Judah, in which, according to ver. 10, Jehoash of Israel became king, is the year 840; in the second year of Jehoash of Israel, that is, in the year 838, Amaziah became king of Judah (chap. xiv. 1). According to this reckoning, the death of Joash, the father of Amaziah, does indeed fall in 837, but, in view of the Jewish mode of reckoning which is explained Pt. II., p. 86 *sq.*, a discrepancy of a single year has no significance. Josephus says, in agreement with ver. 10: ἕβδομον ἤδη καὶ τριακοστὸν ἔτος βασιλεύοντος Ἰωάσου τῆς Ἰούδα φυλῆς. If, on the other hand, we hold fast the "twenty-third year" in ver. 1, and, in ver. 10, read thirty-ninth for thirty-seventh, as Ewald, Thenius, and others desire, this thirty-ninth year will be 838, Jehu will only have 26 years, not 28 (chap. x. 36), and his son Jehoahaz' reign, extending from 854 to 838, will amount to 16, not 17 years (ver. 1); moreover, if Jehoash of Israel did not ascend the throne until 838, and Amaziah became king in Judah in his second year (chap. xiv. 1), then the latter did not become king until 836, though his father did not live, at the utmost, beyond 837. If thirty-seventh is changed into thirty-ninth, then all the other numbers must be changed, and this is inadmissible. If then we let these numbers stand, we must suppose that the words: "in the twenty-third year," in ver. 1, are either a copyist's error (כג for כא), or, that it is a mistake growing out of the confusion to which the Jewish mode of reckoning gave occasion (see above, Pt. II., p. 86 *sq.*). All the versions and all the editions have "thirty-seventh" except the *Editio Aldina* of the Sept. (1518), which has "thirty-ninth." Keil justly observes that this variant is "nothing but an unfortunate emendation, adopted in order to bring about a reconciliation, but without any critical value."

Ver. 3. **And the anger of the Lord was kindled.** The sense and the connection of vers. 3–7, are as follows: In the time of Jehu, who, contrary to all just expectations, clung to the calf-worship which Jeroboam had introduced, Jehovah had already commenced to "cut off" from Israel, and had given the land east of the Jordan into the hands of the Syrians (chap. x. 32 *sq.*). Since, however, Jehoahaz, Jehu's successor, did not take warning, but, on the contrary, during his reign the worship of the image of Astarte was once more introduced (1 Kings xiv. 15), so that the abolition of idolatry which had been accomplished was rendered ineffectual, God's anger (*i. e.*, His justice, and His avenging, punishing, rigor) was kindled, so that one defeat followed upon another, until the might of Israel was reduced to a minimum. In his great distress, when he was on the brink of ruin, Jehoahaz at length turned to Jehovah, and besought Him, and the Lord, seeing the distress of His people, answered his prayer and sent a deliverer.—[That is the *sense* of the passage, but it does not account for the grammatical form and succession of the sentences. The best modern expositors agree with the English translators in making a parenthesis of vers. 5 and 6. The only question is as to where it is to begin, and it seems best, with Thenius and Bunsen, to enclose all after the first clause of ver. 4. The explanation then is as follows: Israel was defeated by the Syrians again and again during the reign of Jehoahaz. He turned in his distress to the Lord and sought him. There was no apparent response to this prayer during his lifetime, but the writer inserts a parenthesis to the effect that the prayer was nevertheless heard and answered, that God saw the distress of Israel and sent a champion for them, and yet that they persisted in their sins. The כִּי at the commencement of ver. 7 then presents no further difficulty. It refers back to the first clause of ver. 4. Jehoahaz besought the Lord, because He had left but, &c.—W. G. S.]—Ver. 3. **All the days,** *i. e.*, of Jehoahaz, not of Hazael and Benhadad, as is clear from ver. 22 [also ver. 25 shows that, as a matter of fact, the success of the Syrians did not continue through "the days" of Benhadad.—W. G. S.].—Ver. 5. **A savior,** *cf.* Judges iii. 9, 15; Nehem. ix. 27. This was Jeroboam II., the grandson of Jehoahaz, as we see clearly from וַיּוֹשִׁיעֵם, chap. xiv. 27, which has an evident reference to מוֹשִׁיעַ in this verse. He completed what had already been begun by Jehoash, the son of Jehoahaz (ver. 25). Reference is here made to him in order to show that he was sent in answer to Jehoahaz' prayer, although he came so long afterwards. The words: **they dwelt in their tents,** describe the peaceful state of things which was brought about by the deliverer; in war they did not dwell in tents, but in strongholds and fortified places.—Ver. 6 contains a restriction of what has just been said in ver. 5. The peaceful state of things, which was brought about, was not a perfectly happy and satisfactory one, for the worship of Jeroboam's calves still continued, and even the worship of Asherah (the statue of Astarte) did not cease entirely. Thenius understands עָמְדָה to mean that the worship of Asherah "very soon obtained a firm foothold" (*i. e.*, under Jeroboam II.). Ewald also thinks that it was reintroduced at about his time. But the history of Jeroboam II., chap. xiv. 23–27, contains no mention of it, and also the כִּי in ver. 7 fixes the attention upon the time of Jehoahaz, when the incidents took place which are referred to in ver. 7. [This כִּי does not refer to ver. 6 at all. No connection can be established which will make good sense. It refers back to the first clause of ver. 4, as shown above. Bähr's interpretation, however, is correct, although it is difficult to understand, as Thenius says, how the Astarte-image survived Jehu's reformation. עמדה is better translated "stood," than "gained firm foot-hold." האשרה has the article, and the form of statement of the first part of the verse is that the old apostasy of Jeroboam was still continued. If it had been intended to say that *this* old sin was continued, and that even the one which had been rooted up was *reintroduced*, it seems that some other word must have been used for עמדה which would have expressed this latter idea distinctly.—W. G. S.] Ver. 7 is a continuation of [the first clause of] ver. 4. It shows how far the "oppression" of the Syrians had gone. Dathe and Houbigant are in favor of placing it between vers. 4 and 5, but the close connection between these verses forbids this. [**For he had left.** The English translation: "Neither did he leave," cannot be defended. It is necessitated by the supposed connection between this clause and

the *last* clause of ver. 4. It also seems to understand "the king of Syria" as the subject of הִשְׁאִיר, which does not make good sense. The subject of that verb is Jehovah, and the last half of ver. 7 repeats the same statement substituting "the king of Syria" (who was the instrument by which it was accomplished), in the place of the ultimate agent. The passage may now be made clear, if we get rid of the parenthesis by putting ver. 7 between the first and second clauses of ver. 4, as follows: Jehoahaz besought the Lord, for He (the Lord) had left but, . . . for the king of Syria had destroyed them . . . and the Lord hearkened unto him, seeing the distress, and gave a deliverer, who delivered them, yet they persisted in their sins.—W. G. S.] The expression כֶּעָפָר לָדֻשׁ does not mean chaff, as Luther understands it, for עָפָר is not dust which floats in the air, but dust which lies upon the ground and is trodden under foot. The fundamental meaning of דּוּשׁ is, to tread under foot (Hab. iii. 12; Micah iv. 13). There is no reference to the barbarous usage of war referred to in Amos i. 3; 2 Sam. xii. 31. [Literally the English for the words would be: dust for treading, *i. e.*, dust which lies beneath one's feet (see *Grammatical* note on the verse). It is an expression for utter defeat and destruction. They were reduced to utter helplessness and powerlessness. Thenius thinks that it refers to a definite defeat, and Hitzig, on Amos iv. 10, suggests that the reference there may be to the same decisive defeat here alluded to.—W. G. S.]—On ver. 10 see notes on ver. 1. Jehoash's war with Amaziah, mentioned in ver. 12, is narrated at length in chap. xiv. 8 *sq.* The concluding formula, vers. 12 and 13, belongs properly after ver. 25. It is given in this place only because it followed, in one of the authorities used by the author, directly upon vers. 10 and 11, and he did not consider it necessary to dissever it from this connection.

Ver. 14. **Now Elisha was fallen sick,** &c. The narrative in vers. 14 to 21 is, without doubt, taken from a different original document from that to which the verses belong which immediately precede and follow. It is not inserted here merely because it belongs to the time of king Jehoash. The end of the great prophet of Israel, who had wrought so influentially upon its history, and whose acts had been so circumstantially narrated, could not be passed over in silence, especially since the accompanying incidents stood in such close connection with what had gone before, and with what was to follow. Jehoahaz had, according to vers. 3–7, left the kingdom very much weakened. When Jehoash heard of Elisha's illness, he went to him, and, weeping, called to him, as Elisha had once called to Elijah as he passed away (see Pt. II., p. 15, and *cf.* p. 69): **O my father, my father! the Chariot of Israel and the Horsemen thereof!** as much as to say: If now thou also, who hast so often shown thyself the strength and the protector of Israel, and hast helped by counsel and by act, if now thou also, in this time of distress, art about to depart, whence shall come help, and counsel, and deliverance from the hand of the powerful enemy? This humble and chastened spirit on his part leads the prophet to give him the declaration that the prayer of his father (ver. 4) had been heard, and that the deliverance should commence in his time. The fulfilment of this promise is then narrated in the following verses, 22–25.

Ver. 15. **And Elisha said unto him,** &c. Elisha does not simply make known this promise to the king by words, but also, as a prophet, in that form which belongs to the essential character of the prophetical office, and is peculiar to prophetical announcements, that is, by means of a symbolic action (see note on chap. 11, 30 *sq.*). The declaration thereby receives the impress of a solemn and purely prophetical announcement. Here, as in all similar cases, the symbolic action precedes the words which explain it; thereby it represents the future event as a fact, as something which will come without fail. Inasmuch as it was the king himself who performed this symbolic action, and not the prophet, it became all the more a pledge to him of the fulfilment of the prophet's words. The whole transaction consists of two acts; vers. 15–17 give the first one; vers. 18 and 19 the second, which is a continuation of the first. Each is followed by words of the prophet, interpreting it. Ver. 15. **Take bow and arrows.** The prophet made use of these for his symbolic action, because the matter in hand was a warlike contest with enemies, and the king, or at least his attendants, were provided with these arms. The command: "Take bow and arrows," signifies: Arm thyself for war against the Syrians! There is not the least reference to a method of soothsaying by means of arrows (Belomancy, *cf.* Ezek. xxi. 21), which was practised by many ancient heathen nations.—Ver. 16. **Put thine hand upon the bow;** literally: Let thine hand ride upon the bow. In drawing the bow, it is held in a horizontal position in such a way that the left hand rests upon it. The prophet placed his hands upon those of the king "in token that the impulse which was to be given came, through the prophet's hands, from the Lord" (Keil). The king's act thereby becomes to a certain extent the act of the prophet, and so an act which is performed in the name and by the authority of Jehovah. Only in so far can the laying on of hands here be regarded as at once a consecration and a blessing, for that is not its primary significance here, as it is in other places where the hand is laid upon the head. —Ver. 17. **Open the window,** that is, order the grating, which is in front of the window-opening, to be removed. The king could not open it himself, for he had both hands upon the bow. **Eastward,** *i. e.*, toward the country east of the Jordan, which the Syrians had taken (chap. x. 33), and from whence they continually threatened the country this side the Jordan. The older expositors refer, by way of explanation of the words: **And he shot,** to the custom in ancient times of declaring war by shooting an arrow into the enemy's territory (Virgil, *Æneid*, ix. 57), but that was not the significance of the arrow shot by the king in this case. The words which explain the symbolic act follow the discharge of the arrow: **An arrow of deliverance for Jehovah,** לַיהוָה, *i. e.*, *auctore Jehova.* [The expression seems intended to interpret the arrow, thus discharged, on two sides, towards Jehovah, and towards the Syrians. It was an arrow of deliverance for, or *in its relation to* Jehovah, inasmuch as it represented the deliverance which He was determined to give; it

was an arrow of deliverance against or upon the Syrians, as it signified the coming overthrow of their oppression.—W. G. S.] Let this arrow be a pledge to thee that Jehovah will help thee, and that thou wilt overcome the Syrians—at *Aphek. Locus erat boni ominis* (Menochius), for Jehovah had already once given Israel a great victory there (1 Kings xx. 26–29). The words עַד־כַּלֵּה refer, in this verse, only to the Syrian army at Aphek; in ver. 19, on the contrary, they refer to the entire Syrian military power.

Ver. 18. **Take the arrows.** The second part of the symbolical action which here begins not only continues the preceding, but consists of an enhancement of it. The article in הַחִצִּים, which is wanting in ver. 15, designates particular arrows, namely all, besides the one which had already been shot away, which remained in the quiver. הַךְ אַרְצָה does not mean: Smite the earth (Luther); nor: Smite upon the earth (De Wette); still less: Strike with the bundle of arrows in the direction of the earth [*i. e.*, as if smiting an enemy to earth with it] (Thenius). The last interpretation has no support in the text; and arrows are not used for smiting enemies to the earth, or for striking upon the ground. נָכָה stands in contrast with יָרָה (ver. 17); it does not mean *jacere* (*sagittas*), to shoot arrows, but, *ferire*, to *hit* (1 Kings xxii, 34; 2 Kings ix. 24; 1 Sam. xvii. 49). The arrow in ver. 17 was only to be shot away through the window towards the east; the arrows in ver. 18 were to hit down to the earth, *i. e.*, in such a way that what was hit by them should be stretched upon the ground. As the king only shot to the earth thus three times and then stopped, did not, therefore, use up all the arrows which remained, the prophet was displeased (Sept. ἐλυπήθη) and said (ver. 19): **Thou shouldest have smitten,** &c. He meant: Thou hadst more than three arrows, and mightest have continued to hit; the fact, however, that thou hast ceased so soon, shows that thou lackest the zeal which is tireless, and which perseveres, trusting in the Lord; thou shalt indeed defeat the Syrians, but the complete destruction of their power will not come about through thee. The reason why the king shot three times and then stopped was that, according to the prevalent notion, that what was done thrice was done perfectly (Numb. xxii. 28, 32, 33; xxiv. 10; Ex. xxiii. 17), he supposed that this sufficed. It was not because he was afraid that, if he shot any more, the prophecies of Elisha would not come to pass (Starke), or because he did not dare to shoot more, "lest too extravagant demands might deprive him of all" (Von Gerlach). In the first part of the transaction (vers. 16 and 17), it is promised him that Jehovah will give him victory over the Syrians; in the second (vers. 18 and 19), he is exhorted to go on, trusting in Jehovah's assistance, without hesitation, and putting forth all his energies, and so to make war upon the Syrians until he utterly destroys them.

Ver. 20. **And Elisha died,** &c., וַיָּמָת evidently refers back to יָמוּת in ver. 14. Vulg.: *Mortuus est ergo Elisaeus et sepelierunt eum.* This sentence closes the narrative which began with ver. 14. It ought not, therefore, to be treated as a subordinate clause to what follows, as Luther understood it: "When Elisha was dead and they had buried him, the Moabites made an incursion." Elisha must have reached a great age, for Jehoash did not come to the throne till 840–39, and Ahab, in whose reign Elisha was already a grown man (1 Kings xix. 19), reigned from 919–897 (see above, Pt. II., p. 45). According to Jerome's statement (*Epitaph. Paulae*), Elisha's grave was in the neighborhood of Samaria, where he had a residence (chap. v. 9; vi. 32). Krummacher locates it, without any definite reason, in the neighborhood of Jericho, and certainly raiding bands of the Moabites might much more naturally appear in the neighborhood of Jericho than near Samaria. בָּא שָׁנָה means literally: a year came. According to the Targum and the Rabbis this means: at the beginning of the year. They came at this season because then the country furnished pasture. It can hardly mean that they came every year (Ewald). Still less correct is the rendering of the Vulg. which Luther follows: *in ipso anno*, in the same year.—וַיַּשְׁלִיכוּ, ver. 21, is not to be understood of a rude and violent "throwing in," but it is meant to describe the haste with which they opened the grave and deposited the corpse in it. It is not necessary to change וַיֵּלֶךְ, as Hitzig and Thenius do, into וַיֵּלְכוּ, *i. e.*, they went away, for הלך "is used not only of the motion of lifeless objects, but also of the gradual progress of an action" (Keil). [It has great dramatic force, describing the gradual approach of the corpse to that contact which involved such momentous consequences.—W. G. S.] The Hebrews brought their dead to the grave, not in closed coffins, but on an open bier (Winer, *R.-W.-B.*, ii. *s.* 16), "so that the corpse which was being brought to the sepulchre, on being hastily deposited there, might easily come in contact with the remains of Elisha" (Keil).

Ver. 22. **But Hazael, king of Syria,** &c. The narrative here returns to vers. 3–7. Seb. Schmidt: *reassumitur hoc de Chasaele ad exponendum complementum prophetiae Elisae.* In sense, לָחַץ is to be taken as a pluperfect. Ver. 23 contains a remark of the author: Israel had been brought by Hazael to the brink of ruin, but, for the sake of His covenant, Jehovah took pity upon His people once more: He did not *as yet* permit it to be destroyed, as He did later (chap. xvii. 6). Hazael died (ver. 24), and Jehoash defeated his son and successor three times, as the prophet had foretold. **The cities of Israel** (ver. 25) which Jehoash took away from Benhadad must have been "those which lay upon this side the Jordan, for Hazael had conquered the territory beyond Jordan during the reign of Jehu (chap. x. 32 *sq.*), and it is expressly stated that the cities which he now recovered were those which had been taken from his father Jehoahaz" (Thenius). Jeroboam II. was the first who restored the ancient boundaries (chap. xiv. 25).

HISTORICAL AND ETHICAL.

1. In regard *to the reign of King Jehoahaz*, we

have but scanty records; the Chronicle does not mention him at all. The kingdom had declined very much during the last years of Jehu (chap. x. 31–33), but, under this king, it sank still lower in every respect. The worship of the calves, which his father had retained, still continued; also the licentious worship of Astarte was once more practised. The entire revolution mentioned in chaps. ix. and x., the overthrow of the House of Ahab, the foundation of a new dynasty, the abolition of idolatry, thus proved fruitless and vain. The divine judgments and chastisements which had begun under Jehu therefore increased, so that the kingdom came nigh to ruin. Jehoahaz, therefore, turned and prayed to God in anxiety and despair, and He once more had pity on His people. Schlier justly says of Jehoahaz: "His prayer was the best thing that he bequeathed to his successor." The state of things during his reign is a proof that worship of images always leads to worship of false gods, and that there is only one step from the one to the other (see 1 Kings xii. 25–33, *Hist.* § 2). It shows how, universally, the weeds of religious error, when they have taken root amongst a people, although they may be pulled up again and again, nevertheless strike root again and spread, and endure more storm and hard usage than good and useful plants. Is it not true that even Christian nations cling more stubbornly to the errors which have fastened upon Christian doctrine, than to Christian truth itself? On the other hand, God, who guides the destinies of Israel, appears here as one whose wrath is indeed kindled at the sin and apostasy of His people, but who does not remain angry forever. He never ceases to be pitiful and gracious, kind and faithful (Ex. xxxiv. 6; Ps. ciii. 8–9). When His people call upon Him, He hears the cry, and in due time sends a deliverer.

2. There is no mention made of the *prophet Elisha* from the anointing of Jehu in 884 to the reign of Jehoash (839), that is, for a period of at least forty-five years, whereas we should have expected that his influence would be especially wide and great under a dynasty which he put upon the throne. The fact that Jehoash called him "Father" and the "Chariot of Israel and the Horsemen thereof" shows that he enjoyed high honor and esteem, and it would be very astonishing, if Elisha had not even given a sign of his existence for forty-five years. We are therefore compelled to infer either that the original documents used by our author were silent in regard to his activity, or that some of the incidents mentioned in chap. iv. *sq.* belong to this period (see Pt. II., p. 45). It cannot be proved, as Ewald asserts, that "all the incidents, in which he appears as standing in high estimation with the king of the northern kingdom, belong to the times of the house of Jehu," that is to say, especially chaps. v. and vi. It is far more probable that it was he who warned and threatened king Jehu (chap. x. 30), and also induced king Jehoahaz to humble himself and turn to God in prayer (ver. 4). He shows himself once more on his death-bed in his full and distinctive prophetical character. He appears here in his last hours in the character which was peculiar to him as compared with Elijah, *i. e.*, as the one who built up, rescued from distress, and preserved (see Pt. II., p. 24). He departs from the world with a great promise of deliverance to his people, with the announcement of coming release from the oppression of the arch-enemy. "Salvation and Victory from Jehovah!" is his last prophetic oracle. While the young and vigorous king, despairing of deliverance, stands crushed and tearful before him, the prophet, oppressed by disease, and age, and approaching death, raises himself up from his death-bed, spiritually full of life and strength, and gives orders to the king to do this and that, in the tone of one who has set up and deposed kings, and whose calling it has been to break in pieces and to destroy, to build and to plant (Jer. i. 10). He commands the king to execute the significant operation, not because he himself was too weak to talk much (Thenius), but because the king was to be the actor, was to be filled with courageous faith, and was to be assured of the victory he should win. It must have made a deep and solemn impression upon him and upon all who stood about, that he himself executed this symbolic action with the hands of the prophet laid upon him. When the prophet's wrath was kindled against the king for desisting from shooting, it was not a sinful ebullition, but a wrath which sprang from love, because the king did not secure still more of the promise for himself and his people.

3. The story of *the restoration to life of a man who was laid in Elisha's grave* stands in close connection with what precedes, not only historically, but also as respects its significance, and its moral. This is sufficient to show that it cannot have, as Ephraim Syrus and some other church fathers suppose, the general moral, that "Elisha, even in the grave, surpassed Elijah in miraculous power," nor, as Theodoret says: *ὡς διαπλασίαν τοῦ διδασκάλου τὴν χάριν ἐδέξατο* [that he had a double portion of his master's spirit]. This notion rests upon the erroneous interpretation of chap. ii. 9 (see notes thereon). Elisha is nowhere placed superior to Elijah. According to the opinion which is now generally received, and which was proposed by Seb. Smith, the object of this miracle of resuscitation was to "impress the seal of the Divine confirmation upon the prediction of the dying prophet in regard to Jehoash's victory over the Syrians" (Keil), or, "to give a pledge of the fulfilment of the promise which had been given" (Thenius). But the resuscitation of a dead man has no essential connection with the contents of this prediction, and the miracle would then be a mere display of supernatural power, having no special significance, and presenting no reason why this rather than any other form of supernatural work should have been chosen. The incident is connected, not with the victory over the Syrians, but with the death and burial of the prophet, which are mentioned just before. Its significance is this: Elisha died and was buried as all men are, but even in the grave testimony was borne to his character as a prophet and servant of God. The spirit (רוּחַ) of Jehovah, which made him, as well as his master, prophets (chap. ii. 9, 15), and which is the principle of all prophetical life and work, made itself manifest in him even in the grave. It manifested itself, moreover, in a manner which corresponds exactly to the form of activity of this prophet, who was a preserver, savior, and life-giver (see Pt. II., p. 24). Salvation and life proceed from him, by the spirit of God, which makes alive, and is the fountain of life (Ezek. xxxvii. 1–14; Hos.

vi. 2; Deut. xxxii. 39), even after he is in the grave. This interpretation is confirmed by the passage Sirach xlviii. 1–15. The praises of the great prophets Elijah and Elisha are there pronounced, and especial reference is made to the end of each. The translation of Elijah is mentioned in ver. 9, and then, in ver. 13, with which the panegyric of Elisha begins, the author refers back to it again: "Elijah was enveloped in a storm-cloud, and Elisha was filled with his spirit. During his life he feared before no ruler, and no one ever imposed restraint upon him. He yielded to no compulsion, *καὶ ἐν κοιμήσει ἐπροφήτευσε τὸ σῶμα αὐτοῦ.* During his life he performed wonders, *καὶ ἐν τελευτῇ θαυμάσια τὰ ἔργα αὐτοῦ.*" Whereas, in vers. 1–8, Elijah's separate deeds are particularly described, Elisha's activity is only delineated in general outline; on the contrary his end, like that of Elijah, is noticed especially. This shows that, in the time of Sirach, this incident was considered important and significant. Taken in connection with the context the sense is: as the greatest of all prophets, Elijah, the second Moses, was marvelously glorified at the close of his career; so was his successor, Elisha, also. Though his end was not like that of his master, yet it was not without divine testimony to his prophetical calling, for the spirit of Jehovah made itself manifest in him even in the grave. It was not the dead bones which brought the dead to life, but the living God. The resuscitation of the dead man was only "brought about by contact with the bones of the dead prophet, because God desired thereby to show to His people that the divine energy, which had been active in Elisha, had not, by his death, disappeared from Israel" (Keil *Commentar*, Ed. of 1845). This shows that it is as great an error to charge the writer with ascribing to the bones of Elisha a magical, miraculous power, as to refer to this narrative as a proof of the miraculous efficacy of relics. "This instance," says Starke, "proves nothing in behalf of the relics of saints and their misuse in the Romish Church, for it was not the bones of Elisha, but the power of God, which made this dead man live. The Church did not then, and has never since, dug up the bones of Elisha, much less encased them in gold and silver, and given them to the people to kiss and reverence, as is done under the papacy, in order to gain favor with God, for which there is neither precept nor example in the Scriptures." Neither is it necessary to have recourse to the typical and allegorical method of interpretation. J. Lange says: "The chief object (of this miracle) was to affirm the doctrine of the future, universal resurrection of the dead. Elisha was, therefore, in this point, a type of Christ." In like manner, Krummacher says, basing his view on Sir. xlviii. 13, that the corpse of Elisha prophesied of the "flowing, new-creating, life-giving, miraculous power, which was to be poured out in the world through the death of his great anti-type, Jesus Christ." This latter notion is inapt, because life and resurrection proceed, not from the crucified and dead, but from the risen, Christ. Cassel (*Der Prophet Elisa*, *s.* 162 *sq.*) even finds the prophetical spirit represented in the (dead) Elisha, and the people of Israel in the dead man restored to life. He says: "When the spirit of the prophets breathed over Israel like an evening wind, then the nation rose again, became living, and made all live whom its word touched. All the dead who fall upon prophecy rise again to life. Elisha is the prophetic law, whosoever in Israel believes on it experiences the resurrection of the dead in Jesus Christ. The miracle at Elisha's grave is a type—but since all, Jews and heathen, alike become living at the grave of Christ through repentance and faith, no dead man's bone any longer restores to life." It is not necessary to show that such interpretations have no foundation in the text. [Scarcely a better means of exposing their frivolity could be found than to translate them. They are inflated, rhetorical inventions. When they are translated literally, they appear to be scarcely more than ridiculous and incoherent jargon. The principal utility of quoting them is to keep before us a warning of the pitfalls which environ the science of interpretation.—W. G. S.] Finally, the naturalistic interpretation of this incident, according to which "an apparently dead man, when he was thrown into the grave of Elisha, was restored to life by the violent shock of the fall" (*Exeget. Handbuch* on the passage; Baur, *Hebr. Mythologie*, ii. *s.* 197; Jahn, *Einleitung in's A. T.* ii. 1. *s.* 261) may be regarded as antiquated and abandoned. Thenius says: "The incident may have occurred very naturally," but does not tell how. Knobel's remark: There is something analogous in the legend that the ground, where Amphiaraus lay buried, prophesied (Cicero, *De Divin.* i. 40)," rests upon an entire misconception of the aim and significance of the miracle.

[This might be regarded as a test case among the Old Testament miracles. It is very doubtful if many readers will find themselves satisfied with the above discussion of it. The notion that Elisha was a "constructive" prophet, in contrast with Elijah, who was "destructive," is a mere whim. The fondness for historical parallels and contrasts seduces many into finding coincidences, correspondences, and contrasts where none exist out of the imagination of the writer. Elijah and Elisha differed somewhat in character, it is true, but they must be taken together as two men who worked with the same general method, under very similar circumstances, and towards the same ends. There is no ground for any such contrast as is here affirmed. Yet this contrast is made to be, in Bähr's explanation of the miracle, after all verbiage is stripped from it, the motive of this wonderful event. God bore testimony to Elisha's calling even after his death, and this testimony took the form of the restoration of a dead man to life by physical contact with the bones of the dead prophet, *because* Elisha had been a constructing, life-giving prophet. Of course, an affirmed miracle would not be disproved, if we did not see the *necessity* for it, but no miracle recorded in Scripture would seem more superfluous than one which was intended to ratify the calling of Elisha as a prophet of Jehovah, after his death. As for the authority of Sirach, it is not worth while to go into it. His panegyric is poetical and rhetorical in form, and when he says, for instance, that "the body (of Elisha) prophesied in the tomb," although there is a reference to this passage, and although it is a perfectly justifiable thing for him to refer to it in this poetical strain in the course of such a composition as that he was making, yet it is difficult to see how these words could be reduced to any statement which would be available for critical and exegetical purposes. The attempts to lend significance to this incident, on one side and on the other, are all failures. The

simple statement of the text is that an incursion of Moabites interrupted a funeral. The corpse was hastily thrown into the sepulchre of Elisha, and when it touched the bones of the prophet, the man returned to life. The remarkable dramatic minuteness of the description in ver. 21: "when the dead man *came* and *touched* the bones of the prophet, he revived," shows that the resuscitation was dependent on, and, we may say, caused by the physical contact, according to the conviction of the writer of the narrative. Different persons will receive this story in different ways, according to their theological and philosophical prepossessions. Some will see in it a popular legend or myth which insisted on glorifying the prophet by ascribing miraculous efficacy to his bones after his death, a mere legend which grew up in the course of time, but had no historical foundation. Others will simply take the story as it is given as an indisputable fact, and will go no farther than the record goes. It is not stated that the bones of the prophet were ever tested again to see if they would repeat the miracle, or that any other persons than this one were ever restored, and it is not stated why the miracle was performed at all. Those who adopt this second course must decline to speculate on these questions. They must assume that, for some reasons unknown, God, on a single occasion, attached to the bones of the prophet this efficacy. They must decline to deduce general inferences from this incident. Others again will go still farther, and infer that the sanctity of the man was due to the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, that this became physically inherent in the remains of his body, that his bones, therefore, had miraculous efficacy, and that the bones of other individuals of equal sanctity will have equal efficacy. It is a development and extension of the second view, and it elevates the isolated instance into a law. In this way the story is made to lend support to the use of relics. It is remarked above, in reference to this, that it was not the prophet's bone, but the power of God, which wrought the miracle. No one would assert anything else of the use of any relic. It is clearly stated that the resuscitation depended upon the physical contact with the physical object, and the latter had mysterious and supernatural efficacy inherent in it, which it could only have acquired as part of the *body* of a man who had been marked by extraordinary *spiritual* superiority. That, however, is the principle which lies at the root of the use and veneration of relics.—W. G. S.]

4. *King Jehoash* did not indeed renounce the worship of Jeroboam's calves, but he was one of the best among the kings of the northern kingdom. This much is clear from the story of his interview with Elisha, if from nothing more. We do not hear that any other one of the four kings, under whom the prophet lived, stood in similar relations to him. Even though the tears which he shed at the prophet's death-bed were not tears of penitence, and of a "lively regret for his past behavior towards the prophet" (Krummacher), yet they certainly show how deeply he was touched by the distress of Israel, and how helpless he felt at the departure of the prophet. By his exclamation: "My Father!" &c., he proclaimed to all who stood by that the prophet was more to him than all the military force which still remained. He then goes on to do what the prophet commands him, as a servant obeys his master. He desisted after shooting three times, not, as Krummacher thinks, from fear of condescending below his royal dignity, but from shame and fear of demanding too much [or rather, because what was done three times was thought to be completely done. See *Exeg.* note on ver. 19.] He took courage, and soon showed himself a bold and victorious soldier, both in his war with Syria, and in that with Amaziah (see chap. xiv.).

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

Vers. 1–13. See *Histor. and Eth.* The history of the kingdom of Israel under Jehoahaz shows us (*a*) God's severity, and (*b*) God's goodness. Rom. xi. 22; *cf.* Sirach v. 6 *sq.*; xvi. 12.—STARKE: Men who have a personal interest in deeply rooted customs or traditions, are very loath to see them overthrown and abandoned, although they often thereby draw down God's judgments by their own hands.—Vers. 3 and 4. How hard it often is to bring a man, who has turned away from the living God and from His word, to seek the Lord's face. Jehoahaz had to be pushed to the last extremity by the enemy, and to be most deeply humiliated, before he called upon the Lord and saw where help is to be found in all distress (Isai. xxvi. 16).—Vers. 4 and 5. BERLEB. BIBEL: The Lord heard him and thereby showed distinctly how easily He may be moved to show mercy, if we will only bring ourselves to ask Him in humility and sincere penitence.—STARKE: Faithful Christian! If God heard Jehoahaz, how much more will He hear thee, if thou callest upon Him. —The Lord gave Israel a deliverer, but Jehoahaz did not live to see him. God hears the cries of those who earnestly call upon Him, and helps them, but the time and place and manner of His aid are retained in His own discretion. Do not despair if thy prayer does not seem to be heard, and the Lord delays His assistance. He knows the fitting seasons and knows what is useful for us.—Vers. 5 and 6. The Lord gave Israel a temporal saviour in its hour of physical need; to us He has given a spiritual Saviour, who can and will save us out of the hands of the greatest of all enemies: sin, death, Satan, and Hell (Luke i. 69–71). What can we expect, if it must be said of us also: Yet they did not renounce their sins.—RICHTER: Many a one prays, like Jehoahaz, in his time of distress, and when the trouble is past, the good impulses quickly disappear again. Ver. 7. WÜRT. SUMM.: No nation is so great and mighty that God cannot take away its might and make it so small and slight that it is only like dust which the wind scatters (Ps. xviii. 42). Therefore, ye godless! plume yourselves not so much upon your strength (Ps. lxxv. 5). Look at the chaff, how quickly it is scattered; so shall it be with your strength. Vers. 14–21. Elisha's End. (*a*) His death-bed, vers. 14–19. (*b*) His grave, vers. 20–21. Vers. 14–17. KRUMMACHER: The sick-bed. (*a*) Elisha in illness; (*b*) bewailed by the king; (*c*) but a prophet until his latest breath. —Vers. 14–19. King Jehoash at the death-bed of Elisha. (*a*) He weeps and laments; (*b*) He is consoled and strengthened.—How did Elisha pass away from earth? Sick and weakened by age—(his lot was the ordinary one of mortals; he also had to pass away into darkness and death, however much he had wrought and fought and labored, Ps.

xc. 10 and 12. God has ordained sickness before death, that we may set our house in order, may seek refuge in the mercy of God, and may ponder what is our sole consolation, in life and in death) —yet, as a man of God. (In spite of weakness and physical decay, he is strong and firm; he asks no help from men, but he, the dying one, consoles and strengthens the living. His last word is a promise of victory. The words of Isaiah [xl. 29–31] are verified in him.)—Ver. 14. It is rarely recognized how great and irreparable is the loss of a true man of God, a great benefactor, and a faithful servant, until he is gone.—King Jehoash was not ashamed to come to the dying prophet, and to confess with tears his own helplessness; but how many shun such holy men, and are glad if they never need have anything to do with them.—Ver. 15 *sq.* From the example of Elisha, we see how one who can say: "The Lord is my strength and song, and is become my salvation" (Ps. cxviii. 14), stands before the gates of eternity; proclaiming salvation, extending blessings, sure of victory. There is no greater thing than a man who, in the face of death, can cry: "O death! where is thy sting," &c. (1 Cor. xv. 55, 57).—Krummacher: Here we see Elisha's patriotism. If we would know what true love of one's fatherland is, let us ask the prophet. In his case it received a divine consecration. It is truly touching to see with what tenderness the prophets enfold in their hearts their country and people, even when they see in them little but spiritual death, decay, and corruption, and experience from their fellow-countrymen little but bitterness, hate, and persecution.—Vers. 18–19. Berleb. Bibel: Cease not to shoot arrows of love into the heart of God, so shall one arrow of deliverance after another come back to thee from the Lord, and be given to thee in the word of truth. So shalt thou smite thy spiritual foes and tread them under foot even more completely than Jehoash did the Syrians.—Roos: The cowardly unbelief of men causes that God cannot reveal His glory in some places as he gladly would (Mark vi. 5), and that their way is not made so easy for them as God would be willing to make it (Prov. iv. 12). The measure of the victory depends upon the measure of the faith. The Lord said to the centurion of Capernaum: "As thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee" (Matt. viii. 13). He who is called to execute a work for God may not stop and desist according to his own good judgment, but must go on in it tirelessly and faithfully, till the Lord commands him to cease.—Calw. Bibel: Many enemies are to be conquered, many tests to be endured. Faith must hold firm until the end. When one battle is won, the conflict is not over. How much is it to be regretted when one only half believes, half obeys, or when one, after a good beginning, desists.

Vers. 20 and 21. The Miracle at the Grave of Elisha; its Object and its Significance, (*a*) for the prophet himself; (*b*) for us all (see *Hist.* § 3). Von Gerlach: The Lord showed thereby that He was not a God of the dead, but of the living; that the dead in Him live for Him (Matt. xxii. 32); that the spirit of life which proceeds from Him spreads life and blessing everywhere where it comes, and that it is superior to death and decay.—The dead cannot make the dead to live; the spirit of the Lord alone penetrates even into the place of corruption, and changes it into a place of life (Ezek. xxxvii. 1 *sq.*). We, therefore, rest our confidence and hope, not upon dead men's bones, but upon the God who makes all things to live, and who raised up from the dead the great Shepherd of the sheep. If we are buried with Him, we have this consolation: the God who raised Him will also raise us to life through His might (1 Cor. vi. 14; 2 Cor. iv. 14; Col. ii. 12; Rom. vi. 4).—Berleb. Bibel: The precept and example of men of God can have power, even after their death, to the resuscitation of those who are spiritually dead, if the latter will only study and follow them (Hebr. xiii. 7). This is the way in which the bones of the dead are truly efficacious. If thou art dead in sin, cast thyself into the tomb of the Saviour in humility and self-renunciation, so shalt thou revive and rise to life again as He did, for he who truly grasps the virtue of the death of Christ (comes into contact with that Dead One) is thus revived to the true life of his soul.

Ver. 23 *sq.* Calw. Bibel: When God turns Himself from us, then we are given over to wretchedness; when He turns back to us again, then we find salvation. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob had been dead for a thousand years, and yet their blessing was efficacious.—Würt. Summ.: God does not take pleasure in our ruin, but remembers, even in the midst of His anger, His promised grace and the covenant which He has made with us (Luke i. 72 *sq.*).—Cramer: Tyrants are rods by means of which God chastises His people; but finally the tyrants themselves are chastised by God and cast into the fire.—Ver. 25. Starke: It was unjustly obtained and quickly lost. Unrighteous wealth rarely comes to the third generation (Jes. xxxiii. 1).—Richter: Israel is to-day, as it was then (ver. 23), a covenant people of God, and is not rejected entirely and forever (Rom. xi.).

B.—*The Reign of Amaziah in Judah, and that of Jeroboam II. in Israel.*

Chap. XIV. 1–29. (2 Chron. XXV.)

1 In the second year of Joash son of Jehoahaz king of Israel reigned [*omits*
2 reigned] Amaziah the son of Joash king of Judah [became king]. He was
twenty and five years old when he began to reign, and [he] reigned twenty and
nine years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name *was* Jehoaddan of Jerusalem.
3 And he did *that which was* right in the sight of the Lord, yet not like David his
father: he did according to [in] all things as Joash his father did [had done].

4 Howbeit the high places were not taken away: as yet [*omit* as yet] the people did sacrifice [were yet sacrificing[1]] and burnt [burning] incense on the high places.
5 And it came to pass, as soon as the kingdom was confirmed in his hand, that
6 he slew his servants which had slain the king his father. But the children ot
the murderers he slew not: according unto that which is written in the book
of the law of Moses, wherein [which] the Lord commanded, saying, The fathers
shall not be put to death for the children, nor the children be put to death for
7 the fathers: but every man shall be put to death [die[2]] for his own sin. He
slew of Edom in the valley of salt ten thousand, [:] and [*omit* and—He also] took
Selah by war, and called the name of it Joktheel unto this day.
8 Then Amaziah sent messengers to Jehoash, the son of Jehoahaz son of Jehu,
9 king of Israel, saying, Come, let us look one another in the face.[3] And Jehoash
the king of Israel sent to Amaziah king of Judah, saying, The thistle [brier]
that *was* in Lebanon sent to the cedar that *was* in Lebanon, saying, Give thy
daughter to my son to wife: and there passed by a wild beast that *was* in Leba-
10 non, and trode down the thistle [brier]. Thou hast indeed smitten Edom, and
thine heart hath lifted thee up: glory *of this* [exult!], and tarry at home: for
why shouldest [wilt] thou meddle to *thy* hurt [provoke a calamity], that thou
11 shouldest fall, *even* thou, and Judah with thee? But Amaziah would not hear.
Therefore Jehoash king of Israel went up; and he and Amaziah king of Judah
looked one another in the face at Beth-shemesh, which *belongeth* [belongeth] to
12 Judah. And Judah was put to the worse before Israel: and they fled every man
13 to their [his] tents [tent]. And Jehoash king of Israel took Amaziah king of Ju-
dah, the son of Jehoash the son of Ahaziah, at Beth-shemesh, and came[4] to Jeru-
salem, and brake down the wall of Jerusalem from the gate of Ephraim unto
14 the corner gate, four hundred cubits. And he took all the gold and silver, and
all the vessels that were found in the house of the Lord, and in the treasures
of the king's house, and hostages,[5] and returned to Samaria.
15 Now the rest of the acts of Jehoash which he did, and his might, and how
he fought with Amaziah king of Judah, *are* they not written in the book of the
16 Chronicles of the kings of Israel? And Jehoash slept with his fathers, and was
buried in Samaria with the kings of Israel; and Jeroboam his son reigned in
his stead.
17 And Amaziah the son of Joash king of Judah lived after the death of Jeho-
18 ash son of Jehoahaz king of Israel fifteen years. And the rest of the acts of
Amaziah, *are* they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of
19 Judah? Now they made a conspiracy against him in Jerusalem: and he fled
20 to Lachish; but they sent after him to Lachish, and slew him there. And they
brought him on horses: and he was buried at Jerusalem with his fathers in the
city of David.
21 And all the people of Judah took Azariah, which [who] *was* sixteen years
22 old, and made him king instead of his father Amaziah. He built Elath, and
restored it to Judah, after that the king slept with his fathers.
23 In the fifteenth year of Amaziah the son of Joash king of Judah, Jeroboam
the son of Joash king of Israel began to reign in Samaria, *and reigned* forty and
24 one years. And he did *that which was* evil in the sight of the Lord: he de-
parted not from all the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to
25 sin. He restored the coast of Israel from the entering of [near[6]] Hamath unto
the sea of the plain, according to the word of the Lord God of Israel, which he
spake by the hand of his servant Jonah, the son of Amittai, the prophet, which
26 *was* of Gath-hepher. For the Lord saw the affliction of Israel, *that it was* very
bitter:[7] for *there was* not any shut up, nor any left [neither any of age, nor any
27 under age], nor any helper for Israel. And the Lord said not that he would
blot out the name of Israel from under heaven: but he saved them by the hand
28 of Jeroboam the son of Joash. Now the rest of the acts of Jeroboam, and all
that he did, and his might, how he warred, and how he recovered Damascus,
and Hamath, *which belonged* to Judah, for Israel, *are* they not written in the

29 book of the Chronicles of the kings of Israel? And Jeroboam slept with his fathers, *even* with the kings of Israel; and Zachariah his son reigned in his stead.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

[1] Ver. 4.—[The participle here marks an event which was going on at the same time with another. Examples of this are numerous. *Cf.* 1 Kings i. 5; iii. 26; v. 24; 2 Kings viii. 5.

[2] Ver. 6.—The keri is the result of a desire to reproduce literally the text of Deuteronomy, but it is unnecessary. Read the chetib, יָמוּת.

[3] Ver. 8.—[נִתְרָאֶה פָנִים, פָּנִים is acc. of the part affected. "Let us look upon one another, as to the face" = "let us look upon one another's face," *i. e.*, "let us measure strength with one another." Ewald (*Lehrbuch*, § 281, *c*) explains it: "Let us look upon one another as to the person," *i. e.*, in person.

[4] Ver. 13.—[The keri is unnecessary. Punctuate the chetib וַיָּבֹאוּ.

[5] Ver. 14.—[Literally: "Sons of pledges."

[6] Ver. 25.—[מִלְּבוֹא would be literally *from as far as; i. e.*, it expresses that he penetrated up as far as Hamath, came near to that place, and then made it a point of departure on the north, from which he extended his conquests southward to the Dead Sea.

[7] Ver. 26.—[מֹרֶה from מרה. Gesen. (*Thes. s. v.*) understands it to mean *deep-rooted, of long standing*, but the latest and best expositors agree to take מרה in the sense of מרר, *to be bitter.*—W. G. S.]

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

Ver. 1. **In the second year of Joash . . . Amaziah . . . became king.** On the chronological datum see chap. xiii. 1. Ver. 3. Instead of the words: **not like David, his father,** the parallel account in Chronicles (xxv. 2) reads: "Not with all his heart." The additional statement: **He did in all things as Joash his father had done,** shows that Amaziah, in the first part of his reign, was devoted to the worship of Jehovah as Joash was (chap. xii. 3), but that afterwards, especially after his victory over Edom, he introduced, or at least tolerated, the worship of the false gods of Edom, as his father had permitted the worship of Asherah (2 Chron. xxiv. 2, 18). [It is putting too great a strain on these words to make them cover any such accurate parallelism between the lives of the two kings, especially when this parallelism is constructed by borrowing from the Chronicles. It is simply meant that his general policy, and the extent to which he conformed to the demands of the Jehovah-religion, were modelled upon his father's conduct.—W. G. S.] The passage 2 Chron. xxv. 14 does not, therefore, contradict this verse, as Thenius and Bertheau assert; on the contrary, ver. 2 of the Chronicle contains the same assertion as ver. 3 here. [An attentive comparison of the records of Kings and Chronicles at this point reveals some most interesting characteristics of each, and nothing could be more mischievous than a false effort to "harmonize" and "reconcile," which should obliterate these distinguishing characteristics. A comparison of chap. xii. 2 with 2 Chron. xxiv. 2 shows a difference of judgment as to Joash's career. (See translator's note on xii. 2.) In perfect consistency, each with its own general judgment, Kings says nothing of any idolatry of Joash, while Chronicles records such an error (2 Chron. xxiv. 18). Again, Kings approves in general of Amaziah's career, although it was not up to the standard of David (chap. xiv. 3; *cf.* also xv. 3). Ver. 4 tells wherein he failed according to this author. 2 Chron. xxv. 2 might be considered equivalent to this, but ver. 14 states the fault which the chronicler had to find with him, while Kings is silent in regard to any such sin. The two accounts are each consistent with itself, but they differ in regard to their general estimate of the careers of these two kings. Thenius and Bertheau think that the chronicler *inferred* from the misfortunes of these kings that they *must* have been unfaithful to Jehovah, but it is unnecessary to adopt so violent an explanation of the divergence. The chronicler either had more information, or a stricter standard.—W. G. S.] On ver. 4 see note on 1 Kings iii. 2. On ver. 5 *cf.* chap. xii. 21 *sq.* As it was the custom in the Orient to put to death not only conspirators themselves, but also their children (Curtius VI. 11, 20; Rosenmüller, *Altes und Neues Morgenland*, II. s. 59), ver. 6 expressly emphasizes the fact that Amaziah, in obedience to Deut. xxiv. 16, did *not* do this, and thereby proved himself to be a faithful king according to the Israelitish standards. The words: **As it is written, &c.,** are not, as Thenius asserts, an explanatory addition by the "redactor;" they do not merely give his opinion; they rather state the true historical reason why Amaziah acted as he did. It is clear, therefore, from this passage, that the author of these books assumes the existence of the book of Deuteronomy at that time, and did not at all suppose that it was first composed under Manasseh, 150 years later, as modern criticism (Riehm) maintains. We do not know whether Amaziah acted according to this precept on his own motive, or not. Perhaps he was exhorted to it by a prophet or a priest.

Ver. 7. **He slew of Edom.** The Edomites revolted from Judah, according to chap. viii. 20, during the reign of Joram. Amaziah undertook to resubjugate them, and prepared great military resources to this end, as is narrated in 2 Chron. xxv. 5 *sq.* The valley of salt (2 Sam. viii. 13; 1 Chron. xviii. 12) is a plain about two miles broad, south of the Dead Sea, which does not show a sign of vegetation. It is now called *El-Ghor* (Robinson, *Palestine*, II. 488 and 450). The chronicler does not mention the capture of Sela, but states that, besides the 10,000 who fell, 10,000 others were taken prisoners and thrown from a rock. *Sela* lay south of the valley of salt, in a valley which was shut in by rocks, but which was well watered and fruitful; it is the well-known *Petra*, and it was as

important in a military as in a mercantile point of view. *Cf.* Winer, *R.-W.-B.* II. *s.* 446 *sq.* The **new name given to this town by the victor is significant.** יָקְתְאֵל means *a Deo subactum, in servitutem redactum* (Gesenius, *s. v.*). We see from the phrase: **unto this day,** that the original document, from which our author took the history of Amaziah's reign, belonged to the time of that king, or at least to a time not long after his death. As soon as the city came into other hands again, which it did under Ahaz (chap. xvi. 6), it certainly lost that humiliating name. It is possible indeed that it continued to be called by this name by the Jews, so that the argument is not conclusive, but, if we do not adopt this hypothesis, we must infer that the original document, in which stood the words "unto this day," which the redactor has preserved, was written at least before the time of Ahaz. Of course this place has nothing to do with the Joktheel mentioned in Joshua xv. 38.

Ver. 8. **Then Amaziah sent messengers.** This took place after the brilliant victory over the Edomites. The detailed statement "son of Jehoahaz, son of Jehu," &c., gives ground for the supposition that the original authority for ver. 8 *sq.* is different from that of vers. 1–7. [**Let us look one another in the face.** See *Grammatical* on the verse. This is a literal translation. Though the formula is variously explained, yet its significance is clear. It is a challenge to combat.—W. G. S.] Josephus says that Amaziah sent a letter to king Joash, in which he demanded of him to submit himself and people, as they had once been subject to David and Solomon, adding that, if he would not do this, a pitched battle should decide between them which had the superior authority (*Antiq.* ix. 9, 2). It is also possible that, as the rabbis say, the acts mentioned in 2 Chron xxv. 13 occasioned this demand.—The parable in ver. 9 is not to be pressed too much in its details. The main point is the contrast of the largest, strongest, and most majestic tree, the cedar, and the contemptible, weak, and useless, although prickly, briar (not, as Thenius maintains, thistle. *Cf.* Prov. xxvi. 9; 1 Sam. xiii. 6; Job xxxi. 40. [The comparison between a tree and a briar bush is more correct and appropriate than between a tree and a thistle]). These two stand side by side upon Lebanon. No wild beast can break down and crush the cedar, but it is very possible that this may occur with the briar. It is more a proverb than a parable, like the story in Judges ix. 8–15. The words: **Give thy daughter to my son to wife,** are not to be interpreted as implying that Amaziah had demanded a daughter of Joash as a wife for one of his sons (Dereser); neither is the explanation that the kingdom of Israel is the daughter, and the kingdom of Judah the son (Thenius), a fit interpretation of the haughty parable of the king of Israel. Only he who is equal to the father may demand of the latter his daughter as a wife for his son, not one who stands as far below the father as the briar below the cedar. If such an one as this latter does make such a proposal, he is guilty of arrogance and presumption, and he must expect to be set in his proper place.—Thenius' translation of ver. 10: "Show thy might at home," is not correct, as we see from 2 Chron. xxv. 19, where we read: "Thine heart lifteth thee up to boast (לְהַכְבִּיד); abide now at home." כבד, in the hifil, means to win honor or fame (Gesen.). The Vulg. is right according to the sense: *contentus esto gloria et sede tua in domo tua.*—Calamity is here spoken of as a hostile power, against which one fights in vain [or rather, in stricter accordance with the literal meaning of הִתְגָּרָה בְּ, upon which one makes a rash and causeless attack, and so provokes it, brings it down upon one's self.]

Ver. 11. **But Amaziah would not hear.** Beth-Shemesh (*cf.* note on 1 Kings iv. 9), where the two armies met, was in Judah, on the southern border of Dan, and therefore much nearer to Jerusalem than to Samaria. It follows that Joash did not wait for the attack of Amaziah, but anticipated his movements and so carried the war into the enemy's country. Josephus says that Joash threatened the captive Amaziah with death, if he did not compel the inhabitants of Jerusalem to open the gates, and grant him free admission with his army into the city; and that Amaziah, in fear for his life, brought about the admission of the enemy. This statement, although it stands by itself, and has no support from any other authority, does not, at any rate, contradict the biblical text. Instead of the chetib ויבאו, in ver. 13, the keri offers ויבא. In 2 Chron. xxv. 23 there stands instead of either: וַיְבִאֵהוּ, *i. e.*, "he brought him." The Sept. have this reading in the verse before us also (ἤγαγεν αὐτόν), and the Vulg. follows: *adduxit eum.* Thenius, therefore, adopts this as the original reading, but unnecessarily, for if Joash took Amaziah prisoner and did not put him to death, it is a matter of course that he took him with him when he went farther. The chronicler simply expresses himself a little more definitely. Although Jehoash did not need to besiege Jerusalem, yet he caused a large piece of its wall of fortification to be torn down, from the gate of Ephraim to the corner gate. The former stood on the north side of the city, towards Ephraim, and was also called the gate of Benjamin, because the road to Ephraim ran through the territory of Benjamin. It is now called the gate of Damascus. The latter was to the west of this, at the point where the wall turned southward: *i. e.*, at the northwest corner of the city. According to Thenius עַד does not here denote the *terminus ad quem*, but only the direction in which, because the distance between them was more than 400 cubits, viz., 2,000 English feet. The question arises, however, whether Thenius has correctly fixed the situation of the corner-gate on his plan of the city, and whether the distance was as great as he supposes, as the city was laid out before the exile. In descriptions of localities, עַד always serves to define the limit up to which, and not merely the direction. Josephus' assertion that Jehoash caused a breach (διακοπή) 30 cubits wide to be made in the wall, and that he drove through this in a chariot with the captive king by his side, has no foundation in the biblical text. Jehoash's purpose in ordering the wall to be torn down was not to get a grand gateway for a triumphal entry (Thenius), but to mark the city as captured, and as lying open on the side of Ephraim.—The "hostages" (ver. 14) were demanded by Jehoash especially because he, as Josephus expressly states, gave the king his freedom, but desired still to hold him in check. They were taken, no doubt, from the most important families,

but they were hardly sons of the king himself, for, if they had been, it would probably have been so stated. The treasures, which the victor carried off, were not probably very great (see chap. xiii. 18), and the word הַנִּמְצְאִים seems to hint at this.

Ver. 15. **Now the rest of the acts, &c.** The repetition of the standing formula, in regard to Jehoash, after it had once been used in chap. xiii. 12, 13, has its explanation probably in this, that the author found it in the document from which he took vers. 8–17, as well as in that from which he took chap. xiii. An especial reason for adopting this explanation is that the formula is not precisely the same here as in the former place. "The name of the king of Israel is there written three times יוֹאָשׁ, whereas we have here twice יְהוֹאָשׁ. The latter form is preserved throughout the section vers. 8-17, whereas in ver. 1 the shorter form occurs. Here, the natural succession of the details is observed (death, burial, successor); there, there is a transposition (death, successor, burial)" (Thenius). Nevertheless, the author may have been led to repeat the formula because ver. 17 "contains an important statement which is connected with Joash's death," namely, that Amaziah lived and reigned for fifteen years after Joash died. The author felt obliged to repeat the notice of Joash's death, as an introduction to this statement (*Superflua non nocent*).

Ver. 17. **And Amaziah, &c.** This chronological datum stands in perfect accord with the ones before given in vers. 1 and 2 and in chap. xiii. 10. Amaziah reigned in all 29 years; 15 after Joash's death; therefore, 14 with him. As Joash reigned 16 years, Amaziah's succession falls in his second year, as is stated in ver. 1. [See the translator's note on ver. 22.]—If we bear in mind that Amaziah's war with Edom took place before that with Joash, we are led to infer that the latter took place shortly before Joash's death. The old expositors adopted the supposition that Amaziah spent the 15 years after Joash's death in retirement and contempt, as a deposed king, and that the conspiracy was a consequence of his disgraceful defeat (ver. 19). There is no ground for such an hypothesis, however, for if the conspiracy had been formed after that defeat, it would not have been 15 years before it was consummated. The chronicler says (chap. xxv. 27): "Now, after the time that Amaziah did turn away from following the Lord (*i. e.*, from the time when he, after the victory over the Edomites, brought their gods back to Jerusalem with him, 2 Chron. xxv. 14), they made a conspiracy against him in Jerusalem." This time was before the war with Joash and the great defeat; it is only intended to assert that the unfortunate end of Amaziah was a punishment for his apostasy. The conspiracy must have had some other especial cause which is not stated. According to Thenius, who explains **all the people of Judah** (ver. 21) to mean the whole military force, it was a conspiracy of the army. It may be, however, that a general dissatisfaction arose among the people from other causes, and that this finally led to the conspiracy.—*Lachish* was originally a royal city of the Canaanites in the lowlands of southern Palestine. Joshua conquered it, and afterwards gave it to the tribe of Judah (Jos. x. 31; xv. 39). Rehoboam fortified it against the Philistines (2 Chron. xi. 9). Amaziah fled to this place, probably because he could easily flee across the frontier from there if the necessity should arise. The conspirators seem to have followed upon his heels. According to ver. 20 it is probable that they brought the slain king back to Jerusalem in his own royal chariot.

Ver. 21. **And all the people of Judah took, &c.** It is remarkable that, in this case also, the conspirators did not take one of their own number and make him king, but, as in chap. xii. 22, they adhered to the succession of the house of David. It is doubtful whether Azariah was the oldest son of Amaziah, for it is most probable that the latter, at the age of 54, when he died, left sons older than this boy of 16 years. The expression יִקְחוּ appears to imply that they chose this boy on account of some peculiar characteristics.—The new king is called here and in chap. xv. 1, 6, 7, 8, 17, 23, 27, עֲזַרְיָה; on the contrary, in chap. xv. 13, 31, 32, 34, as in the Chronicle (except 1 Chron. iii. 12), [and in Isai. i. 1; vi. 1; Hos. i. 1; Amos i. 1; Zach. xiv. 5], he is called עֻזִּיָּה. Against the explanation that עזריה is an error of the copyist, arising from the similarity of the ר and the י, is the consideration that the error, if it be an error, is repeated so often. "We must rather suppose that the king really had both these names, which are very closely connected" (Keil). [In the ed. of 1865, he says that they are used "promiscuously."] Vatablus: *duo nomina habuit affinia: Fortitudo Domini, et Auxilium Domini.* [The two names are at least very nearly equivalent in etymological meaning: עזריה (he whose) Help (is) Jehovah; עזיה (he whose) Strength (is) Jehovah. Bertheau calls attention to a similar case. In 1 Chron. xxv. 4, among the sons of Heman, is one who is called Uzziel. A comparison of the names in the subsequent repetition shows that he is the person called Azareel in ver. 18.—W. G. S.] This is quite possible in view of the frequency with which names are changed in the Orient. The name Uzziah seems to have been generally used after his accession to the throne (see the places where it occurs in the later prophets, which are quoted above).—Ver. 22. On *Elath*, see note on 1 Kings ix. 26. Either Amaziah did not push forward as far as this important port of commerce, in his expedition against the Edomites, or else he was unable to retain possession of it after his defeat by Joash, at Beth Shemesh; but Edom was not a valuable possession for Judah except as it involved the possession of Elath. That the new king took this city and "built" it, that is, either extended it or strengthened it, was a most important event for the kingdom, and especially for his own authority. That is why it is here mentioned by anticipation at the beginning of his reign, whereas his further history is not given until later, in chap. xv. 1–7. We cannot infer from the clause: **after that the king slept with his fathers,** that Azariah undertook this expedition "at once" (Thenius), and advanced victoriously to Elath, for he was, at the time of his accession, a boy of 16 years. However, it may well have been in the early part of his reign. [This clause is very enigmatical. No satisfactory explanation of it has ever been offered. It is said that a certain king died, another succeeded, and when the author goes on to mention the acts of

the latter's reign, he says that he did a certain thing *after the* (*former*) *king was dead*. It is either a most idle and meaningless statement, or else it has a significance which has not yet been perceived. It is difficult to avoid the suspicion that it alludes to the fact that Azariah was made king after his father was captured by Jehoash, and before he was released, and that he did *this* after his father's release and death. This would account for Azariah's youth at the time he was made king. Ver. 22 would then follow ver. 14 in the connection of the narrative. In view of the form and substance of the intervening verses this is not at all impossible. After ver. 14 the author goes on to tell (*a*) what became of Jehoash, (*b*) what became of Amaziah, (*c*) what the people of Judah did after their king was captured (ver. 22). The immediate release of Amaziah by Jehoash rests only upon the authority of Josephus. In connection with this the other remarkable datum in ver. 17 may be noticed: Amaziah lived 15 years after Joash. (It is worth noticing that it does not say that he *reigned*.) Ewald understands this to mean that he lived as a captive, and was finally released by Jeroboam; but he does not suppose that Azariah was made king until after his father's assassination. This would leave Judah kingless for 15 years, and force us to assume that its king was assassinated as soon as he was released. If, however, we suppose that, after Amaziah was taken away captive, his son was made king; that when Amaziah was released and returned to Judah, he was not welcome there; and that the conspiracy was formed to remove him, we have a consistent theory throughout. With regard, then, to the chronology: Chap. xv. 1 says that Azariah became king in the 27th of Jerob. II. This is inconsistent with every other chronological datum, and is universally sacrificed (see the COMM. on the verse). Zachariah's accession in the 38th of Azariah would fix Azariah's accession in the 3d or 4th of Jeroboam, if we hold fast 41 years as the duration of Jeroboam's reign. If, as seems very probable, Joash died soon after he defeated and captured Amaziah, then the people of Judah waited 3 or 4 years for the release of their king, and when this did not take place, they made Azariah king. Amaziah lived 11 years longer, was released, returned, and was assassinated, and Azariah was 27 years old when he took Elath. This construction is consistent with all the texts. The "29 years" in xiv. 2, cover the period from Amaziah's accession to his death, and the "15 years" in ver. 17 hold good. Azariah reigned for 52 years from the date of his *coronation*, or 41 years from the date of *his father's death*. In the text his coronation is recognized as the true beginning of his reign, and the dates for the accession of Zachariah, Shallum, Menahem, Pekahiah, Pekah, and Jotham, are all consistent therewith. Against this construction is the strong consideration that the circumstances are not more distinctly narrated. We have no mention of Amaziah's release at all. There are also difficulties connected with the chronology, but these confront us in any case. They can only be removed by arbitrary changes, and these changes can only be based upon conjecture. Every time that I have re-examined the chronology of this period the suspicion has been revived in my mind that the error, which undoubtedly inheres in it at this point, is to be sought in the duration ascribed to the reign of *Amaziah*, although the chronologies almost all alter the data in regard to Jeroboam or Azariah. It may be that the clue to the solution of the difficulty lies in the captivity of Amaziah.—W. G. S.]

Ver. 23. **In the fifteenth year of Amaziah, &c.** This statement agrees with that in ver. 1 and in ver 17. Amaziah ruled 29 years; 14 with Joash of Israel, and 15 with his son Jeroboam II. The further statement, however, that Jeroboam reigned for 41 years, is contradicted by chap. xv. 8, which says that the son and successor of Jeroboam, Zachariah, came to the throne in the 38th year of Azariah (Uzziah). Now if Jeroboam reigned with Amaziah for 15 years, and then 38 years more with Azariah, his entire reign was not 41 but 53 years, or if, as is probable, the 15 years and the 38 years were not all complete (see Pt. II., p. 86), then 51 years. As all the chronologers agree that Zachariah's accession cannot be placed earlier than the 38th of Azariah, it is generally assumed, in order to account for the difference between 41 and 51 years, that an interregnum or anarchy of 10 years took place after the death of Jeroboam (Keil and others). But, according to chap. xiv. 29, Zachariah followed his father Jeroboam, not after an interval of 10 or 11 years, but immediately after his death. Moreover there is not the slightest sign, in the history, of any period of anarchy, though such a period must certainly have been marked by some important incidents, and we may not make history in order to account for a single inconsistent chronological statement. According to Hos. i. 1, that prophet labored under Jeroboam II., and also under Hezekiah, who did not come to the throne until 727 B. C. Now, if Jeroboam only reigned 41 years, from 823 to 782, Hosea must have labored as a prophet publicly before 782 and after 727, that is, for over 60 years; but this hardly seems possible. But if Jeroboam reigned 51 years, 823–772, then still Hosea's public work covers the great but not impossible time of 50 years. For all these reasons we are compelled to conclude, with Thenius, that there is an error here in copying the letters which designate the numbers (מא — 41 for נא — 51), and that the latter would be the correct number. Wolff (see Pt. II., p. 89), with whose other combinations we do not agree, considers the number 41 incorrect, and reckons the years of the reign of Jeroboam II. at 52. [See bracketed note on ver. 22.]

Ver. 25. **He restored the coast of Israel, &c.** As in 1 Kings viii. 65; Amos vi. 2. 14, Hamath, by which we must understand not a city merely, but also a district of Syria (2 Kings xxiii. 33; xxv. 21), is here used to designate the northern boundary of Palestine. The sea of the plain is the Dead Sea (Deut. iii. 17; Jos. iii. 16), the ordinary designation of the southern boundary of Palestine, east of the Jordan, which is more definitely marked on the frontier of Moab by the brook Arnon which flows into the Dead Sea (Isai. xvi. 2). [*Cf.* also Amos vi. 14.] Jonah is the well-known prophet (Jon. i. 1) from the city of Gath-Hepher, which lay in the territory of Zebulon (Jos. xix. 13). This oracle does not lose any of its historical value from the fact that it is not to be found in the "Book of Jonah" which we possess. It is incomprehensible how Menzel could suppose that the book of Jonah "contains this prophecy in a metaphorical form, although not directly." Others,

as Hitzig and Knobel, think that Isaiah xv. and xvi. contains the oracle of Jonah here referred to, an hypothesis which rests upon a very weak basis.—In vers. 26 and 27 it is explained how it came about that the frontiers were restored by a king who still maintained the worship of Jeroboam's calves. The ground for this lay in Jehovah's pity for His chosen people. He had not yet declared that He would blot it out for its apostasy. He helped it out of the deep distress into which it had been brought by the Syrians (chap. xiii. 3. 7), and prospered it to an extent which was no longer to be expected or hoped for; for, though Jehoash had recovered all the lost cities on this side of the Jordan, yet all the territory beyond the river was still in the hands of the Syrians. Jeroboam was the one who recovered it. On עָצוּר and עָזוּב see note on 1 Kings xiv. 10; *cf.* Deut. xxxii. 36.—In ver. 28, הֵשִׁיב cannot be translated otherwise than as in ver. 25: *he brought back.* Ewald desires to strike out לִיהוּדָה and then to read לְיִשְׂרָאֵל instead of בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל: "He recovered Damascus and Hamath for Israel." These changes are as violent as they are unnecessary. לִיהוּדָה is a periphrasis for the genitive, because the proper names do not admit of any form for the *stat. const.* (Keil, Thenius), and בְּ before יִשְׂרָאֵל means *to* or *for.* As, however, neither the cities nor the districts of Hamath and Damascus ever belonged to Judah or Israel, it is impossible to say, in the strict sense of the words, that he brought them back. David had, indeed, once conquered a part of Syria (Damascus, 2 Sam. viii. 5 and 6), and Solomon had conquered a part of Hamath (2 Chron. viii. 3, 4). It was these districts, which had long before made themselves independent of any authority of Israel, which Jeroboam recovered. The sense is then: Jeroboam re-established the frontiers of the kingdom as they had once been under David and Solomon, *i. e.*, at the most flourishing period of the kingdom.

HISTORICAL AND ETHICAL.

1. *The reign of Amaziah* had, in general, the same course as that of his father Joash (chap. 12). "We see the same good beginning, the same bad progress, and the same sad and terrible ending in the case of Amaziah as in that of Joash" (Schlier). The text itself affirms this by the words: "He did in all things like as Joash his father had done" (ver. 3.). The reasons why he clung, at the commencement of his reign, to the lawful worship of Jehovah, were rather external and traditional than the result of an internal conviction. He may have seen that this was necessary for the maintenance of his authority, just as the kings of Israel considered it necessary for political reasons to maintain the worship of Jeroboam's calf-images. It certainly was not an affair of the heart with him (2 Chron. xxv. 2). "He was a soldier with all his heart, and he was nothing more" (*Calw. Bibel*). He wanted military glory, and therefore, immediately after his accession to the throne, he collected a large army, and also hired mercenaries from Israel (2 Chron. xxv. 5 and 6). The Edomites had not provoked in any way the attack upon themselves; it was purely an expedition for conquest. The brilliant victory which he won made him arrogant, and intensified his thirst for war, so that he, in haughty self-confidence and without external occasion, challenged Israel to war, and insisted even when the latter put aside the challenge and warned him to give up his plan. His arrogance was severely punished; he was subjected to a humiliation such as no king of Judah had experienced, not even his father Joash. The Chronicler represents this as a divine judgment upon him because he introduced the worship of the gods of Edom into Judah upon his return from the expedition, and repelled haughtily the warning of a prophet against this course (2 Chron. xxv. 14–16). There is no occasion at all to doubt this story, as Thenius does, because it "is intended to put in pragmatic form the theocratic explanation of the unfortunate result of the war with Israel." Neither is it contradictory to ver. 3. The idea that divine judgments follow upon idolatry and the worship of false gods is one which runs through the entire Old Testament economy; it is not peculiar to the Chronicler, but was held also by the author of the Books of Kings, and, indeed, by all the Old Testament writers. Amaziah's unfortunate and shameful end showed that it was not enough for a king of Judah to observe the law for mere external and political reasons, but that he fulfilled his calling only when he, like David, clung to Jehovah "with all his heart."

2. It has been regarded as a proof of extraordinary humanity on the part of Amaziah that, *although he put to death, upon his accession, the murderers of his father, nevertheless he spared their sons and relatives*, contrary to the course which was commonly pursued in such cases (Curtius 6, 11: *Lege cautum erat, ut propinqui eorum, qui regi insidiati cum ipsis necarentur. Cf.* Cic. *ad Brut.* 15). "We see," says Eisenlohr (*Das Volk Israel*, II. s. 203), "that there was a remarkable development and growth of moral feeling in the nation, and that a humane and generous culture gradually supplanted the former harshness. We are forced to recognize this movement in spite of exceptional instances to the contrary, and we see that it went hand in hand with the decay of the more rigid and formal conception of moral relations, and with the growth of a more expanded moral vision." But there are no signs of any progress in humanity at this period. On the contrary, we are rather forced to infer from the oracles of the prophets Amos and Hosea, that it was a time of rudeness and violence. As for Amaziah, it is impossible to speak of any humane disposition in a man who, after killing 10,000 Edomites in battle, proceeded to throw from a rock 10,000 more who had been captured alive (2 Chron. xxv. 11, 12). The author only means to say that Amaziah, in the beginning of his reign, was guided by the precepts of the Law, and that he obeyed them also in regard to the punishment of those concerned in the murder of his father, and their children. This law came from Moses, and was not the product of a later and (as is asserted) more humane time. This is not disproved by the fact that the precept in question is contained in the Book of Deuteronomy, for that book did not repeal or abolish former statutes, it only renewed and extended them. Hitzig is decidedly in error when he says, on Jerem. xxxi. 29 (*cf.* Ezek. xviii. 2 *sq.*): "The

punishment of the sins of the fathers upon the children, a legal institution of the old covenant, is, according to ver. 29, repealed. This repeal is accomplished (ver. 31) by abolishing the entire former covenant." In the places cited, the prophets Jeremiah and Ezekiel are attacking the popular error that God had left the guilty parents unpunished, and was now punishing the children for their sins (*cf.* Havernick on Ezekiel xviii.). The author of this passage in Kings is not speaking of God's punishment of men, but of the punishment of the sons of the murderers by the king, *i. e.*, by the civil power. The civil punishment of the sons of wrong-doers for the crimes of their fathers was abolished, not in the time of Ezekiel or Jeremiah, but by the law of Moses. Amaziah's conduct was not dictated by thirst for vengeance against the fathers, nor by humane pity for the sons. It was rather a simple act of justice, in which he behaved, both towards the fathers (Ex. xxi. 12; Levit. xxiv. 17), and towards the sons (Deut. xxiv. 16), according to the Law.

[The question of the degree of humanity to be ascribed to Amaziah is of little importance. It is certain that his conduct was very different from that which was observed on all the changes of dynasties in Israel, and by Athaliah in Judah. These events were marked by the wholesale bloodshed which was common in similar cases elsewhere in the Orient. The author of the book of Kings ascribes this action of the king to his loyalty to the law of Moses, *i. e.*, Deuteronomy. The bearing of the text on the question of the time of composition of the book of Deuteronomy is plain. If the author is correct in his explanation of Amaziah's conduct, then the Book of Deuteronomy was in existence at this time. This is not the place to discuss the general evidence for the time of composition of that book, but the evidence of this verse can only be avoided by supposing that the author carried back to Amaziah the ideas of a book which was written 150 years after his death, but before the time when the Book of Kings was written, or else that this verse was put in by the compiler. Those who maintain the late origin of Deuteronomy are divided between these explanations.—The idea that God punishes the sins of the fathers upon the children is certainly found in the Mosaic Law (Exod. xx. 5; Deut. v. 9), and it is a simple fact of observation and experience, both in history and in private life. This is at once a proof and a consequence of the solidarity of the human race. No man can commit an action which will not have greater or less effect upon his contemporaries and upon succeeding generations. Those on whom the punishment falls complain of injustice in this order of things, as the Jews did who had to bear the captivity, while their fathers, who had incurred the penalty, had lived in luxury and sin and died in peace, at home. Against them the prophets maintained the justice of God in his dealings with individuals, and the responsibility of each for his own sins only. This was, undeniably, a modification or explanation of Deut. v. 9. Jeremiah (xxxi. 29 *sq.*) represents it as a new covenant which is to take the place of the old. Deut. xxiv. 16 is entirely different. It forbids, plainly and most justly, that men shall imitate the course of nature, which entails upon the children the consequences of the father's sins, by inflicting upon children physical punishment for their fathers' crimes. The latter alone comes into the discussion of Amaziah's conduct.—W. G. S.]

3. The representation of *king Joash* which is here given us supplements essentially the portrait of him which we had in the last chapter. The manner in which he here repels Amaziah's challenge is not by any means a well-meant warning; it is rather calculated to exasperate him, and to stimulate his thirst for war still further. It bears witness, not to faith and trust in God, but to great self-confidence and arrogance. The old spirit of Ephraim appears here again, and, pluming itself upon superior numbers, and external greatness and power, looks down contemptuously upon Judah. The parable of the cedar of Lebanon and the briar-bush at its feet is a piece of genuine oriental bombast, for which Joash had the less ground inasmuch as all that part of Israel beyond Jordan was still in the hands of the Syrians, and Israel was altogether in a distressed condition from which Jeroboam II. was the first to relieve it (ver. 26). Moreover, Joash did not bear in mind that fire can go forth, even out of a briar, and consume the cedars of Lebanon (Judges ix. 15). For the rest, Joash sustained himself here as a valiant soldier; he did not wait for Amaziah to attack him, but took the initiative himself, pushed on to the neighborhood of Amaziah's capital, inflicted upon him a signal defeat, and took him captive. We are not told why he did not put him to death, and, after taking Jerusalem, put an end to the kingdom of Judah, as Nebuchadnezzer afterwards did (chap. xxv.). It can hardly have been from magnanimity that he took the captive king with him to Jerusalem, left him upon the throne, and contented himself with hostages. It is more natural to suppose that he did this from arrogance. The "cedar" treated the "briar" with contempt, and let him go as beneath fear. Nevertheless he took hostages as security. We have to recognize here a dispensation of Him who meant indeed to humble Amaziah (2 Chron. xxv. 20), but who would not permit that Israel should become master of Judah.

4. *Jeroboam II.* reigned, even if we take the number 41 to be correct, longer than any other king of Israel. The history of his reign is given here very concisely, and, with the exception of the incidental mention, Amos vii. 10, we have no further information. Besides the fact that he, like all his predecessors, maintained the worship of the calf-images, we are only told in regard to him that God, according to the prophecy of Jonah, through him rescued Israel from its bitter distress, and that he restored the frontiers of the country as they had existed under David and Solomon. The complete defeat of the Syrians, and the expulsion of these arch-enemies, who had brought the kingdom to the verge of ruin, had the most important consequences. These events took place early in the reign of Jeroboam, and they show us Jeroboam as the most able and energetic of the kings of Israel. The latter part of his reign seems to have passed away without any decisive events. It was a time of peace and quiet, in which, as chap. xiii. 5 says, "The children of Israel dwelt in their tents as before," and the people enjoyed the fruit of the victory over the Syrians. It follows that Jeroboam was not only a valiant soldier, but also a prudent ruler, who understood how to use the time of peace so as to raise the material condition of his people. From the prophecies of the contemporary prophets

Amos and Hosea, it is evident that the kingdom had then attained a state of prosperity such as it had never before enjoyed (*cf.* Amos vi. 4–6; iii. 15; Hos. xii. 8). The deep depravity of the people, however, appeared just at this time, for, instead of being led, by God's bountiful goodness, to repentance, they were stimulated to pride, so that Hosea said: "According to their pasture, so were they filled," &c. (Hos. xiii. 6). Not only did the worship of the calf-images continue, but also the worship of false gods increased (Hos. iv. 12, 17; viii. 4; xi. 2; xiii. 2). A shocking corruption of morals found entrance at the same time: luxury, debauchery, shameless licentiousness, injustice, violence, falsehood, and deceit of all kinds (Amos ii. 6 *sq.*; iii. 9; v. 12; vi. 4–7; Hos. iv. 1, 2, 18), so that the kingdom went on from the height of its prosperity, only the more surely, towards its final downfall. (See the next chapter.) In so far, the time of Jeroboam was a turning point in the history of Israel. It gave the proof that this nation could better endure misfortune and oppression of every kind than earthly glory and prosperity; therefore the Lord allowed it, for its own salvation, to fall from its position as an independent nation (chap. xvii. 6 *sq.*).

5. *The prophet Jonah*, who foretold the victory of Jeroboam over the Syrians, and the restoration of the ancient boundaries by him, must have appeared in the early part of his reign. He is the first of the line of prophets who not only spoke (preached), but also wrote down their prophecies. A new phase of prophecy begins with him, so that in this respect also the reign of Jeroboam was most important for the history of redemption. Up to this point the activity of the class of prophets of whom Elijah and Elisha were the chief, was especially [and almost exclusively] directed to the present, and aimed to bring about a return from the worship of the calves, and from idolatry, to the fundamental law of Israel. They seized upon events and circumstances, not so much by their teaching and preaching, as by their acts, and their acts were signs, that is, they were acts which transmitted a divine revelation. "Since now," as Hasse (*Geschichte des Alten Bundes*, *s.* 110 *sq.*) remarks, "the house of Jehu, which owed everything to the prophets, also failed to return to the original purity of the Israelitish constitution, and since it persevered in its idolatry even under Jeroboam II., who no longer had any foreign enemy to fear, every hope of a reformation in the northern kingdom had to be given up, and the prophets could no longer hope to accomplish anything there by actual interference [*i. e.*, by such acts as the deposing of one dynasty and the institution of another. Even that extreme measure had failed in the case of the house of Jehu]; they could only allow the evil to go on to its consummation. They, therefore, gradually withdrew from the direction of affairs, and regarded it as their only remaining task to make known to this stubborn and hard-hearted generation the judgment which it was bringing down upon itself. Just at the time, therefore, when the northern kingdom was at the very height of its glory, Amos and Hosea proclaimed to it its approaching ruin, and, because Judah had also been tainted by the contagion of apostasy, Joel also appeared there at the same time, as herald of the coming judgment. This judgment could not, of course, arrest the higher destiny of Israel. Therefore the prophets saw beyond it a new and purified Israel arise, and form a united kingdom under a sceptre of the house of David, which should embrace the heathen also. The Messianic kingdom, therefore, rose up more and more distinctly as the end and aim of the entire development, as the true kingdom of God, and promises of this kingdom were joined with threats of judgment. Now for the first time did prophecy become truly prophecy—that is, a vision of coming salvation which stretched forward into and anticipated the future; and where the prophets had hitherto made use of word of mouth only, in order to influence the present, and their immediate surroundings, they now made use of writing, because coming generations also were to learn what they had received into their souls." Instead of recognizing a turning-point in the history of the prophetic institution at the time of Jeroboam, Ewald asserts (*Gesch.* iii. *s.* 565 *sq.* 3d ed. 607 *sq.*) that there was a "complete dissolution of the ancient prophetic institution" at that time. "The entire school (of Elijah and Elisha) degenerated, and moved, not forwards, but backwards." The cause of this was that "the violent and imperious character which clung to all the old kind of prophecy, but especially to its developments in the northern kingdom, could no longer be maintained over against the crown. The bow was stretched too hard—it had to break. . . . A new form of the prophetical institution now arose. . . . This did not aim to be an independent power in the kingdom, to exercise a control which admitted of no contradiction, to set up and to depose kings," &c., &c. This theory rests upon the erroneous premise mentioned above (*Hist.*, § 7, on Chap. ix.), that the ancient prophetical institution stood opposed to the crown as one independent power to another, and that they strove for the mastery, whereas the former was only a divinely appointed corrective for the latter. If we were to charge any of the prophets with violent and imperious behavior, this charge would fall first of all upon the new order of them, Hosea and Amos for instance, in comparison with whose words those of Elijah and Elisha sound mild and gentle. Jeremiah, who came still later, was called to the prophetic office with the words: "See, I have this day set thee over the nations and over the kingdoms, to root out and to pull down," &c. (Jerem. i. 10; *cf.* xviii. 7). The development of the prophetical institution stands in exact relation to the history of Israel, and is conditioned upon it. It does not break off with Elisha, who died under Jeroboam's predecessor. The word-prophets stand upon the shoulders of the deed-prophets, and carry on the work which they had founded and begun.

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

Vers. 1–20. The Reign of Amaziah. (*a*) The good beginning, vers. 1–7; (*b*) the deterioration as it advanced, vers. 8–14; (*c*) the sad ending, vers. 17–20.—Ver. 3. In cases like that of Amaziah, where faith is not completely and sincerely an affair of the heart (2 Chron. xxv. 2), it has no firm foundation and is quickly overwhelmed, either by unbelief or by superstition. A half-and-half disposition in what is good is a bridge which leads to what is evil.—In sacred and spiritual affairs we have not to ask, how did our fathers do? but, how would God have us do? Because Amaziah only

did as his father had done, he finally fared as his father had fared.—Vers. 5 and 6. The civil authority does not carry the sword in vain, but it is an avenger to inflict punishment upon him who does wickedly (Rom. xiii. 4). It is as much a sin to leave the guilty unpunished as to punish the innocent. Right and justice are distorted by both courses. Where regicides are allowed to go unpunished, out of pity or weakness, there all justice ceases. The throne [and the civil authority] are not established by weak concessions, but by righteousness (Prov. xvi. 12).—Although the faults of the fathers are not nowadays visited upon the children, yet it is not rare that the son suffers from enmity which his father incurred.

Vers. 7–14. Pride goes before a Fall. (*a*) Amaziah's arrogance; (*b*) his fall.—Ver. 7. Victory cometh from the Lord (Prov. xxi. 31). If Amaziah had seen and believed this, he would have given to God the honor, and would have humbled himself; but he ascribed the victory to himself and to his own power, and so became haughty and arrogant (Jerem. xvii. 5, 7).—Extraordinary success in our undertakings is a great temptation to arrogance (Würt. Summ.: Those must be strong legs which can support great good fortune and prosperity). God blesses our undertakings in order that we may become, not haughty, but humble (Gen. xxxii. 10 and 11). Every undue self-exaltation robs us of the blessing again. Paul labored with greater success than any other of the apostles, but he was so far from proudly exalting his heart on this account that he called himself the least of the apostles, and said: "By the grace of God I am what I am" (1 Cor. xv. 9, 10).—Ver. 8. To commence a war from mere lust for war and victory is an abomination in the sight of God. Quarrelsomeness among common people is the same as love of war among kings. The word of God says: "Follow peace with all men" (Heb. xii. 14), and: "If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men" (Rom. xii. 18).—Vers. 9 and 10. As you shout, so will the echo be. He who over-estimates his own strength, and pushes himself forward into the charge of things which he is not capable of managing, must not be surprised if he is contemptuously corrected. The warning to "Enjoy your victory (which you have already won) and stay at home!" belongs justly to vanity and self-exaltation.—He who desires to correct another for his arrogance must take good care not to fall into the same fault himself. Blame and complaint for the pride and arrogance of others often come from hearts which exalt themselves too much.—Do not parade your wisdom and strength, if you really possess them. The Lord breaks down even the *cedars* of Lebanon (Ps. xxix. 5; *cf.* Isai. ii. 12, 13). Little David, when he comes in the might of the Lord, is a match for the giant Goliath. —Ver. 11. When the humiliating truth is spoken out with scorn and derision, although it is in itself beneficial, yet it only exasperates and embitters, instead of leading to self-knowledge. As a bee sucks honey even out of a poisonous flower, so also a sincere and truth-loving soul will win even from the scorn and mockery of its enemies something good and beneficial for itself.—Arrogance and love of honor make men deaf to every warning and incapable of considering what is really best for them. But he who will not hear must feel.—Vers. 11–14. The defeat and fall of Amaziah proclaim loudly: (*a*) "Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall" (Prov. xvi. 18). "The stone falls back upon the head of him who casts it into the air" (Sir. xxvii. 28). (*b*) He who desires too much, loses even that which he already has; therefore, "Godliness with contentment is great gain" (1 Tim. vi. 6).—Vers. 13–16. "What is a man profited," &c. (Matt. xvi. 26). Joash won a great battle, took the king prisoner, conquered Jerusalem, and came back to Samaria crowned with glory and laden with gold and silver; but the best thing, the God who was yet worshipped and honored in Judah, he did not bring. He remained in the sins of Jeroboam until his end.—Vers. 17–20. It is the great grace of God when a long time is given to a man who has sinned grievously in order that he may make good again the harm which his sins have done, but then the responsibility is all the heavier when the limited time expires. There stands written on the tombstone of Amaziah by the finger of God this great and eternal truth: "God will resist the proud!"

Vers. 23–29. See *Histor. and Eth.*—Vers. 25–27. Israel's deep misery (Jer. ii. 19), and God's great pity (Ps. ciii. 10; Hos. xi. 8).—Würt. Summ.: Our faithful God helps us out of trouble according to His great compassion, even when we have not deserved it of Him, but often not until our distress has reached the highest pitch and no help is to be expected from any other quarter.—When God not only helps us out of trouble which we have not deserved, but also gives us besides what we never could have hoped for or expected, He thereby says to us: "I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked," &c. (Ezek. xxxiii. 11; Rom. ii. 4).—Ver. 25. In times of need and calamity God provides faithful servants who bear witness to his pity and call men's attention to the one thing needful. Well is it for those who listen to these voices and do not harden their hearts.—Vers. 28 and 29. Jeroboam had striven for the external prosperity of his people, and, when he died, he left the kingdom in a more flourishing condition than any previous king of Israel. For its spiritual welfare, however, he had done nothing. Calf-worship and the service of false gods had continued, and a moral rottenness had found entrance, which brought the kingdom near to ruin. So has many a one, at his death, left to his children treasures which he had won by long labor and care, but those children have not been bred in the fear and love of God, and have not been taught that "The world passeth away and the lust thereof; but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever" (1 John ii. 17; 1 Peter i. 24 *sq.*).

THIRD SECTION.

THE MONARCHY UNDER AZARIAH (UZZIAH) AND JOTHAM IN JUDAH, AND UNDER ZACHARIAH AND OTHERS UNTIL HOSHEA, IN ISRAEL.

(2 Kings xv.–xvii.)

A.—*The reigns of Azariah and Jotham in Judah, and of Zachariah, Shallum, Menahem, Pekahiah, and Pekah in Israel.*

Chap. xv. 1–38. (2 Chron. xxvi. and xxvii.).

1 In the twenty and seventh year of Jeroboam king of Israel [,] began [omit
2 began] Azariah son of Amaziah king of Judah to reign [became king]. Six-
teen years old was he when he began to reign [became king], and he reigned
two and fifty years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name *was* Jecholiah of
3 Jerusalem. And he did *that which was* right in the sight of the Lord, accord-
4 ing [like] to all that his father Amaziah had done; save that the high places
were not removed; the people sacrificed and burnt incense still on the high
5 places. And the Lord smote [touched] the king, so that he was a leper unto
the day of his death, and dwelt in a several house [house of sickness][1]. And
6 Jotham the king's son *was* over the house, judging the people of the land. And
the rest of the acts of Azariah, and all that he did, *are* they not written in the
7 book of the Chronicles of the kings of Judah? So Azariah slept with his
fathers; and they buried him with his fathers in the city of David: and Jotham
his son reigned in his stead.
8 In the thirty and eighth year of Azariah king of Judah did Zachariah the son
9 of Jeroboam reign over Israel in Samaria six months. And he did *that which
was* evil in the sight of the Lord, as his fathers had done: he departed not from
10 the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin. And Shallum
the son of Jabesh conspired against him, and smote him before the people[2], and
11 slew him, and reigned in his stead. And the rest of the acts of Zachariah,
behold, they *are* written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Israel.
12 This *was* the word of the Lord which he spake unto Jehu, saying, Thy sons
shall sit on the throne of Israel unto the fourth *generation*. And so it came to
pass.
13 Shallum the son of Jabesh began to reign [became king] in the nine and thirtieth
14 year of Uzziah king of Judah; and he reigned a full month in Samaria. For
[And] Menahem the son of Gadi went up from Tirzah, and came to Samaria, and
smote Shallum the son of Jabesh in Samaria, and slew him, and reigned in his
15 stead. And the rest of the acts of Shallum, and his conspiracy which he made,
behold, they *are* written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Israel.
16 Then Menahem [*starting* from Tirzah] smote[3] Tiphsah, and all that *were* there-
in, and the coasts [environs] thereof from Tirzah [omit from Tirzah]: because
they opened not *to him*[4], therefore he smote *it; and* all the women[5] therein that
were with child he ripped up.
17 In the nine and thirtieth year of Azariah king of Judah began [omit began]
Menahem the son of Gadi to reign [became king] over Israel, *and reigned* ten
18 years in Samaria. And he did *that which was* evil in the sight of the Lord:
he departed not all his days [omit all his days] from the sins of Jeroboam the son
19 of Nebat, who made Israel to sin. *And* [In his days—omit And] Pul the king
of Assyria came against the land: and Menahem gave Pul a thousand talents of
silver, that his hand might be with him to confirm the kingdom in his hand.

20 And Menahem exacted [imposed] the money of [upon] Israel, *even* of [upon—
omit even of] all the mighty men of wealth, of [upon] each man fifty shekels of
silver, to give to the king of Assyria. So the king of Assyria turned back, and
21 stayed not there in the land. And the rest of the acts of Menahem, and all that
he did, *are* they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Israel?
22 And Menahem slept with his fathers; and Pekahiah his son reigned in his stead.
23 In the fiftieth year of Azariah king of Judah, Pekahiah the son of Menahem
began to reign [became king] over Israel in Samaria, *and reigned* two years.
24 And he did *that which was* evil in the sight of the Lord: he departed not from
25 the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin. But Pekah the
son of Remaliah, a captain of his, conspired against him, and smote him in
Samaria, in the palace [citadel] of the king's house, [together] with Argob and
Arieh, and with him [*i. e.* Pekah *there were*] fifty men of the Gileadites: and he
26 killed him, and reigned in his room. And the rest of the acts of Pekahiah, and
all that he did, behold, they *are* written in the book of the Chronicles of the
kings of Israel.
27 In the two and fiftieth year of Azariah king of Judah, Pekah the son of
Remaliah began to reign [became king] over Israel in Samaria, *and reigned*
28 twenty years. And he did *that which was* evil in the sight of the Lord: he
departed not from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to
29 sin. In the days of Pekah king of Israel came Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria,
and took Ijon, and Abel-beth-maachah, and Janoah, and Kedesh, and Hazor,
and Gilead, and Galilee,* all the land of Naphtali, and carried them captive to
30 Assyria. And Hoshea the son of Elah made a conspiracy against Pekah the son
of Remaliah, and smote him, and slew him, and reigned [became king] in his
31 stead, in the twentieth year of Jotham the son of Uzziah. And the rest of the
acts of Pekah, and all that he did, behold, they *are* written in the book of the
Chronicles of the kings of Israel.
32 In the second year of Pekah the son of Remaliah king of Israel began
[*omit* began] Jotham the son of Uzziah king of Judah to reign [became king].
33 Five and twenty years old was he when he began to reign [became king], and
he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name *was* Jerusha,
34 the daughter of Zadok. And he did *that which was* right in the sight of the
35 Lord: he did according [like] to all that his father Uzziah had done. Howbeit
the high places were not removed: the people sacrificed and burned incense still
in the high places. He built the higher [upper] gate of the house of the Lord.
36 Now the rest of the acts of Jotham, and all that he did, *are* they not written in
37 the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Judah? In those days the Lord
began to send against Judah Rezin the king of Syria, and Pekah the son of
38 Remaliah. And Jotham slept with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers
in the city of David his father: and Ahaz his son reigned in his stead.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

[1] Ver. 5.—[חָפְשִׁית, for which 2 Chron. xxvi. 21 has חָפְשׁוּת, is an abstract noun, "sickness." *Cf.* Ew. § 165, *a* and *b*. בֵּית הַחָפְשִׁית therefore means *house of sickness, hospital.* So Gesen., Thenius, Bunsen, and others. Hengstenberg and Keil understand it to mean, "*house of freedom,*" *i. e.*, in which those dwell who are freed or released from human obligation. It is clear how artificial and forced such an explanation is. Bähr (see *Exeg.* on the verse) takes it as the English translators did, "*separate,*" but חפשׁ, although it means *free*, comes to that idea from another side. Its primary meaning is *to be loosened, lax*, and so *free from bonds*. Hence, by a connection of thought which is often found, it means, when applied to the body, *having the natural conserving forces weakened and relaxed*, *i. e.*, to be *weak, diseased, sick*. There is here a certain sense of "free," but not the one which is akin to separate. It is of the utmost importance, in following out the developments of the radical signification of a Hebrew root, not to *depart from the true line* of its development. The ramifications of different roots approach one another very often, at many points. It is all the more necessary not to pass over from one to the other. בית החפשית means "*house of sickness*," a house belonging to the king, standing by itself, no doubt, as a matter of fact, and set apart as his residence under the circumstances of his disease.—W. G. S.]

[2] Ver. 10.—Before witnesses, or, in public. קָבָל [lengthened from קְבָל, (which form Ges. gives in the *H.-W.-B.*, and pronounces *Qŭbŏl*) is to be pronounced Quobol (Böttcher, Ewald), and] is equivalent to the Chaldee קֳדָם, Dan. ii. 31: iii. 3,—Bähr.

[3] Ver. 16.—[Note the imperfect יַכֶּה after אָז. Like the historical present it is used for graphic force, to follow dramatically the succession of events as they arose or came to pass. Ew. § 184, a.

[4] Vers. 16.—[פתח is impersonal, "because it was not opened," or, "because no opening was made," i. e. because the people did not open the gates for him.

[5] Ver. 16.—[The art. with the suff. is very rare. See, however, Levit. xxvii. 23; Josh. vii. 21; viii. 33,—Ew. § 290. d.e.

[6] Vers. 29.—[הַגָּלִילָה—Elsewhere in the O. T. it is always called הַגָּלִיל. It is not regarded as a fem. and hence the ultima is not accented, though the plural has the form גְּלִילוֹת,—Ew. § 173, h, 2 and 3, note 1. Böttcher sees in it a peculiarity of the "Ephraimitic" dialect (§ 84). In form הגלילה is a perfect feminine, but, as the other form was Judaic, that is, classical, the punctuators did not accent this as a feminine. *Lehrb.* § 616, 3.—W. G. S.]

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

Ver. 1. **In the twenty and seventh year of Jeroboam.** This chronological statement, although it appears in all the versions and in the massoretic text, is inconsistent with chap. xiv. 2, 17, 23. Amaziah the father of Uzziah ruled in all 29 years (xiv. 2), 14 years contemporaneously with Joash of Israel, and 15 years contemporaneously with his successor, Jeroboam II. (xiv. 17, 23). Amaziah therefore died, and his son Uzziah succeeded him, in the 15th year of the reign of Jeroboam II., not in the 27th. In order to retain the number 27, it has been assumed that there was an interregnum of 11 or 12 years, although there is no mention of any such thing in the history. According to chap. xiv. 20, 21, Uzziah succeeded immediately upon the death of his father, and moreover, if this supposition were to be adopted, we should have to alter all the other chronological statements in chaps. xiv. and xv. *Cf.* the *Excursus on the Chronology*, below, after chap. xvii. Evidently there has been an interchange of the numerical signs here, כז, 27, has been put for טו, 15, as Capellus and Grotius supposed, and as all the expositors, even including Keil and Von Gerlach, now assume. [Thenius, adopting this solution of the difficulty, calls attention to the testimony which it bears to the antiquity of the use of טו, instead of יה, to represent 15. The latter being the abbreviation for יהוה, was avoided, as is well known, when it should have occurred in the list of numerals to represent fifteen. If טו ever stood there, of course the inference is good, that, even at a very early time, the superstitious reverence for the name יהוה had gone so far as to produce this change in the mode of writing the number. In fact, however, the change here from 27 to 15 is purely arbitrary. It must be defended by considerations drawn from the context. Any argument in its favor which is deduced from the greater or less resemblance of כז to טו is of little value. Other letters would have as great or greater resemblance. We ought to understand that, when we abandon the text as it stands, we make arbitrary changes, and we must justify them by critical grounds. We only deceive ourselves when we imagine that there is a resemblance between the numerals in the text and those we want to put there, and so persuade ourselves that we have found further support for our conjecture. That number must be put in the place of 27, which the best critical combinations require. The expositors almost all agree in reading 51 (53) for 41 as the duration of Jeroboam's reign, and then in reading 15 for 27 here, because Zachariah succeeded in Uzziah's 38th. See, however, the bracketed note on chap. xiv. 22, and the *Appendix on the Chronology*. —W. G. S.] Azariah, or Uzziah, was devoted to the worship of Jehovah, as Amaziah was at the commencement of his reign; like him, however, he still permitted the worship upon the high places. See notes on chap. xiv. 3 and 4. The chronicler says that he sought Jehovah so long as the prophet Zachariah lived (2 Chron. xxvi. 5). [The chronicler does not charge him with idolatry at all. He accounts for his leprosy by telling how he trespassed upon the function of the priests. This he did from pride; nevertheless, it was rather too great zeal in the service of Jehovah than too little. —W. G. S.]

Ver. 5. **And the Lord touched the king,** &c. This did not take place until after Uzziah had accomplished what is narrated in 2 Chron. xxvi. 6–15. The ground which is there given (ver. 16) for the punishment with leprosy is, that he, being puffed up in consequence of his victories and of his powerful position, usurped priestly functions contrary to the law (Numb. xviii. 3, 7), and thereby violated the sanctuary. It is hardly possible that he can have become a leper earlier than the last years of his long reign. His son Jotham, who ruled in his stead during his sickness, was only 25 years old when he became king in his own right by his father's death (ver. 33).—בֵּית הַחָפְשִׁית does not mean: *sick-house*, or *pest-house*, as it is now generally translated, for חפש means to be *loose*, *free*, that is, *separated* (Levit. xix. 20). Neither does it mean *house of freedom*, or *manumission* (Hengstenberg, Keil), but *house of separation*, *i. e.*, a house which stands in the open country, by itself, separate from others. Vulg: *in domo libera seorsum*. [See *Grammatical* note on the verse.] According to the Law (Levit. xiii. 46), the lepers had to dwell apart (בדד), outside of the city or the camp (2 Kings vii. 3). Probably the house in which the leprous king lived was especially built for him.—**And Jotham the king's son was over the house,** *i. e.*, he filled one of the highest offices of the court (*cf.* 1 Kings iv. 6; xviii. 3; 2 Kings xviii. 18)—**judging the people of the land** (*cf.* 1 Sam. viii. 6, 20; 1 Kings iii. 9), *i. e.*, *Vicarius erat regis, qui a populo segregatus fungi regiam potestatem non poterat* (Grotius). As was said above (Pt. II., pp. 88 and 89), this passage bears strongly against the supposition that there occurred, in the Hebrew history, joint-regencies which are not specifically mentioned. Uzziah remained king until his death; up to that event, Jotham was not co-regent, but only the representative of his father.—**In the city of David,** ver. 7. Instead of this the chronicler says (II. xxvi. 23): "In the field of the burial which belonged to the kings; for they said, He is a leper." Bertheau remarks on this: "He was buried, according to this, near to the royal tombs (with his fathers), because they did not dare to put a king who had died of leprosy in the royal sepulchres, lest they should make them unclean."

Ver. 8. **In the thirty and eighth year,** &c. In regard to the correctness of this statement, see

note on chap. xiv. 23. The assassinations of kings which had been perpetrated before this, had taken place in secret, but this one was carried out in public, that is to say, boldly and without fear. The people saw it perpetrated without opposing it. The Sept. translate quite incorrectly: *καὶ ἐπάταξεν αὐτὸν ἐν Κεβλαὰμ*. Ewald considers קָבָל־עָם a proper name, because עָם has not the article [and because קָבָל does not "occur elsewhere in prose," and because the Sept. take it as a proper name]. He believes it to be the name of the "third king during that month" [see Zach. xi. 8]. He translates: "And Kobolam slew him." Not to speak of any other objection to this, we should then expect to be told whose son he was, as in the similar cases, vers. 14, 25, and 30. [Stanley is the only scholar who has followed Ewald in this invention. The facts referred to in support of it are not by any means without weight, but the invention of another king is too ponderous a solution for them. Yet it is remarkable to notice that a form from the root קבל forms a part of certain Assyrian proper names. (See the list of Assyrian kings at the end of vol. I. of Lenormant's *Manual of the History of the East*, with foot-note thereon.) However, to take קָבָל־עָם as a proper name in the place before us renders the passage awkward and unnatural.—W. G. S.] Thenius arbitrarily pronounces ver. 12 to be an addition by the "redactor." It refers back very significantly to chap. x. 30. Zachariah was the fourth and last descendant of Jehu upon the throne of Israel.

Ver. 13. **Shallum the son of Jabesh, &c.** As the one month, during which Shallum reigned, falls in the thirty-ninth year of the reign of Uzziah, the six months, during which Zachariah was king (ver. 8), must be placed in the last part of the 38th year of Uzziah's reign; probably some of them fall even in the beginning of the 39th. According to Josephus, Shallum was a friend (*φίλος*) of Zachariah, and put him to death by taking advantage of this relation. When Menahem, *ὁ στρατηγός* (*i. e.*, the commander-in-chief), who was then in Tirzah, heard this, he started up with his entire force, and marched to Samaria, *καὶ συμβαλὼν εἰς μάχην ἀναιρεῖ τὸν Σέλλουμον*; after he had made himself king, *ἐκεῖθεν εἰς Θαψὰν παραγίνεται πόλιν*. *Tirzah* lay in the neighborhood of Samaria. See above, note on 1 Kings xiv. 17.—**Then Menahem,** ver. 16, *i. e.*, after he had made himself master of the throne. The verse contains a further continuation of ver. 14, and tells more definitely what Menahem did, after he had killed Shallum, in order to become ruler of the country. This event does not belong to the reign of Menahem, for the story of that does not begin until the 17th verse, but it belongs to the incidents connected with his taking possession of the throne. It follows that *Tiphsah* is not the celebrated Thapsacus on the Euphrates (as it is in 1 Kings v. 4; see note thereon), as has often been supposed, and as Keil [and Rawlinson] yet maintain. Menahem could not, at any time, have undertaken an expedition against this far distant city, which formed the utmost limit of the kingdom of Solomon; least of all could he have undertaken this just after ascending the throne. He had enough to do to establish his usurped authority on a firm basis. Most commentators, therefore, correctly judge that Tiphsah was a city near Tirzah, of which, as of so many others which are mentioned but once, nothing further is known. The name תִּפְסַח, *trajectus*, ford, "may, in view of its appellative force, have been applied to many towns which lay near to fords" (Winer). There is not sufficient reason for believing that "תפסח is an error for תַּפּוּחַ," a town on the border between Ephraim and Manasseh, Jos. xvii. 7, 8 (Thenius).—מִתִּרְצָה cannot be translated otherwise than as in ver. 14. It does not therefore mean: "from Tirzah on," *i. e.*, to Tiphsah, but: "starting out from Tirzah," and it is to be joined with יַכֶּה, not with גְּבוּלֶיהָ. The meaning of the passage is, therefore, this: When Menahem heard of the events which had happened in Samaria, he marched from Tirzah with his army, or a part of it, to Samaria, and there slew Shallum. Then he went back to Tirzah and marched out with his entire force to reduce the country to obedience to himself. In Tiphsah he met with obstinate resistance, but took the city by storm (Josephus: *κατὰ κράτος*), and chastised it and the surrounding territory in a horrible manner (Josephus: *ὠμότητος ὑπερβολὴν οὐ καταλιπὼν οὐδὲ. ἀγριότητος*). He thereby frightened any others who might have been intending to resist, and so established himself on the throne. We have mention of a similar cruelty towards pregnant women in chap. viii. 12; Hos. xiv. 1 [E. V. xiii. 16]; Amos i. 13. If newspaper reports may be believed, a guerilla captain in Michoacan, Mexico, did the same thing in the year 1861.

Ver. 17. **In the nine and thirtieth year, &c.** On the duration of Menahem's reign, see note on ver. 23. The closing words of ver. 18: כָּל־יָמָיו are nowhere else added to the stereotyped formula which recurs in that verse, although they would hold just as true of any of the other kings of Israel as of Menahem. The Sept. join the words to the following verse, and translate: *ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις αὐτοῦ ἀνέβη Φοὺλ*. They therefore read בימיו, and Thenius and Keil, referring also to ver. 29, agree in regarding this as the original reading of the text. By this change בָּא, at the commencement of ver. 19, comes into a good connection of sense, and is not left abrupt; also there is no need for Hitzig's emendation וַיָּבֹא.—Pul (ver. 19) is the first Assyrian king who is mentioned in the Old Testament. In fact this is the first reference to the Assyrians in the history of the Israelites. Since they had to come through Syria in order to reach Palestine, it follows that they must have reduced that country to subjection, and extended their power on this side of the Euphrates; *i. e.*, Assyria must have commenced to take the position of a great world-monarchy. [Assyria had begun to take the position of a world-monarchy, but it must be understood that these expeditions were *raids* rather than complete conquests. Tribute was imposed and then the defeated nation was left intact. It refused the tribute as soon as it dared and then a new expedition was made against it. It was only after a long period of this vassal relationship that a conquered country was incorporated as a

province of the empire. Accordingly very few were ever thus treated at all. The expression for incorporation used in the inscriptions is to "treat them like the Assyrians."—W. G. S.] Hosea (viii. 10) calls the king of Assyria "The king of princes." ["King of kings" is a standing epithet of the Assyrian monarchs upon their monuments.] It has often been inferred from Hos. v. 13; vii. 11; viii. 9 that Menahem invited the Assyrians to support him against other aspirants to the crown (Thenius), and that Pul came "to help the king to restore order" (Ewald). This notion is controverted by the expression בָּא עַל־הָאָרֶץ, which is used of a *hostile* coming and attack, Gen. xxxiv. 25; Judges xviii. 27; Isai. x. 28; Job ii. 11. In I Chron. v. 26, Pul's coming is distinctly referred to as a hostile attack. Menahem induced the mighty enemy to withdraw from the country by a large sum of money, and then secured his alliance against internal and external foes. This last is what Hosea calls Israel's going to Assyria. A thousand talents of silver are about two or two and a half million thalers [$1,440,000 or $1,800,000. The value of the talent is not surely and definitely known.] Menahem imposed this sum as a tax (יֹּצֵא, he made the money go out) upon the "able ones" in Israel. גִּבּוֹרֵי הַחַיִל are not here the mighty men of the army, but those who were strong in wealth (Job xx. 15; Ruth ii. 1). Either there were no treasuries then in Israel, or, if there were any, they were empty. Menahem did not include the poor in this tax, in order that he might not excite discontent, and might not have to use force to collect it. **Each man fifty shekels of silver.** As a talent contained 3,000 shekels, there must have been 60,000 "mighty men of wealth." The interpretation, that Menahem paid to Pul 50 shekels for every soldier in his army (Richter), is incorrect. It is often inferred, though incorrectly, from 1 Chron. v. 26, that Pul, on his departure, took away Reuben and Gad and the half of Manasseh. This deed is ascribed there, as here, to Tiglath Pileser (see Bertheau on that passage). The assertion of the *Calw. Bibel* that "this entire occurrence was prophesied in Amos vii. 1–3," has little or no foundation.

Ver. 23. **In the fiftieth year of Azariah,** &c. As Menahem became king, according to ver. 17, in the 39th of Uzziah, and ruled 10 years, we expect here the 49th year. Keil assumes that "some months passed between the death of Menahem and the accession of Pekahiah; probably because of the disorder which prevailed at the time, and which made this accession difficult." We prefer to suppose that Menahem became king in the last months of the 39th year of Uzziah, and reigned for a month or two into his 50th, *i. e.*, a few months over ten years. [This changes the form of the difficulty, but does not do away with it at all. If the facts had been as is here supposed, the Jewish mode of reckoning would have made Menahem's reign 11 or 12 years in duration. There is a discrepancy which we cannot explain. We must either change the text, or pass it over, taking 10 years as the length of the reign and neglecting the other statement. The attempted explanations are futile.—W. G. S.] On שָׁלִישׁ, ver. 25, see *Exeg.* note on 1 Kings ix. 22. It is not apposition to Remaliah (as Luther took it), but to Pekah. The citadel of the king's house is not the harem (Ewald). It is the fortified part of the palace into which Pekahiah fled when the conspirators approached (*cf.* 1 Kings xvi. 18). [So far as we know there was no part of the Oriental palaces which was, in any proper sense, fortified. The Assyrian palaces which have been exhumed consist of three independent yet connected buildings, a hall of audience or business, a servants' house, and the harem. The last was the most strictly enclosed and carefully guarded, and was the strongest for defence. It was connected by an enclosed cloister with the first mentioned building. If we may judge from this of the arrangement of a Samaritan palace, the ארמון was the harem or included it.—W. G. S.] Josephus gives as the reason for his short reign of two years: τῇ τοῦ πατρὸς κατακολουθήσας ὠμότητι. Argob and Arieh were no doubt high officials, and influential friends of the king, whose opposition was to be feared, and whom Pekah, therefore, put to death together with (אֶת) the king. The following עִמּוֹ shows that they were not fellow-conspirators of Pekah (as many have supposed) who, with him, murdered the king. The fifty Gileadites probably belonged to the body-guard which was under the command of Pekah. The Gileadites, who were stout soldiers (1 Chron. xii. 8; xxvi. 31; Josh. xvii. 1), were employed in this department of the service.

Ver. 27. **In the two and fiftieth year,** &c. On the chronological data in vers. 27 and 30, see below, after chap. xvii. The following may suffice here: Pekah is said (ver. 27) to have reigned only 20 years. But, according to ver. 32, he reigned two years before Jotham. The latter reigned 16 years. According to chap. xvii. 1, Pekah's successor, Hoshea, came to the throne in the 12th year of Jotham's successor Ahaz. But $2 + 16 + 12 = 30$. We are therefore compelled to conclude that the time from the accession of Pekah to that of Hoshea was thirty years. All the commentators agree in this. Then, either Pekah ruled 30 instead of 20 years, or he reigned 20 years and there was an interval of 10 years before the accession of his successor, Hoshea, during which there was no king in Israel, and, as those who adopt this view agree, there was anarchy. Ver. 30, however, contradicts this latter hypothesis, for it is there said that Hoshea slew Pekah and reigned in his stead, not after an interval of 10 years, but as soon as he had killed him. The history does not hint at any period of strife or anarchy, although such a period must have presented incidents worth recording. We do not hesitate, therefore, to assume here, as in ver. 1, that an error in copying has been made. The error here, in writing כ, 20, for ל, 30, is one which could take place more easily than the one we discovered there (Thenius). All the other chronological data are consistent with 30 in this place, as we shall see below, on chap. xvii. [See the translator's addition below at the end of this *Exeg.* section.]

Ver. 29. **In the days of Pekah . . came Tiglath Pileser.** This Assyrian king was the successor of Pul. To which of the Assyrian dynasties he belonged, and whether he was the last

of the dynasty of the Dercetadæ, are questions which do not interest us here [?] (Keil on the passage). The signification of the name Tiglath-pileser (or, as the chronicler writes it, Tilgath-pilneser) is uncertain. According to Gesenius, Tiglath is equivalent to Diglath, the Tigris river, and pileser means lord: "Lord of the Tigris river.". According to Fürst, Tiglath means *acer*, *fortis*.—[This is the etymological meaning of Diglath, applied to the Tigris from its swiftness. See the dictionaries on חִדֶּקֶל.]—פַּל, *arcere*, and אָסַר, prince; together: "The chief, as mighty defender." According to others, Diglath is the name for the goddess Derceto, or Atargatis. [The name is transcribed from the cuneiform by Lenormant: Tuklat-pal-ashir; by Smith: Tukulti-pal-zara; by Rawlinson: Tiglat-pal-zira. Rawlinson (*Five Great Monarchies*, II. 539) gives the etymology thus: *Tiglat* is *worship*, or *adoration* (Chald. תְּכַל, *to trust in*); *pal* is *son* (of this there is no doubt; it occurs in scores of names); *zira* is obscure; Sir. H. Rawlinson thinks that it means *lord*, "as *Zirat* certainly means *lady*." However this last may be, *Pal-zira*, as a compound, was an epithet of the god *Nin* (= Hercules), and the king's name would mean: "Worship to Hercules." This is the only explanation yet offered which is anything more than a guess.—W. G. S.] On *Ijon* and *Abel-beth-maachah*, see notes on 1 Kings xv. 20. *Janoah* cannot be the town on the border between Ephraim and Manasseh, which is mentioned Josh. xvi. 6 *sq.*, for all the cities here mentioned were in the northern part of Palestine; it probably lay near those which have been mentioned. *Kedesh* was a free, levitical city in the tribe of Naphtali (Josh. xix. 37; xx. 7; xxi. 32); on the western bank of the sea of Merom (Robinson, *Palest.* III. 355). On *Hazor* see note on 1 Kings ix. 15. *Gilead* with the article is not a city but the territory east of the Jordan which Jeroboam II. had recovered to Israel (chap. xiv. 25). On *Galilee*, or Galilah, see note on 1 Kings ix. 11. **All the land of Naphtali** is an explanatory apposition to Galilah. The places are mentioned in the order in which they were conquered. The incident which is here narrated coincides with that in chap. xvi. 9 (see Maurer on that verse) and belongs to the last years of Pekah's reign. Perhaps it gave occasion to Hosea's conspiracy against him. The chronological statement in ver. 30: **in the twentieth year of Jotham,** cannot be correct, for Jotham only reigned 16 years. See further, notes on chap. xvii.

Ver. 32. **In the second year of Pekah,** &c. On the section vers. 32–38 see the parallel narrative in 2 Chron. xxvii. 1–9, which contributes further information in regard to Jotham. To the words: **He did like to all that his father Uzziah had done,** the Chronicler adds: "howbeit he entered not into the temple of the Lord," *i. e.*, into the inner sanctuary, by which it is meant to say that he did not usurp priestly functions as Uzziah had done (2 Chron. xxvi. 16). He did not abolish the worship on the heights (ver. 4 and chap. xiv. 4). **He built the upper gate,** *i. e.*, he restored it, he rebuilt it more splendidly, for it could not well be meant to assert that he built it at this time, and that there had been none before. הָעֶלְיוֹן is not the highest gate, nor the chief gate, but "the upper one," perhaps because it was toward the north, towards that part of the temple rock, which, as compared with the south side, was higher. (Bertheau, on 2 Chron. xvii. 3). ["King Solomon's palace was evidently at a lower level than the temple, and therefore (2 Chron. xxvii. 3) king Jotham may still have built much upon the wall." (*Jerusalem Restored*, p. 222).] According to Ezek., xl. 38 *sq.*, the sacrifices were slain at this gate. (*Cf.* Ezek. ix. 2; viii. 5.) This is probably the reason why Jotham made it especially beautiful. In Jerem. xx. 2 it is called the gate of Benjamin. It must not be confused with the gate סוּר, chap. xi. 6, for this was adjoining the palace (see *Exeg.* note on that ver.).—**In those days** (ver. 37), *i. e.*, towards the end of Jotham's reign, Jehovah began to send against Judah the confederated Israelites and Syrians, *i. e.*, he brought this chastisement upon Judah (Levit. xxvi. 22; Amos viii. 11). *Rezin;* "the name of the founder of the dynasty (1 Kings xi. 23) [rather of the founder of the monarchy. There had been more than one dynasty.] appears again, slightly altered, in him who was to close it" (Thenius). The attacks were begun under Jotham; under his successor Ahaz (chap. xvi.) they first became threatening to the kingdom. As the Assyrians had already once penetrated into Palestine (ver. 19), and as Ahaz once more called on them for aid against Rezin and Pekah (chap. xvi. 7), we must suppose that the Syrians had, in the mean time, freed themselves once more from the Assyrian yoke (see notes on ver. 19). This had probably become possible for them because the Assyrians, on account of the revolt of the Medes and Babylonians, were prevented for a time from maintaining their authority. Tiglath Pileser reconquered Damascus (chap. xvi. 9).

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[Supplementary Note *on the references to Assyrian history contained in* chap. xv.—The references to contemporaneous history which occur in the text are of the highest value for the solution of the chronological difficulties, and for the elucidation of the history. Every such reference, therefore, requires our most careful attention. In the three years since the German edition of this volume was published most important contributions have been made to our knowledge, especially of Assyrian history. It is difficult to understand how the German author could lay aside all notice of the results which had been attained, even at that time, and refuse to take notice of them. The time has now certainly come when biblical scholars must give them attention, and a summary of the information we possess is given in a series of notes at the end of the *Exegetical* sections on the next few chapters.*

* Of works which are available to the English student for acquiring a more detailed acquaintance with history contemporaneous to that of the Israelitish monarchy, we may mention the following: a) Prof. Geo. Rawlinson's *Five Great Monarchies of the Ancient World.* (4 Vols. Murray: London, 1864. 2d ed. 1871.) This work is based on the investigations and opinions of Sir H. Rawlinson. The first edition has been already to some extent superseded by later discoveries. b) *Manual of Ancient History*, by the same (Harpers' reprint, 1871). This is a small and convenient work. A large part of it is taken up with the history of Greece and Rome, and the history of the Oriental nations is so much epitomized that it is hardly available for any who are not already familiar with the history from other sources. It is not consistent in its chronology. It adopts the "short period" for Assyrian history, but has not ventured to depart from the received chronology for the Israelitish

Pul (ver. 19) is the first king of Assyria who is mentioned in the Book of Kings, though we know from the monuments and inscriptions that Ahab and Jehu both came in contact with the Assyrian world-monarchy. (See notes 5 and 12 on the *Chronological Table*, and p. 114 of PART II.) No such king is mentioned in any inscription which has yet been found, and no such one is named in the *Canon* (See *Appendix on the Chronology*, § 4). Rawlinson (*Five Great Monarchies*, II., p. 385 *sq.*) thinks that the identification with certain known kings of Assyria, which has been attempted, is unsatisfactory, but does not dispose definitely of the question. In the *Manual*, *Pul* is not mentioned among the kings of Assyria though he is mentioned in the section on "Judæa." Oppert offers a solution of the difficulty. He gives credit to the story of the "first destruction of Nineveh" by the Chaldeans and Medes. According to his identification of the eclipse mentioned in the Canon (*App. on the Chron.*, § 4.), the date of this would be 789. The accession of *Tiglath Pileser* II. in 747–6 is beyond dispute. The gap between 789 and 747 is filled by inserting *Pul*, a Chaldean (the name is not Assyrian in form), who is supposed to have remained in Assyria after the destruction of Nineveh as ruler of the country. This, such as it is, is the best conjecture to account for the king mentioned in ver. 19.

Tiglath Pileser II. (ver. 29) was, according to Rawlinson, a usurper, according to Lenormant, a descendant of the ancient Assyrian dynasty. His reign dates from 745–4, but he may have been engaged for two or three years before that time in securing the throne. He reigned until 727. He is said in the text to have come into Syria and Samaria in the reign of Pekah. This is the first instance we find of that policy of deportation which the Assyrians and Babylonians afterwards practised so much. It was not generally, or certainly had not been up to this time, the policy of the Assyrians to destroy the nationality of the nations which they subdued. (See bracketed note on ver. 19.) They made expeditions against certain nations which they plundered and made tributary, but which they then left undisturbed so long as the tribute was paid. It was only after long vassalage, and repeated revolts and reconquests, that nations were incorporated as provinces in the Assyrian empire.

We are now promised from the Assyrian inscriptions a solution of one of the most perplexing discrepancies in the chronological statements of the text, and one which, if correct, at the same time supplies an omission in the historical narrative. It is said that Pekah reigned for 20 years (ver. 27), but it is stated also that he came to the throne in the 52d of Azariah, who reigned for 52 years. In chap. 17, 1, it is said that Hoshea (Pekah's successor) came to the throne in the 12th of Ahaz. In the mean time Jotham reigned for 16 years. But 1+16+12=29 or 28 years interval for Pekah's reign. This difficulty has never been solved; it has only been put aside by the assumption of an interregnum after the death of Pekah.

Oppert claims to have discovered the explanation in certain statements of the inscriptions. Lenormant adopts his results, but Rawlinson does not. "It is found that the reign of Pekah was interrupted for more than 7 years; that about 742 he was deposed by a second Menahem, probably a son of Pekahiah, who was placed on the throne by Tiglath Pileser II., king of Assyria, to whom he paid tribute as vassal. In 733 a new revolution dethroned him and restored Pekah. The latter, openly hostile to the Assyrians, whose vassal he had dethroned, made an alliance with Rezin, king of Damascus. These two princes, even in the time of Pekah's first reign, had formed the design of overturning the throne of the House of David, and installing as king in Jerusalem a certain son of Tabeel (his own name is given in the inscription—Ashariah), a creature of their own (see ver. 37, where they seem to have formed the plan before Jotham's death, and Isai. vii. 1–6), in order, probably, to oppose a more compact force to the Assyrians." (Lenormant, I. 172; *cf.* also 389.) See note 15 on the *Chron. Table.* In the last column of the table the chronology of the events of this period is given according to this scheme. In the second alliance and revolt of Rezin and Pekah, in 733, they resumed the plan of attacking Judah. Ahaz called for Tiglath Pileser's aid (see note after *Exeg.* on chap. xvi.), and that monarch marched into Damascus. He put Rezin to death, made Damascus a province, forced many of the chief inhabitants of Syria, northern, and trans-Jordanic Israel to emigrate into Armenia, and, though he left Pekah on the throne, reduced the kingdom of Israel to the district of Samaria. Pekah was present as a vassal at Tiglath Pileser's court in Damascus in 730.

"Towards the end of 730, Muthon, king of Tyre, made an alliance with Pekah, king of Israel, and they both refused their tribute to the Assyrians. Tiglath Pileser did not consider this revolt of sufficient importance to require his own presence. He contented himself with sending an army into Palestine. On the approach of this force a conspiracy was formed in Samaria, headed by Hoshea, who, after killing Pekah, possessed himself of the crown. The Assyrian king confirmed him in this position, and Muthon, finding himself without an ally, attempted no resistance, and quickly submitted to pay his tribute." (Lenormant, I. 391.)—For continuation see *Supp. Note* after the *Exeg.* section on chap. xvi.—W. G. S.]

HISTORICAL AND ETHICAL.

1. This chapter contains rather *a succinct review of several reigns* than a detailed account of them. Although we have very little specific information in regard to the character and conduct

monarchy in order to bring them into accord. (See notes 5 and 15 on the *Chronological Table* at the end of this volume, and the *Appendix on the Chronology*. Both these works are marked by a certain timidity and want of independence. c) Lenormant's *Manual of the Ancient History of the East;* English edition edited by Chevallier Asher: London, 2 vols.; Vol. I., 1869; Vol. II., 1870. This the edition to which the references in this volume apply. [illegible]print by Lippincott). The French edition (Levy: Paris, [illegible]9) is accompanied by an excellent historical atlas. [illegible]is work is based chiefly upon the researches of Oppert, but contains also original investigations and independent judgment. It presents a very satisfactory statement of the present state of our knowledge, and is in style and method very available as a student's manual. The caution needs to be borne in mind, however, in using it, that assured facts and hypothetical conjecture are sometimes combined to produce a smooth narrative, and that the reader has little warning as to which is which. It is very conservative in its religious and theological attitude, and the English edition follows the E. V. sometimes even where it is certainly incorrect.

of the kings mentioned, yet we have a statement about each one in respect to his attitude towards the fundamental law, or constitution, of Israel, that is, towards the covenant of Jehovah. This is always stated in a stereotyped formula. Hence we see that this point was the most important one, in the eyes of the author, in regard to any king, and that, in reviewing or estimating his reign, he laid most stress on this inquiry: How did he stand towards the covenant with Jehovah—the constitution of Israel? After the death of Jeroboam II. the decline of the Kingdom of the Ten Tribes went on without interruption. From the reign of Zachariah on, the kingdom was in the progress of dissolution. The author therefore hastens more rapidly over the period of these kings, of whom three, indeed, only reigned for a very short time, and gives only those facts in regard to them which bear either upon the chief question mentioned above, or upon the approaching catastrophe. For everything beyond this he refers to the original authorities. It is true that he follows the same course in regard to Uzziah and Jotham, who belonged, according to the Chronicler, to the number of energetic and efficient rulers, but this is to be explained, first, by the fact that he treats the history of Judah with less detail from the time of the division of the kingdom on, and, secondly, by the character of the activity of these two kings, which was directed almost exclusively to the external and political prosperity of the nation, not to the restoration and complete realization of the theocracy, which was, for this author, the matter of chief interest. From what the Chronicler gives in addition, we cannot see that the religious and moral life took any new *élan* under their rule, or reached any more vigorous development. Both were, it is true, favorable to the worship of Jehovah, but they lacked decided zeal for it, for "the people still sacrificed and offered incense upon the heights;" *i. e.*, they did nothing to abolish a form of worship which could so easily lead to error. The external prosperity which they produced and fostered caused carelessness, luxury, forgetfulness of God, and immorality of every kind, just as the same causes had produced these vices in Israel under Jeroboam II. This we see from the descriptions of the prophets (see Isai. ii–v.). A slow corruption and demoralization was making its way in Judah. It became evident, and bore fruit under the next king, Ahaz. His successor, Hezekiah, was the first to bring the Mosaic constitution into full and efficient working, hence the author narrates in detail the reign of this genuine theocratic king (*cf.* chaps. xviii., xix., and xx.).

[Ewald (*Gesch.* III. *s.* 634) thus describes the state of Judah under Uzziah: At this time the people turned their attention to money-getting "not so much, as had formerly been the case, in particular provinces and districts, but throughout the country, even in Judah, and not so much because a single king like Solomon favored commercial undertakings, as because the love of trade and gain, and the desire for the easy enjoyment of the greatest possible amount of wealth, had taken possession of all classes. All the scorn poured out by the prophets upon this haste to be rich, and all their rebukes of the tendency to cheat, which was one of the fruits of it, no longer availed to restore the ancient simplicity and contentment (Hos. xii. 8; Isai. ii. 7). The long and fortunate reign of Uzziah in Judah was very favorable to the growth of this love of gain and enjoyment. The quick interchange of money in the lower classes, and the fierce struggle for gain which gradually absorbed the entire people, stimulated the upper classes to similar attempts. Many were the complaints in Judah of the injustice of the judges, and of the oppression of the helpless (Amos iii. 1; vi. 1; Hos. v. 10; *cf.* also Ps. xii.). There was a perverse and mocking disposition prevalent which led men to throw doubt upon everything and to raise objections to everything (Amos vi. 3; ix. 10; Hos. iv. 4). It made them treat with harsh contempt the rebukes and exhortations of the best prophets, as we feel distinctly from the whole tone of the writings of Amos, Hosea, and Isaiah. It led them to desire to know heathen religions, and to introduce foreign divinities, even when the king himself held aloof from any such movement (Amos ii. 4; Hos. iv. 15; vi. 11; xii. 1; Isai. ii. 8). It became more and more difficult to restrain these tendencies."]

2. The only incident which is mentioned during *the long reign of Uzziah* is that God touched him (נגע), and that he was a leper until his death. It follows that this fact must have seemed to the author to be important before all others. Leprosy is not, for him, an accidental disease, but a divine judgment for guilt, as it is often described (Numb. xii. 10; Deut. xxiv. 8, 9; 2 Sam. iii. 29; 2 Kings v. 27). He does not tell more particularly what the sin of the king was, perhaps because it was baleful to the king alone and personally, and not to the whole people, like the sin of Jeroboam. He rests with a simple reference to the original documents. [The author of the Book of Kings regards Uzziah's sickness as a visitation of Providence, just as he regards any other affliction, or any piece of good fortune, as something sent by God. He does not know of any guilt on the part of Uzziah for which this was a judgment. He simply mentions it as a matter of interest in itself, and in its connection with the fact, otherwise unparalleled in the history of the monarchy (unless Uzziah was made king while his father was a captive), that the king's son exercised royal functions during his father's life-time. He does not hint at any belief on his part that this was a proof that the king had been guilty of some sin, and it does not behoove us to draw any such inference.—W. G. S.] On the contrary, the Chronicler (2 Chron. xxvi. 16 *sq.*) gives a detailed explanation of the cause of this visitation. According to him the king, who had become arrogant and puffed up by his prosperity and by the power he had attained, was no longer contented with the royal authority, but sought, as an absolute ruler, to combine with it the highest priestly authority and functions, as the heathen kings did. The institution of the levitical priesthood, however, formed an essential part of the theocratic constitution, and the monarchy, which was, moreover, not established until much later, was not justified in attempting to absorb the priestly office and to overthrow its independence. Uzziah's guilt, therefore, did not consist in a single illegal action, but in an assault upon the constitution. A principle was at stake, whose violation would have opened a cleft in the theocratic constitution. According to Josephus, Uzziah went into the sanctuary (holy-place), on a great feast-day, before the entire people, ἐνδὺς ἱερατικὴν στολήν, and offered incense there upon the golden al-

tar. [Thenius calls attention to the remarkable detail in the account of this incident in Josephus. Josephus says that the earthquake which is mentioned in Amos i. 1, and Zach. xiv. 5, as having occurred during Uzziah's reign, took place at the moment of his quarrel with the priests; that it broke the roof of the temple, and that a ray of sun-light penetrated this, fell upon the head of the king, and produced the leprosy.] No former king had ventured to make such an assault upon the independent authority of the priesthood. Thenius says: "It is most probable that the powerful king desired to reassume the high-priest's functions which had been executed by David and Solomon," but this is decidedly false, for there is no hint anywhere that David and Solomon executed priestly functions in the holy place, or in the holy of holies; in fact, there is nothing in the whole Old Testament about any "chief-priestly authority of the kings." (See notes on the passage 1 Kings ix. 25.) It was not, therefore, "any improper self-assertion on the part of the priests against the king" (Ewald). They did right to resist him. On the other hand, it was a usurpation on the part of the king to attempt any such violence upon the rights and functions of the priesthood which God had appointed. It was as much the right as it was the duty of the priests not to allow any such invasion of their prerogatives, and if they resisted the powerful and revered monarch, their courage deserves to be honored. Moreover, it was not they, but Jehovah, who smote the king with leprosy, and he was now compelled to abandon not only the priestly, but also the royal functions.

3. Witsius (*Decaphyl.* p. 320) says of *the five kings who followed Zachariah: non tam reges fuere quam fures, latrones ac tyranni, augusto regum nomine indigni; qui tyrannidem male partam neque melius habitam fœde amiserunt.* They all persevered in the sin of Jeroboam, which was, from the very commencement of the kingdom, the germ of its ruin. It is to them that the prophet's words apply: "They have set up kings, but not by me; they have made princes and I knew it not" (Hos. viii. 4). Only one of them died a natural death and left the succession to his son, who, in his turn, could only retain the sceptre for a short time. Of the others, each one killed his predecessor in order to gain the crown, the authority of which was, in the mean time, shattered by these commotions. One of the most important factors in the history of this period is the conflict with the rising Assyrian monarchy, which came to assist the internal dissension in hurrying the nation to its downfall. Assyria was destined, in the purpose of God, to be the instrument for inflicting the long-threatened judgment. Invited, probably, by the internal weakness and distraction which commenced under Zachariah, Pul made the first invasion during the reign of Menahem; he could only be bribed to withdraw by a heavy tribute. The second Assyrian, Tiglath Pileser, came during Pekah's reign; he could not be satisfied with money, but carried off a large portion of the inhabitants into captivity. The third, Shalmaneser, came during Hoshea's reign, captured Samaria, and put an end to the kingdom forever (chap. xvii. 6). [See the bracketed addition at the end of the *Exegetical* section, above.]

4. Not a single event of *the reign of Zachariah*, which, in fact, only lasted for six months, is mentioned. It is, however, stated expressly that with him the house of Jehu expired, according to the words of the prophet, chap. x. 30, and not by dying out, but in a violent and bloody way (Hos. i. 4; Amos vii. 9). This was also an actual confirmation of the declaration in the fundamental law of Israel, that God visits the sins of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation (Ex. xx. 5; xxxiv. 7; Deut. v. 9); that is, the sin against the first and chief commandment: "Thou shalt have none other Gods before me, and shalt not make to thyself any graven image" [the first commandment, according to the Lutheran division]. This commandment was the foundation of the covenant with Israel and the centre of the Israelitish nationality. The meaning is, therefore, that the "sin of Jeroboam" will not be permitted by God to run on beyond the third or fourth generation (*cf.* Menken, *Schriften*, V. *s.* 35). No dynasty in Israel which followed the sin of Jeroboam lasted for more than three or four generations. The house of Jeroboam, like that of Baesha and Menahem, perished with its first member; the house of Omri with its third, and the house of Jehu with its fourth. Zimri, Shallum, Pekah, and Hoshea died without successors, while the house of David remained without [long] interruption upon the throne. Although single kings in the line were guilty of apostasy, yet the sin was never continued until the second generation. [On the physical calamities which marked the last years of Jehu's dynasty, and on the death of Zachariah, see Stanley, II. 400–403.]

5. *Shallum*, the king of a month, had no historical importance further than this, that he murdered and was murdered. Both these facts go to show, what the author desires to show, the state in which the kingdom then was. The history makes special mention of only two events in the history of Menahem, although he reigned for ten years, but these two events are characteristic of him and of the state of the kingdom. The first is his campaign against Tiphsah, the city which would not admit him, that is, would not recognize him as king. We see from this that he was not at all beloved, and that the land was already distracted by parties. The fact that he there perpetrated a great massacre, and did not even spare the infant in its mother's womb, and so raged against his own countrymen after the manner of the most savage foreign foes, shows that he was a bloody tyrant, who desired from the outset to fill all his opponents with terror. Machiavelli's words (*De principe*, 8) apply to him: "He who violently and without just right usurps a crown, must use cruelty, if cruelty becomes necessary, once for all, in order that he may not find it necessary to recommence the use of it daily." The second fact mentioned in regard to this reign, one which had decisive influence upon the fate of the whole nation, is the contact with Assyria. Menahem pressed from his subjects a large sum of money, in order not only to bribe the Assyrian king to leave his territory, but also to purchase his support and assistance against his subjects themselves. He was the first king of Israel who, in order to hold his people in subjection and establish his own authority, purchased the assistance of a foreign power. "In order to establish his authority, at the price of the independence of his people, he founded his power upon the Assyrian support" (Duncker). It was against this course that the prophet Hosea pronounced his in-

tense denunciations (v. 13; vii. 11; x. 6). Instead of establishing the kingdom securely by these means, the king only hastened its ruin, for "it has always been thus in the history of the world; the protection of mighty nations has only been the first step towards oppression by them. Such protection has often been, as it was here for Israel, a punishment for those who sought it" (*Calw. Bibel*). Starke's observation: "Menahem acts prudently here, not only in purchasing the departure of the invader with money, but also in laying the tribute as a tax upon his wealthy subjects," entirely misses the historical connection. Ewald says: "Menahem seemed at first to be inspired with better principles, and it seemed as if the nation would take new life, under his rule, after three incapable rulers had been killed in a single month." The fact of the three kings is asserted on the strength of Zach. xi. 4–8, where "three shepherds" are mentioned, but it falls at once as destitute of foundation. "Kobolam" is a pure fiction (see *Exeget.* on ver. 10). There is no hint in the text of any better principles at the beginning of Menahem's reign; his conduct at Tiphsah rather bears testimony to the contrary. Also all the rest which Ewald brings together in regard to Menahem's reign (*Gesch.* III. *s.* 599 *sq.* [3d Ed. *s.* 644]) rests upon passages in the prophets Zachariah, Isaiah, and Hosea, which do not contain any history. Winer justly characterizes it as: "a very ill-founded combination."

6. The author does not mention a single event in the *reign of Pekahiah.* He only speaks of the end of it, which was significant in two respects. Menahem had bought at a heavy price the assistance of Assyria to confirm his royal authority, and to found a dynasty. As long as he lived he maintained himself on the throne. Hardly had his son succeeded him, however, before the vanity of the Assyrian support became apparent. In the second year it was all over with the new dynasty; it was not destined to last. Pekahiah was murdered, not by foreign foes, but by one of his familiar attendants with the help of a portion of the body-guard which should have protected him. Such crimes can be perpetrated only where all the bonds of discipline and order, of fidelity and obedience, are loosed; hence the contemporary prophet Hosea says: "The Lord hath a controversy with the inhabitants of the land," &c. (Hos. iv. 1, 2).

7. In regard to *Pekah* again, we are not informed of a single act of his. The author tells us, however, that, during his reign, Tiglath-pileser conquered a large portion of the country and carried off the inhabitants. This was the upshot of Pekah's long reign. This was the great event of the time, in comparison with which all else that occurred was insignificant. The reference to this event is meant to show us that with Pekah's reign comes the beginning of the end. The war which Pekah carried on against Judah in alliance with Rezin, contributed to the same general result, as is shown in chap. xvi. It is at any rate a proof of unusual and irrepressible energy that Pekah, in spite of the internal decay and decline of the kingdom, was able to maintain himself so long upon the throne. He had energy and a soldier's courage. The manner in which he attained to the throne shows that he was a violent, ambitious, and perfidious man, who cared not for God or divine things. Isaiah never calls him by his name, but only refers to him contemptuously as the "son of Remaliah" (Isai. vii. 4, 5, 9), probably because he was a man of vulgar origin. We can only guess what passages in the prophets apply especially to Pekah, since we have no historical data in the book before us upon which to attach them. The interpretation of Zach. xi. 16 *sq.*; xiii. 7; *cf.* x. 3, as applying to Pekah, which Ewald proposes so confidently (*Propheten des A. B.* I. *s.* 319 *sq. Geschichte* III. *s.* 602 [3d ed. *s.* 648]), is arbitrary and forced. Schmieder's opinion (in Von Gerlach's *Bibelwerk*) that Hosea vii. 4–7 refers to Pekah's conspiracy against Pekahiah, although it is much more probable than Ewald's notion mentioned above, is not by any means above serious doubts.

8. In the history of *king Jotham* of Judah no details are given aside from the regular data, except that he built the upper gate of the temple (on the north side of the outer court), and that, about the end of his reign, the attacks of Rezin and Pekah upon Judah began. The first of these has direct reference to the statement that the people still sacrificed on the high places, or, as the Chronicler expresses it, that "the people did yet corruptly" (2 Chron. xxvii. 2). In order to put a stop to this "corruption," to which the people was so much accustomed, Jotham "built" the gate, through which the sacrifices were brought in, anew; he desired thereby to induce the people to bring their sacrifices hither and not to the forbidden "high places." This was at least an act inspired by loyalty to the theocracy. This king thereby confessed himself a servant of Jehovah, and the act is therefore especially mentioned. The second fact recorded had, as appears in chap. xvi., more important consequences for Judah than anything else which happened during Jotham's reign. Hence it deserved to be especially mentioned. It was not so much a chastisement for Jotham himself as for the people, who, under the prosperous reigns of Uzziah and Jotham, still continued to act "corruptly," and inclined strongly to idolatry.

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

Vers. 1–7. (Compare 2 Chron. xxvi.) King Uzziah. (*a*) His prosperous reign of 50 years. (*b*) His unfortunate end.—It is the greatest blessing for a nation, when a God-fearing king lives long to rule over it. Hence we pray for those in authority.—Ver. 4. How hard it is to abolish and do away with bad customs which have been handed down from generation to generation!—Ver. 5. Uzziah's guilt and punishment. Starke: We should not be over-bold to undertake duties which do not devolve upon us. He who covets more than he has any right to have loses even what he has.—Let each one remain in his own calling to which he is called, and not invade the functions of another calling, even if he has strength and opportunity to do so. We cannot break over the bounds which God has set without incurring punishment. —CALW. BIBEL: This is a warning example for those who behave as if they are capable of being all in all, whereas each one has his own gifts and his own calling. The might of kings does not reach into the sanctuary.—Think no man blessed until thou hast seen his end. The most fortunate, rich, and mighty king learned that "all flesh is

grass," and that "the world passeth away," &c., 1 John ii. 17.—Pfaff. Bibel: God chastises often the great in this world with heavy misfortunes, in order to remind them of their own nothingness, and to humble them.—Separation from the world and from the current of affairs, and residence in solitude, may become a great blessing to him who recognizes in them a divine dispensation.—Cramer: Children must take care of their sick and weak and aged parents; must take their places as far as they can, and honor them in word and deed (Sirach iii. 9, 14). [The history of king Uzziah presents warning and instructive lessons especially for a time of prosperity, when greed of gain, love of luxury and ease, respect for wealth, with all the attendant vices of prosperity, are the characteristics of society. See the bracketed addition to *Hist.* § 1.—W. G. S.]

Vers. 8–31. See *Historical and Ethical.* The last kings of the northern kingdom, or the monarchy in its decay. (*a*) The monarchy as the highest civil authority is ordained by God (Prov. viii. 16); it is God's ordinance. If it does not consider itself as such it cannot endure. The last kings of Israel were not chosen and instituted by God, nor even by the people; they raised themselves by force through robbery and murder (Hos. viii. 4). They ruled, not by the grace of God, but by His wrath (Hos. xiii. 11). The monarchy in Israel had lost its foothold on the divine ordinance. All its kings persevered in the sin of Jeroboam, therefore it had no endurance. No dynasty endured beyond the third or fourth generation, some only to the second, the last ones not even to the first; while the house of David, in Judah, did not perish in spite of storms. Where one dynasty overthrows another, there the true, divinely instituted monarchy comes to an end, and people and kingdom perish with it. (*b*) The monarchy is the "minister of God to them for good" (Rom. xiii. 4); it is its calling to work out the welfare of the people. The last kings of Israel did not care for this, they only cared for power and dominion. Hence the people and the kingdom sank continually lower and lower. When kings only rule for their own sakes and not for the sake of their people, then they cease to be shepherds of their people (Jerem. xxiii. 1–4), and the monarchy decays (Prov. xx. 28; xxv. 5). Rulers who seized power by force and violence, have never been the deliverers and protectors of their people, but rather tyrants, who have led it down to its ruin. "In one demagogue," says Luther, "there are hidden ten tyrants."—As is the master, so is the servant; as is the head, so are the members. A succession of rulers, who attained to the throne by conspiracy, revolt, perjury, and murder, is the surest sign, not only that there is something rotten in the State, but also that there is nothing sound in the nation, from the sole of the foot to the crown of the head (Isai. i. 6; Hos. iv. 1 *sq.*). The corruption in Israel extended, in the first place, from the head downwards. Jeroboam made Israel to sin. Then, however, it came from below upwards. The rebels and murderers who came to the throne came from the people. These kings were so hostile that the one killed the other but they were of one accord in abandoning Jehovah, and persevering in the sin of Jeroboam. This was the cause of their ruin. When there is no fear of God in the heart, then the door is open to every sin and vice.

Vers. 8–12. The end of the house of Jehu is a clear testimony to the fulfilment of the threats of the divine law (Exod. xx. 5).—*Before the people.* It is a sign of general demoralization and corruption when sins and crimes can be perpetrated in public without causing horror and incurring condemnation.—Vers. 13–15. As a rule, one successful revolt is only the prelude to another. A throne which is founded on sin, cannot sustain the attacks of storms.—Würt. Summ.: We see in the case of Shallum, the murderer, who reigned but a month, how God, the just judge, exercises His retribution upon tyrants.—Vers. 14–22. In the eyes of a domineering man there is no greater crime than that any one should refuse obedience to his will. Love of command is the vice which makes a man inhuman, and more cruel than a wild animal.—It is the way of all tyrants, great and small, that they are cruel and fierce to those over whom they have authority, but tremble and cringe before any who are greater than themselves.—Menahem, instead of turning to God as his protector and helper (Ps. cxi. 1 and 2), seeks help from the enemies of Israel. He buys this help with money forced from his subjects, but thereby prepares the ruin of his kingdom and people. *Cf.* Jerem. xvii. 5 and Hos. xiii. 8 *seq.* A friendship which is bought with money will not last.—Vers. 23–26. A prince who is not faithful to his God cannot expect his servants to be faithful to him, but a king who, like David, is a man after God's own heart, can say: "Mine eyes shall be upon the faithful of the land," &c. (Ps. ci. 6, 7).—Osiander: Princes ought not to trust too implicitly to their servants—those whose duty it is to protect them may be the first to strike them.—Vers. 27–31. To the "son of Remaliah" the words apply: "He that exalteth himself shall be abased" (Matt. xxiii. 12).—Osiander: Tyrants generally rise very high that they may fall only so much the farther (Isai. xxvi. 4–6).

Vers. 32–38 (*cf.* 2 Chron. xxvii.).—Pfaff. Bibel: How beautiful it is to see children walk in the footsteps of their fathers when these were righteous. It is a glorious thing for a prince, instead of beautifying his palaces, and building ivory houses (Amos iii. 15), to restore the temple gates, and so says to his people: "Enter into his gates with thanksgiving and into his courts with praise" (Ps. c. 4).—Vers. 37 and 38. Calw. Bibel: We have here a distinct proof that neither the good conduct of a prince by itself, nor the good conduct of the people by itself, can make a nation happy. Prince and people must together serve the Lord, if the land is to prosper.—Osiander: When God wishes to punish the sins of a nation, he is wont to remove pious princes by death before the judgment begins.

B.—*The Reign of Ahaz in Judah.*

Chap. xvi. 1–20. (2 Chron. xxviii.)

1 In the seventeenth year of Pekah the son of Remaliah, Ahaz the son of
2 Jotham king of Judah began to reign [became king]. Twenty years old *was*
Ahaz when he began to reign, and reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem, and did
not *that which was* right in the sight of the Lord his God, like David his father.
3 But he walked in the way of the kings of Israel, yea, and made his son to pass
through the fire, according to the abominations[1] of the heathen, whom the Lord
4 cast out from before the children of Israel. And he sacrificed and burnt incense
in the high places, and on the hills, and under every green tree.
5 Then Rezin king of Syria, and Pekah son of Remaliah king of Israel, came
up to Jerusalem to war: and they besieged Ahaz, but could not overcome *him*
6 [prevail].[2] At that time Rezin king of Syria recovered [won] Elath to [for]
Syria, and drave the Jews from Elath: and the Syrians[3] came to Elath, and
7 dwelt [dwell] there unto this day. So Ahaz sent messengers to Tiglath-pileser
king of Assyria, saying, I *am* thy servant and thy son: come up, and save me
out of the hand of the king of Syria, and out of the hand of the king of Israel,
8 which rise up against me. And Ahaz took the silver and gold that was found
in the house of the Lord, and in the treasures of the king's house, and sent *it for*
9 a present to the king of Assyria. And the king of Assyria hearkened unto him:
for [and] the king of Assyria went up against Damascus, and took it, and carried
the people of it captive to Kir, and slew Rezin.
10 And king Ahaz went to Damascus to meet Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria,
and saw an altar that *was* at Damascus: and king Ahaz sent to Urijah the priest
the fashion [pattern] of the altar, and the pattern [plan] of it, according to all
11 the workmanship thereof.[4] And Urijah the priest built an altar according to all
that king Ahaz had sent from Damascus: so Urijah the priest made *it* against
12 king Ahaz came from Damascus. And when the king was come from Damas-
cus, the king saw the altar: and the king approached to the altar, and offered
13 thereon [went up upon it]. And he burnt his burnt offering and his meat
offering, and poured his drink offering, and sprinkled the blood of his peace
14 offerings, upon the altar. And he brought also the brazen altar, which *was*
before the Lord, from the forefront of the honse, from between the [*new*] altar and
15 the house of the Lord, and put it on the north side of the altar. And king Ahaz
commanded Urijah the priest, saying, Upon the great altar burn the morning
burnt offering, and the evening meat offering, and the king's burnt sacrifice,
and his meat offering, with the burnt offering of all the people of the land, and
their meat offering, and their drink offerings; and sprinkle upon it all the blood
of the burnt offering, and all the blood of the sacrifice: and [as for] the brazen
16 altar shall be for me to inquire *by* [I will consider further].[5] Thus did Urijah
the priest, according to all that king Ahaz commanded.
17 And king Ahaz cut off the borders of the bases, and removed the laver from
off them; and took down the sea from off the brazen oxen that *were* under it,
18 and put it upon a pavement [structure] of stones. And [he altered] the covert
[covered way][6] for the sabbath that they had built in the house, and the king's
entry without, turned he from [*omit* turned he from.—*Insert* in] the house of the
Lord [,] for [fear of] the king of Assyria.
19 Now the rest of the acts of Ahaz which he did, *are* they not written in the
20 book of the Chronicles of the kings of Judah? And Ahaz slept with his
fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the city of David: and Hezekiah his
son reigned in his stead.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

[1] Ver. 3.—[Abominable rites or usages.

[2] Vers. 5.—[*Cf.* Isai. vii. 1, where we find עָלֶיהָ after לְהִלָּחֵם, "Was not able to make war against it," *i. e.* successfully.

[3] Ver. 6.—[The chetib is to be retained. *Cf. Exeg.* Ewald, Thenius, Böttcher (*Lehrb.* § 976), and others, who follow the keri, also change לַאֲרָם, above, to לֶאֱדוֹם. The entire conception of the incident is then changed. Rezin does not conquer Elath for himself, but restores it to Edom, in order to strengthen the hereditary enemy of Judah and gain his alliance. Keil very justly objects that אדום is written defectively אדם only once in the O. T. (Ezek. xxv. 14). His explanation of the form אֲרוֹמִים is also simpler than the above change. He considers it a Syriac (Aramaic) form (u for a), and points to other similar forms in the same chapter, הַקּוֹמִים for הַקָּמִים (ver. 7); אֵילוֹת for אֵילַת (ver. 6); דּוּמֶּשֶׂק for דַּמֶּשֶׂק (ver. 10). Böttcher gives the euphonic and other grounds for these exceptional forms in §§ 1132, 9, 1; 851, a.

[4] Ver. 10.—[*I. e.* with full details how it was made.

[5] Ver. 15.—["I will consider further *what shall be done with that.*" Thenius defends the rendering given in the E. V. He denies that יִהְיֶה־לִּי can have the sense which we give it, but he finds it necessary to change לבקר into לְבַקֵּשׁ.

[6] Ver. 18.—[The keri is supported by the Vulg.: *Musach.* However, we find other instances of ־ִי instead of ו in the first syllable of a word before שׁ or ס. See הַיִּשְׁם for הוּשַׂם, Gen. xxiv. 33; יִיסַךְ for יוּסַךְ, Ex. xxx. 32. See also Ezek. xii. 8. (Böttcher, § 460, b).—The massorah requires that החיצונה shall be accented milel, because it will not recognize a feminine in this adjective which agrees with מָבוֹא. *Cf.* הגלילה, chap. xv. 29, *Gramm.* note.—W. G. S.]

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

Ver. 1. **Ahaz became king, &c.** On the year of Ahaz's accession see the chronological discussion after chap. xvii.—Ver. 2. If Ahaz was 20 years old at his accession and reigned 16 years, so that he was 36 years old when he died, then he must have begotten his son Hezekiah in the tenth year of his age, for Hezekiah, according to xviii. 2, ascended the throne in his 25th year. This would not be an impossibility, for even yet marriages occur in the East between boys of 10 and girls of 8 years (see the instances quoted by Keil in his *Comment.* on the verse). It is, however, very improbable, and there is no similar instance in Scripture. It is very likely, therefore, that the reading "twenty-five" instead of twenty, which is presented by some MSS., by the Vatican MS. of the Sept., as well as by the Syriac and Arabic translations on 2 Chron. xxviii. 1, is the original and correct one (Ewald, Thenius, and Keil).

Ver. 3. **But he walked in the way of the kings of Israel.** This cannot mean that he transplanted the Israelitish worship of the calves into Judah, for the relation between Judah and Israel had become hostile even in the last years of his father Jotham (chap. xv. 37). Moreover, there is not a hint of that form of worship in the history of Judah. The words only mean, generally, that Ahaz forsook the covenant of Israel as the Israelitish kings had done. The parallel passage 2 Chron. xxviii. 2 and 3 adds directly the words: "And made also molten images for Baalim. Moreover he burnt incense in the valley of the son of Hinnom." This sentence "is evidently taken from the original authority" (Thenius). Probably it was omitted by the author of the Book of Kings because it seemed to him to be implied in the statement already made that he "walked in the way of the kings of Israel," for these had had images of Baal (1 Kings xvi. 32; 2 Kings iii. 2; x. 26 *sq.*). He desired to go on at once to the things which this king had done other than what had been done by the kings of Israel. We have not, therefore, to understand, by the images of Baalim, calf-images like those of Jeroboam (Keil), but idol-images. On the valley of Hinnom see notes on chap. xxiii. 10.—**Yea, and made his son to pass through the fire,** viz., לַמֹּלֶךְ. This must be supplied, as we see, from chap. xxiii. 10; Levit. xviii. 21; Jerem. xix. 5. The meaning of the phrase הֶעֱבִיר בָּאֵשׁ is distinctly stated in Numb. xxxi. 23. It has accordingly been supposed by some that, where בֵּן or בָּנִים is the object, and not gold or silver, it refers to a literal passage through fire, and that it was an act of lustration or purification (Theodoret, Grotius, Spencer, and others). It is clear, however, from 2 Chron. xxviii. 3, where וַיַּבְעֵר stands for it, that it is not a simple passage through, but a burning up. The same is clear from chap. xvii. 31; Deut. xii. 31; Jerem. xix. 5; Ezek. xvi. 20 *sq.*; xxiii. 37. Josephus declares plainly of Ahaz: *καὶ ἴδιον ὡλοκαύτωσε παῖδα* (*cf.* Gesen. *Thesaurus*, II., p. 985). Another question arises, however, viz., whether we must understand that the children were burned alive, or that they were killed and then burned. The rabbis assert the former (see the passages quoted from Jarchi in Winer's *R.-W.-B.* II., *s.* 101), but their authority is overturned by other and better testimony. In Ezek. xvi. 20 it is said: "Thou tookest thy sons and thy daughters, which thou hadst borne to me, and slewest them (וַתִּזְבָּחִים) [as a sacrifice] to them [*i. e.*, to the false gods] לֶאֱכוֹל [*i. e.*, to consume them]. Was thy whoredom too slight a thing that thou slewest (וַתִּשְׁחֲטִי) my sons, and gavest them away

בְּהַעֲבִיר אוֹתָם"—[*i. e.*, in that thou causedst them to go through, or, to be burned up in, the fire]? Ps. cvi. 37 *sq.* speaks only of the slaughter of children in sacrifice to idols, not of burning them: "And they slew their sons and daughters in sacrifice (וַיִּזְבְּחוּ) to false gods, and shed innocent blood—blood of their sons and daughters whom they sacrificed (זִבְּחוּ) to the idols of Canaan, and the land was desecrated by the shedding of blood (בַּדָּמִים)." Diodorus Siculus (xx. 12) describes the brazen statue of Kronos (Moloch) with its outstretched arms, glowing hot from an internal fire, but he does not say that the children were laid living upon them. Eusebius (*Præp. Evang.* iv. 16) states in regard to the human sacrifices which were offered at Salamis that they were first killed by the priest with a spear and then burned upon the pile. Slaying, and cutting in pieces, and shedding blood, are essentials in sacrifice, so that זָבַח, *i. e.*, to slaughter, means, to sacrifice. We have certainly to understand, therefore, in the case of the child-sacrifices, that they were killed before they were burned (Hävernick, *Comm. über Ezech. s.* 237 *sq.*). Such seems to have been the case also in the incident mentioned in chap. iii. 27. The only remaining question is this: if the procedure was the same in the case of the child-sacrifices as in the ordinary burnt offerings, why do we find the expression העביר באש used only of the former? The probable explanation is that the expression only referred originally to a passage through the fire without consumption, a sort of fire-baptism, as purifications by fire were practised by various peoples, and that it was not connected with human sacrifice. Not until a later time did this become corrupted into a real sacrifice and burning, but the original expression was retained and became general (see Keil on Levit. xviii. 21). It may be, too, as Witsius (*Miscell.* p. 616) suggests, that the practice was not always and everywhere the same, but both living and dead children were burned, and this expression was used in both cases.

[This is the point in the history of the Israelites at which they became acquainted with the Assyrio-Chaldean idolatry. The gods Baal and Ashtaroth became known to them from the Phœnicians by the marriage of Jezebel with Ahab. That that was the point of contact between the Jehovah-worship and the *Baal*-worship is proved by the fact that this pair (Baal and Ashtaroth) are the ones whom the Israelites worshipped, and that that was the couplet which was worshipped at Sidon (see note on chap. xvii. 17). Now, however, Pekah and Ahaz came into close intimacy with the Assyrians, and learned from them the *astral* conception of the same heathen religion. Ashtaroth always had sidereal character, but her worship, so far as it was introduced into Israel, seems to have been confined rather to its voluptuous rites. Ahaz introduced the astral worship into Judah. In order to understand the influence of these heathen religious conceptions on Judah, and the origin of the rite of passing through the fire, it is necessary to take a somewhat comprehensive view of these heathen religious conceptions. Here follows a description of the cultus. On the astral ideas see note on xvii. 17. The religious conceptions of the nations of Western Asia were all closely related to each other. The deity was conceived of as one, simple, formless, and universal, but *in a pantheistic sense*. It has often been observed that behind the polytheism of these nations (and of Egypt also) there was an idea of one sole and original deity, and it has been inferred that there was a pure and true monotheistic idea at the root, and that the polytheism was only popular. In fact, however, the corruption of these heathen religions was rooted in the pantheistic conception of this original divine essence. Then his *attributes* were deified (hence the plural Baalim), and not only his good attributes but also his destructive and profane and base attributes. Hence, by a legitimate deduction, all the cruel and licentious rites of pretended religion. In different countries the chief and original God took different names according to the especial point of view from which he was regarded. The Assyrians called him *Asshur*, or, in a still more pantheistic conception, *Ilu;* and among the Canaanites he was called *El* as the "Mighty One," the first and simplest conception of God as strength. He was also very widely named *Baal* (Babylonian *Bel* [Merodach]), as the "Lord;" also *Yaoh* (Hebr. *Yahvah* [Jehovah]), as the "Eternal," the pure conception of being or existence. The Aramæans named him *Hadad* or *Hadar*, "The Only One;" the Ammonites, *Moloch*, the "King;" the Moabites, *Chemosh*, the "Governor." Then he received different names according to his attributes, and was worshipped by each nation under the name of the attribute which they kept most in mind. As the deity which presided over generation he was *Thammuz* or *Adon* (Hebr. *Adonay;* Greek, *Adonis*); as protector and preserver he was *Chon;* as destroyer he was *Moloch;* as "presiding over the decomposition of those destroyed beings whence new life was again to spring," he was *Zebub* (Beelzebub). Hence, probably, Baal-zebub was the god of restoration to health from dangerous sickness. See 2 Kings i. 2. In this last sense probably the main idea was that of resurrection or life from death. The flies on carrion seemed to spring to life out of it. The Egyptian beetle probably embodies the same idea. Moloch was therefore the supreme deity in his attribute of destroyer. Fire, lightning, war, pestilence, and so on, represented him. He was worshipped under this form when his appetite for devouring and destroying was being satiated. Hence his rites consisted in sacrifices of things cast into the fire. Those who robbed themselves of something which they cast into the fire appeased the god and averted the assaults which were to be apprehended from him if his appetite for destruction was not satisfied. The parents who thus sacrificed their children might hope that this frightful sacrifice would save them from further or other losses. When the king of Moab found the fight going against him he offered his son to *Chemosh*, that the god, appeased by this, might not push on the destruction of war. No doubt he considered that this sacrifice was successful when the horrified Israelites desisted from the war (2 Kings iii.). So far as we can judge, the children were cast alive into the flames.—The religion of Israel differed from these heathen religions in that its supreme deity was *personal, spiritual*, and *holy*, and that the Israelites refrained from deifying his attributes as emanations or hypostases of himself.—W. G. S.]

Instead of בְּנוֹ in ver. 3 and chap. xxi. 6, the Chronicler (II. xxviii. 3 and xxxiii. 6) has the plural בָּנָיו. Thenius regards this as a contradiction, or,

at least, as an exaggeration of the passage before us, but the plural stands here, as it often does (Matt. ix. 8; ii. 20; Gesen. *Lehrgeb. s.* 664 *sq.*), rhetorically, in order to say, in general, that Ahaz and Manasseh had incurred the guilt of child-sacrifice. "The pure, abstract idea of child-sacrifice, apart from any idea of number, is expressed by the plural" (Bertheau, Keil). In like manner, Cicero (*De Prov. Cons.* xiv. 35): *jucundissimi liberi*, although Cæsar had only a single daughter (*cf.* also *Pro Lege Manil.* 12). On ver. 4 *cf.* 1 Kings xiv. 23. The sense is: The centralization of the worship of God, such as the law prescribed, came to an end; the very contrary came to pass. Thenius seizes upon the fact that we have בְּ before בָּמוֹת, instead of עַל, which we find before הַגְּבָעוֹת, as a support for his interpretation of the former word as "grove" or "sacred enclosure" (see *Exeg.* on 1 Kings ii. 2 and 3). It stands here, as it often does, for בֵּית הַבָּמָה, Ahaz offered incense in the sacred places on the tops of the mountains and on the hills, *i. e.*, on heights where there was no בית but only an altar.

Ver. 5. **Then Rezin, king of Syria.** See on this and the following verse: Caspari, *Ueber den Syrisch-ephraimitischen Krieg unter Jotham und Ahas.* Christiania, 1849. After the author has described the reign of Ahaz in its broad and general features (vers. 1–4), the detailed account of the particular incidents begins in ver. 5. אָז only means, therefore, after Ahaz had succeeded to the throne. The attacks began under Jotham (chap. xv. 37), but there had not yet been any formal and united expedition. [The first attempt was frustrated by the attack of Tiglath Pileser on Damascus and Samaria. See *Supp. Note*, p. 161.] No real attack was made until Ahaz was on the throne. The object was, according to Isai. vii. 6, to conquer Judah and to set upon the throne a person called "the son of Tabeel," of whom we know nothing further. [Mention of this confederation occurs in the Assyrian inscriptions. We learn there that the name of this "son of Tabeel" was *Ashariah.*] Whether "they hoped thereby to be able to oppose larger means and stronger force to the aggressions of the Assyrian empire" (Thenius), is a matter for mere supposition. [This supposition is now very strongly confirmed.] They came as far as Jerusalem, which they besieged (וַיָּצֻרוּ means *besiege*, as it does in 2 Sam. xx. 15; Jerem.. xxi. 4; xxxix. 1; Ezek. iv. 3, and not merely: "they pressed forward towards it"), but were not able to take it, for the city had been strongly fortified on all sides by Uzziah and Jotham (2 Chron. xxvi. 9; xxvii. 3), and, in the providence of God, it was otherwise decreed (Isai. vii. 7).

Ver. 6. **At that time Rezin won Elath for Syria, &c.** בָּעֵת הַהִיא does not mean "thereupon" or "afterwards," but designates in general the time of the Syriac-ephraimitic war against Judah. Ver. 6 is a sort of parenthesis, so that ver. 7 is the real continuation of ver. 5. The author desires to record the danger which threatened Jerusalem, for this was the chief event in this war, and, besides this, to record the fact that Judah, during this reign, lost the city which was its most important seat of commerce, and one of the chief sources of the prosperity of the country (*cf.* on Elath, notes on 1 Kings ix. 26 and 2 Kings xiv. 22). Ver. 7 then joins on to ver. 5, for Ahaz sent to Tiglath Pileser, not on account of the loss of Elath, but on account of his endangered capital, with which the whole kingdom must stand or fall. Many expositors, both ancient and recent, have desired to change לַאֲרָם to לֶאֱדוֹם, because Elath never belonged to Syria, and therefore could not be "restored" to it. But this conjecture is not supported by a single manuscript or ancient version, and, as Winer and Keil observe, הֵשִׁיב does not necessarily imply the idea of "back again." It means, in general, to turn away from something to something else (Isai. i. 25, and Knobel's note thereon; Ps. lxxxi. 14; Amos i. 8; Dan. xi. 18). It means, therefore, that Rezin took away Elath from Judah, to which it had previously belonged, and joined it to Syria. The case is similar with the word וַאֲרוֹמִים, for which the keri offers ואדומים, the Sept., Ἰδουμαῖοι, and the Vulg., *Idumæi*, but evidently incorrectly. The Edomites did not need to come to Elath and to settle there; they had always lived in this city, which lay in their own country, and had remained there even when it was in the hands of the Jews. What is asserted, however, is, that Rezin expelled the Jews and brought thither Syrians, who settled there for purposes of trade, and remained there "until this day," *i. e.*, at the time that these books were written the Syrian commercial colony was yet in Elath. Yet one question further suggests itself here, viz., whether Rezin took Elath before or after the attack which he and Pekah made upon Jerusalem. The answer to this question depends upon another one: What is the relation between the record before us and that in the parallel passage in Chronicles? In the latter there is no mention of the expedition against Elath, nor of the siege of Jerusalem. On the other hand, it is recorded that Jehovah gave Ahaz into the hand of the king of Syria, who defeated him, and took away many captives to Damascus; likewise into the hand of the king of Israel, who, in a great battle, won a great victory over him (vers. 5 and 6). This narrative the rationalistic school formerly regarded as an invention and unworthy of belief (Gesenius, De Wette, Gramberg), but that view has been abandoned even by this school. Thenius, amongst others, regards the narrative as unquestionably historical, and as a supplement to the record before us. Nevertheless there is some disagreement as to whether the campaign described in Chronicles is the same one which is described here. Caspari has examined this question very carefully in the work mentioned above; we, therefore, refer in general to that work and here add only what follows. Those, like Vitringa, Movers, Hävernick, and others, who adopt the hypothesis of two successive expeditions, appeal for their proof especially to Isai. vii. 1–9. At the commencement of the war against Judah, when it is made known to the house of David that the Syrians are already in Ephraim, the prophet announces to Ahaz the complete failure of the enterprise of the two kings. As, however, according to the account in Chronicles, Ahaz was defeated by each of these kings, it is inferred that that must have taken place in a

different expedition from the one here referred to, and that it took place before the latter; furthermore, that the capture of Elath took place during the second expedition and after the siege of Jerusalem, since it is narrated in the history after that event (ver. 6). It is certain that the two battles mentioned in 2 Chron. xxviii. 5 and 6, must have taken place *before* the siege of Jerusalem, but it does not follow that they occurred in an earlier expedition. As it was the intention of Rezin and Pekah to put an end to the kingdom of Judah and to put "the son of Tabeel" (probably a Syrian general) upon the throne, it is not by any means to be supposed that they would have abandoned the attempt after gaining two victories over Ahaz, and then would have undertaken a new expedition in order to besiege Jerusalem. On the contrary, it is plain that they would try, after winning two victories, to complete their enterprise by taking Jerusalem. The words in Isai. vii. 2, נָחָה אֲרָם עַל־אֶפְרָיִם do not mean, as they are often translated: "The Aramæans are encamped in Ephraim" (Bunsen), nor: "The Syrians stand [*are* under arms] in Ephraim" (De Wette), so that it would follow, that Rezin first advanced into Ephraim at the outbreak of the war, in order to advance, in conjunction with Pekah, against Jerusalem. The phrase must be explained as it is in the Chaldee paraphrase: "The king of Syria has joined himself (אתחבר, *societatem iniit*) with (עם) the king of Israel." So the Sept. translate: *συνεφώνησεν 'Αρὰμ πρὸς τὸν 'Εφραίμ*. "The verb נוח with על is never used of an army encamping, and it does not seem fitting to take אפרים as referring to the country, and ארם as referring to the people" (Hengstenberg). נוח means, *to lie down to rest*, and it expresses, when it is used as it is here of a person who rests upon or over (על) another, *a being with or by, a being in connection with him* (*cf.* Numb. xi. 25, 26; Isai. xi. 2; Ps. cxxv. 3). [An examination of these passages will show that they do not justify any such rendering of נוח על as, *to be in alliance with*. They contain "the spirit *rests upon*" or some similar sense of נוח על, which is a different sense of "rest" and a different sense of "upon" from the one here to be proved. Hengstenberg's objection, that Aram is used of the people and Ephraim of the territory, has force, but the most fair rendering of the words is: "Aram is encamped in Ephraim" (Bunsen, Ewald). נוח is not indeed the technical word for the encamping of an army, but it is used for special force. They have *settled down, are stationed, are resting and recruiting*, but when an army does this it encamps.—W. G. S.] What made Ahaz and his people tremble, as the trees of the forest tremble before the wind, was, not the fact that Syria was in camp in Ephraim, but the fact that the kings of Syria and Israel had joined forces against Judah. The prophet promised that this enterprise should not succeed, and his promise was fulfilled. The supposition that Rezin began the war by taking up a position in the land of Ephraim is, therefore, totally unfounded. Moreover, it was not necessary for him, in order to make war upon Jerusalem, to go through Ephraim. He could just as well advance on the other side of the Jordan, and this he no doubt did. As for the capture of Elath, ver. 6 of the chapter before us does not force us to the assumption that it took place before the siege of Jerusalem, for, as we have said above, ver. 6 is a parenthesis and ver. 7 follows ver. 5. It is also difficult to believe that Rezin gave up the siege, because Jerusalem could not be taken (ver. 5), and then, because he "was unwilling that the expedition should have been made entirely in vain" (Thenius), that he made a long march around the southern end of the Dead Sea in order to return home. After Ahaz had called upon Tiglath Pileser for aid, and the latter was actually advancing against Syria, it is impossible that Rezin can have undertaken this long march; he must have hastened home by the most direct route. In view of all this we come to the following conception of the course of the events. Rezin made an alliance with Pekah and advanced on the east side of the Jordan and won a great victory over Ahaz (2 Chron. xxviii. 5). At the same time, on this side the Jordan, Pekah invaded Judah, and also inflicted a severe defeat on Ahaz (2 Chron. xxviii. 6). As a consequence of his victory Rezin marched on southward to Edom, where he put an end to the hated supremacy of Judah over Edom, and captured Elath, an important source of commercial prosperity to Judah (2 Kings xvi. 6). From thence he moved northwards on this side of the Dead Sea and made a junction with Pekah, who had in the mean time been devastating the country, in order, with him, to make a united attack upon Jerusalem, and so to come to the end of his entire undertaking, namely, to the overthrow of the kingdom of Judah and of the dynasty of David. [It may hardly be worth while to balance conjectures where the basis of testimony on which to build them is so slight. The above construction is open to considerable objection. If a king set out, in alliance with another, against Judah, would it not be strange that he should march through Edom to Elath and then up to Jerusalem before joining his ally? What is more, it is very remarkable that Isaiah, when he prophesies deliverance to Ahaz, makes no reference to two defeats which the king is supposed to have suffered already. We expect a sentence in this form: *although* thou hast been defeated, *yet*, &c. The king looks for aid to Assyria. The prophet rebukes this. He evidently expects that the physical form of the deliverance will be something else than Tiglath Pileser's advance. It is more consistent to suppose that the city was found too strong, that the two kings commenced to devastate the country, that Ahaz was twice defeated when he sallied out to try to restrain them, or before he was shut up in the city, and that Rezin pushed forward as far as Elath. Probably it was not until they had made some progress in plundering the country that they heard that Tiglath Pileser was advancing. The information derived from the Assyrian inscriptions strongly sustains this view. Rezin and Pekah revolted in 734–3. Haste was necessary above all things. It was deemed necessary to conquer Judah and force it into the confederated revolt. Hence the news comes suddenly to Ahaz in this startling form: The Syrians are in Ephraim. Before the end of 731 the war was all over and Tiglath Pileser held his court in Damascus. (See *Supp. Note* at the end of this section.) The whole campaign in Judah was therefore very brief. There was no time for a siege. The two "battles" were fought in the open country, and

the "captives" were taken thence, and the long expedition to Elath was undertaken in order to bring the strongest possible pressure to bear on Ahaz to force him to join the revolt, next to the capture of his capital.—W. G. S.] As the Edomites and Philistines had also invaded Judah (2 Chron. xxviii. 17 *sq.*), Ahaz, pressed on every side, turned to Assyria for help in spite of the warnings and promises of Isaiah (vii. 1 *sq.*). This induced Rezin to desist from his advance and to hurry home. There he was defeated and slain by Tiglath Pileser.—It is scarcely possible to combine the two narratives in any other than this simple and direct way. Keil also places the capture of Elath before the siege of Jerusalem, but leaves it undecided whether Rezin advanced northwards from Elath, against Jerusalem, or whether, after his victory over Ahaz (2 Chron. xxviii. 5), "he sent a portion of his army into Idumea to detach that country from Judah, while he, in conjunction with Pekah, led the rest of the army against Jerusalem." Against this view arises the objection that ver. 6 makes no mention of a detachment sent into Idumea, but says that Rezin himself marched thither and drove the Jews out of Elath.

Ver. 7. **Ahaz sent messengers to Tiglath Pileser.** He did not take this step as soon as hostilities commenced, but, as has already been said, when he saw himself hard pressed. He did not heed the prophet's warning and counsel (Isai. vii. 4); on the contrary, by the words: **thy servant and thy son,** he placed himself in servitude to the king of Assyria as well as under his protection. He sent the presents of gold and silver (ver. 8) after the allied armies had withdrawn from Jerusalem, and Damascus had been taken (ver. 9). Tiglath Pileser took the captured inhabitants of Damascus to *Kir*. By this we have not to understand, as the ancient Expositors did, the Median city Κουρήνα or Καρίνη, but the country around the river Kur (Κῦρος, Κύῤῥος), which flows through the northern part of Iberia, the modern Georgia, into the Caspian sea (Isai. xxii. 6 [*cf.* also Amos i. 3–5]). "Tiglath Pileser transferred the inhabitants of Damascus to the most remote portion—in the extreme north—of his dominions, and yet to the place from which their ancestors had originally migrated (Amos ix. 7)." (Thenius). After the subjugation of Syria, Tiglath Pileser advanced against Israel, and accomplished what is recorded in chap. xv. 29. It may be that Pekah submitted at once to the approaching enemy and thereby averted from himself the fate of Rezin. [See *Supp. Note*, p. 161.] —The statement 2 Chron. xxviii. 20 *sq.*, according to which Tiglath Pileser marched against Ahaz, and besieged him but did not overcome him, is discussed in detail by Caspari (work above cited, *ss.* 56–60). He strives to reconcile it to the statements of the passage before us, but does not in all respects succeed. So much is certain; Ahaz, in spite of all his gifts to Tiglath Pileser, did not find in him a true helper and friend; on the contrary, he was harshly treated by him: "It did him no good." [The meaning of 2 Chron. xxviii. 20 seems to be more correctly given in the English translation: "He came unto him (not against him), and distressed him (not necessarily besieged him), and strengthened him not."]

Ver. 10. **And king Ahaz went to Damascus to meet Tiglath Pileser,** *i. e.*, in order to testify to his gratitude towards him for his deliverance, and at the same time to secure the continued favor of the king of Assyria. The latter must, therefore, have remained at Damascus for some time. Perhaps Ahaz himself brought the presents which are mentioned in ver. 8. While he was at Damascus he saw an altar which pleased him so much that he sent orders to Urijah the priest to make one like it. This Urijah can hardly be the same one who is mentioned in Isai. viii. 2. [We should unhesitatingly infer that these two were the same individual, if it were not for the improbability that a man, who would build and introduce into the temple a new altar built on a heathen model, should be called by a prophet a "faithful" witness. The solution may be that the prophet took the priest as a faithful witness on account of his official position solely. The priest seemed the most fit and proper witness, however much the prophet may have had to find fault with (as to which he tells us nothing one way or the other) in his administration of his office.—W. G. S.] It was undoubtedly an altar consecrated to an Assyrian deity which Ahaz saw, but he desired to have one like it for the service of Jehovah (ver. 15). דְּמוּת has a general signification: *shape, image;* תַּבְנִית designated more particularly the model; and מַעֲשֶׂה the sort of workmanship, decoration, &c.—In ver. 12, וַיַּעַל עָלָיו is not to be translated: "and he sacrificed upon it" (Luther, De Wette, and others), but: "and he ascended upon it." See 1 Kings xii. 32, 33. It does not follow from this, however, that "Ahaz was not willing to give up the royal prerogative of exercising the high-priestly office upon occasion" (Thenius). The words mean simply that this was *his* sacrifice, namely, the one which he offered for his fortunate return from Damascus. He led the way by his own example. We have not to understand that he usurped any priestly functions. It is no more intended to assert in ver. 13 that he himself sprinkled the sacrificial blood, than it is in ver. 14, that he, with his own hand, removed the altar. [The translation: "He went up upon it," is justly preferred by Bähr, but it does not remove the difficulty about the king's share in the sacrifice. Why did he go up upon the altar, if not to perform the rites himself? There is no other evidence at all that any one but the person officiating at the sacrifice went up upon the altar. Furthermore, ver. 13 is not a case of the ultimate agent being said to do what others do by his command. The fact that the king could sacrifice unrebuked by the priest is not any more astonishing than that the priest should make an altar on a heathen pattern, and put it in the place of the one built by Solomon. Both incidents belong to the picture of this reign.—W. G. S.] The thank-offering was the chief thing (ver. 13), but it was preceded by a burnt-offering as usual (*Symbol. d. Mos. Kult.* II. *s.* 362, 423, 435). 2 Chron. xxviii. 23 does not contradict the passage before us. It does not refer to the new altar and the sacrifice which was offered upon it, but to the sacrifices which Ahaz offered elsewhere (*cf.* ver. 4).

Vers. 14 and 15. **And he brought also the brazen altar,** &c. וַיַּקְרֵב cannot mean: "he removed," "*Er that weg*" (Luther), nor: he moved away; "*Er rückte hinweg,*" but: he brought nearer, he moved closer up to. [The sense of "away

from" is, of course, in מֵאֵת. The first meaning of וַיַּקְרֵב is certainly: "he brought nearer," but as it is not clear *what* it was brought nearer *to*, the word seems to have lost this force and to mean simply, *he moved*. Bähr translates: "But the brazen altar (*i. e.*, the altar of burnt-offering), which was before Jehovah (*i. e.*, which was immediately before the house of Jehovah), he moved nearer, away from (the place) before the house (*i. e.*, away from the point) between the (new) altar and the house of Jehovah, and he put it by the side of the new altar towards the north." It is not clear what it was nearer to.—W. G. S.] The altar of burnt-offering was called the "brazen" altar, in contradistinction from the golden altar of incense in the interior of the temple. It stood in the middle of the court of the priests in front of the temple-building. Urijah had placed the new altar in front of this, but Ahaz ordered the brazen altar to be moved away from its former position to the north side of the new one. This he did evidently because the position which was nearer to the dwelling-place of the divinity seemed to be more holy, and he did not wish that the old altar should be regarded as superior in honor or sacredness to the new one. As they were now upon the same line, they were, in so far, equal; while the new one, being in the middle, was, if anything, superior. In ver. 15 the new altar is called הַגָּדוֹל; hardly because "it was somewhat larger than Solomon's altar" (Keil), for the latter was very large, twenty cubits long and wide and ten cubits high (2 Chron. iv. 1). It seems better, with Thenius, "to understand it as in כֹּהֵן הַגָּדוֹל and to translate: 'the chief altar.'" According to Ahaz's orders, all the offerings were now to be made upon the new altar; the regular morning and evening sacrifices, and the special ones of particular individuals, whether the king or others. He did not, therefore, forbid the worship of Jehovah—he did not dare to do that—but nevertheless this worship was to be celebrated only upon an altar imitated from one which belonged to the heathen.—**The morning burnt-offering and the evening meat-offering.** "It might seem from this that there was no meat-offering in the morning and no burnt-offering in the evening, which would be contradictory to Ex. xxix. 38–42 and Num. xxviii. 3–8. But, as no burnt-offering was brought without a meat-offering (Numb. vii. 87; xv. 2–12), the latter is assumed as a matter of course in the morning offering; and, as the burnt-offering was to burn throughout the whole night (Levit. vi. 9), the meat-offering was the only part of the evening sacrifice at which the people could assist" (Thenius). The final words: **And as for the brazen altar** יִהְיֶה־לִּי לְבַקֵּר, are translated by the Vulg.: *erit paratum ad voluntatem meam;* similarly Philippson: "But to inquire at the brazen altar is my prerogative." This rendering is evidently incorrect, for בִּקֵּר means to investigate but not *to seek out* or *inquire*, much less *to be at one's disposition* (Levit. xxvii. 33). It has here the same meaning as in Prov. xx. 25, *to consider*, so that the phrase is to be translated: "I will consider [farther]" (Fürst). Thenius, very unnecessarily, desires to read לְבַקֵּשׁ for לְבַקֵּר, because הָיָה לְ, as he maintains, always means *to serve a certain purpose.* The meaning would then be "shall be mine for prayer;" *i. e.*, that the old altar should be retained as a "prayer-altar." הָיָה לְ is used here, however, as it is in Gen. xv. 12; 1 Sam. iv. 9; Josh. ii. 5. No distinction between prayer-altars and altars of sacrifice was recognized in ancient times. Ahaz did not desire that the altar of Solomon, which had hitherto been held very sacred, should be removed at once, but he desired to wait and see how the people would regard the innovation. He therefore reserved his further commands for a time.

Ver. 17. **And king Ahaz cut off,** &c. Thenius maintains that this and the following verse are a continuation of the first half of verse 10, and that a more precise statement is here added to the report of Ahaz' journey to Damascus which is there spoken of, viz., that it was impossible for him, after he had obtained the needed assistance, to appear before Tiglath Pileser with empty hands; that the treasury was empty (ver. 8); that he was, therefore, compelled to take for this gift anything which could be made available; and that this is what is meant by the closing words of ver. 18: "for the king of Assyria." But vers. 17 and 18 clearly carry on the narrative of what occurred after the return of the king from Damascus (ver. 12). They are therefore a direct continuation of vers. 10–16. Besides the removal of the brazen altar, Ahaz undertook still further changes in the sanctuary, namely those which are mentioned in vers. 17–18. As the brazen oxen are among the things which he removed, and as they were not carried away from Jerusalem until the Babylonians carried them off (Jerem. lii. 20), it is not to be understood that they were carried as a gift to Damascus by Ahaz. As it was with the oxen, so it must have been also with the other decorations mentioned in ver. 17. Finally the words: "for (מִפְּנֵי) the king of Assyria," cannot be understood in the sense of: "In the service of the king of Assyria" (Luther), or, "In order to obtain (by abstracting the decorations mentioned) the necessary gifts for the king" (Thenius); for מִפְּנֵי means *for* in the sense of *from fear of* anybody (*cf.* Judges ix. 21; Gen. vii. 7; Isai. xx. 6; 2 Kings xxii. 19; Hos. xi. 2, &c.), but never *for the sake of* any one, or *out of love* to him. Ahaz removed all these valuable objects "before the king of Assyria" not in order to make him a present of them, but either because he thought that they would give him offence or because he feared that he might want them and demand them of him. [This last is the true explanation. He wanted to escape the cupidity of the Assyrians by hiding evidences of wealth.—W. G. S.]—On the מִסְגְּרוֹת of the bases and on כִּיּוֹר and the brazen sea, see notes on 1 Kings vii. 27 *sq.* Ahaz did not set the last "upon the stone pavement" (Luther), but upon a foundation built of stone.—The מֵיסַךְ was "unquestionably a covered place, a platform or hall, in the forecourt of the temple, set apart for the king when he visited the temple with his retinue on the Sabbaths or feast-days" (Keil). This addition was built later than the rest of the temple. Its form cannot be definitely discovered, for it is only mentioned here. The

Sept. have for it: τὸν θεμέλιον τῆς καθέδρας τῶν σαββάτων, which does not throw any light upon it, as they evidently read מוּסַד, *foundation*, for מוּסַךְ.

The king's entry without is perhaps the "ascent" mentioned in 1 Kings x. 5. According to Thenius it was "the entrance at the eastern gate of the inner court, which lay towards the outer fore-court through which the king alone entered (Ezek. xlvi. 1, 2), and it is mentioned in contrast to the platform of the king in the inner forecourt, which has just been mentioned." Keil translates הֵסֵב, which applies to both the localities, "he transferred into the house of Jehovah," but the platform (מוּסַךְ), which was in the inner court, cannot possibly have been transferred into the temple itself, still less the outer entrance. Moreover, why should this transfer have taken place "before" or "for fear of" the king of Assyria? הֵסֵב means strictly: to make something turn about, to change a thing so that it is not what it was. Hence it often means to change one's name (2 Kings xxiii. 34; xxiv. 17), and it can only be understood here in the same sense. Thenius: "He 'changed' in the same way as he had changed or altered the bases, &c." This no doubt took place in this way, that he took off from them what was valuable. בֵּית יְהוָֹה is the ordinary accusative of place, "in the sanctuary."—We see from 2 Kings xxiii. 12 that Ahaz was not contented with the arrangements for worship here made, but also erected altars on the roof of his "upper chamber."—In regard to the sepulture of king Ahaz (ver. 20), 2 Chron. xxviii. 27, says: "They buried him in the city, in Jerusalem, but they brought him not into the sepulchres of the kings of Israel." It is not evident why this is an "error," as Thenius asserts. It does not contradict the record before us, and the same thing occurred in regard to Uzziah, although not for the same reason (*cf.* chap. xv. 7 and 2 Chron. xxvi. 3).

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[Supplementary Note *on the references to contemporaneous history in* chap. xvi., incorporating the results of Assyrian investigations.—As we saw above (p. 161), chap. xv. gives an account of the intervention of Assyria in the history of Israel. Chap. xvi. gives the history of the intervention of Assyria in Judah. The first revolt of Pekah and Rezin against Assyria, and their conspiracy to attack Judah and force it to join in the attempt, in the last year of Jotham (742), was crushed before it gained any strength. In 734 they once more united in revolt, and renewed their policy of attacking Judah. Ahaz, hard pressed by them (see *Exeg.* on ver. 7), called to Tiglath Pileser for aid, and paid him tribute. The aid was promptly given, as Tiglath Pileser regarded Rezin and Pekah as rebels. Ahaz was thus relieved from this danger (732). Tiglath Pileser, after dealing with the rebels as described on p. 162, marched into Philistia and took Gaza and Ashdod, and also Dumah in Arabia, and came back to Damascus. It was probably on this march that he "came to" Ahaz, and distressed him; and it was probably at this time that Ahaz removed the furniture of the temple and took away its decorations, lest they might present an appearance of wealth to Tiglath Pileser, and excite his cupidity (see *Exeg.* on ver. 18). In 731, before leaving Damascus to return to Assyria, Tiglath Pileser "held a court" of his vassals at that city. Twenty-three such vassals came. Among them are mentioned Pekah of Israel and Ahaz of Judah (Lenormant I. 389 and 390). Continued in the *Supp. Note* after the *Exeg.* section on chap. xvii.—W. G. S.]

HISTORICAL AND ETHICAL.

1. The *reign of king Ahaz* was the most disastrous through which Judah had yet passed. The kingdom sank so low, both internally and externally, religiously and politically, that it was on the verge of ruin. Such an incapable ruler had never before ascended the throne. The predominant feature in his character was weakness, weakness of spirit and weakness of intellect. History records nothing about him which is worthy of respect. Although Judah and Israel had had many perverse, wicked, and godless rulers, yet these had been at least brave and energetic soldiers; but of Ahaz even this much cannot be said. When the enemy approached "his heart was moved as the trees of the wood are moved with the wind" (Isai. vii. 2). No word of prophetic promise or encouragement could deliver him from his despair. He was defeated; he did not win a single victory: all the conquests of his two predecessors were lost; the land was devastated and robbed of all its sources of revenue. Finally he turns in his distress, in spite of every warning, to the threatening Assyrian power and purchases its help, not only by the treasures of the temple and the palace, but also with the independence and honor of his kingdom. As is usually the case with weak rulers, he cringes before the mighty, but is arrogant and domineering towards his subjects (*cf.* vers. 7–16). As for the main point, the attitude towards Jehovah, his apostasy was deeper than that of any other king of Judah or even of Israel. He not only tolerated idolatry, but practised it zealously himself, and even went so far in his error as the abomination of sacrificing his own son. The historical books, which only state the facts, do not tell how it came about that a king of Judah, a descendant and successor of David, fell so low, but the prophetical books give us an insight into the religious and moral status of the kingdom. The kingdom of Judah had attained to power and glory under Uzziah and Jotham, as Israel did under Jeroboam II. Flourishing trade and lively intercourse with foreign countries produced wealth, and with it also foreign manners and customs. Finally foreign divinities were introduced. The result was great luxury, effeminacy, debauchery, and excess which soon, especially in the upper classes, led to immorality and vice of every kind. The foreign forms of worship, which were, for the most part, brilliant and attractive, and connected with vice, pleased this degenerate generation better than the simple, severe, and earnest Jehovah worship, which indeed continued, but had degenerated into a mere external ceremonial. Uzziah and Jotham had indeed, as we have said above, done their utmost for the external prosperity of the kingdom. They also remained true to the worship of Jehovah, but they were not filled with warm zeal for it, and they did not oppose effective resistance to the invading corruption. Isaiah, who commenced his prophetical labor in the year in which Uzziah

died (Isai. vi. 1), says, in the passage in which, according to the generally received opinion, he is speaking of the time of Jotham: "Therefore thou hast forsaken thy people, the house of Jacob, because they be replenished from the East [filled with Eastern rites and acts] and are soothsayers like the Philistines, and they please themselves in the children of strangers. Their land also is full of silver and gold, neither is there any end of their treasures; their land is also full of horses, neither is there any end of their chariots; their land is also full of idols, they worship the work of their own hands, that which their own fingers have made" (Isai. ii. 6-8). In another passage, which, though it does not belong to the time of Jotham, yet falls in the beginning of the reign of Ahaz, the prophet describes the degeneracy of morals, the debauchery, licentiousness, pride, deceit, alienation from God, injustice, oppression, &c., of the time (Isai. v. 8-25). In such circumstances the youthful Ahaz had grown up. Such was the atmosphere which he had breathed from his childhood up. He was emphatically a child of his time, a faithful representative of the majority of the nation, corrupted by foreign modes of thought and morals. By nature he was weak and vacillating. He allowed himself to be swept away by the stream, and sank deeper into a depraved character and career, so that even the heavy judgments which befell him did not avail to bring him into other courses.

2. *The idolatry* which was practised in Judah, in the time of Ahaz, by the side of the worship of Jehovah, was not of the form peculiar to any particular people, but was like that which Solomon allowed his wives to practise (see *Exeg.* on 1 Kings xi. 5 and *Hist.* §§ 3 and 4 on 1 Kings xi. 1-13), a mixture of the different kinds of worship which predominated in western Asia. Since, as we saw from Isai. ii. 6-8, such a cultus had been established in Judah even in the time of Jotham, and Ahaz found it in existence when he ascended the throne, it follows that it cannot have been Assyrian in origin, for, in Jotham's time, Judah had not come in contact with Assyria at all. In the book of Chronicles, as well as in the book of Kings, the sacrifice of children is presented as the extreme of apostasy. In its nature this form of sacrifice is the most utter contrast to the worship of Jehovah (see Pt. II., p. 36). As it is not mentioned as having been committed at all before the time of Ahaz, but, on the contrary, he was the first who went so far astray, it has been supposed that he was led to it by becoming acquainted with the Assyrian fire-gods, Adrammelech and Anammelech (2 Kings xvii. 31) (*cf.* Movers, *Phöniz.* I. *s.* 65; Winer, *R.-W.-B.* II. *s.* 101). The record, however, distinctly contradicts this notion by the words: "According to the abominations of the heathen whom the Lord cast out from before the children of Israel." The Assyrians did not belong to this category and the words apply here, as they do wherever they occur (chap. xvii. 8, 11; *cf.* Numb. xxxiii. 51-55; Deut. iv. 38), to the Canaanitish nations, that is, the nations of western, not of upper, Asia. It is an unquestioned fact that among the former, especially among the Phœnicians, child-sacrifices were common, and that Moloch, to whom they were offered, was worshipped in western Asia (*cf.* Levit. xviii. 21, 27 *sq.*; xx. 1-5). Moreover, it cannot be proved that Ahaz did not perform such sacrifices until after he became acquainted with the Assyrian cultus. It is mentioned in the most general terms as a sign of his apostasy. His sacrificing and offering incense "under every green tree" does not point to Assyrian star-worship, but to the Astarte and Aschere-worship of western Asia. Duncker's notion that Ahaz first offered child-sacrifice when Rezin and Pekah were before Jerusalem, and he was most hardly pressed on all sides ("In vain the king offered sacrifices to the gods of Damascus in order to turn the fortunes of war; in vain he sacrificed his own son as a burnt-offering"), is nothing but a pure construction on the basis of 2 Kings iii. 27. The biblical text does not offer the slightest hint of it. It is in fact very questionable whether child-sacrifices were common among the nations of Upper Asia, and especially among the Assyrians. It cannot, at any rate, be proved from 2 Kings xvii. 31. It cannot, indeed, be denied that Ahaz, after he had met Tiglath Pileser in Damascus, became acquainted with the Assyrian cultus and transplanted at least some parts of it to Jerusalem. This is proved, not so much by the fact that he caused an altar to be built after the pattern of the one which he had seen in Damascus, as rather from 2 Kings xxiii. 12, where "altars upon the upper-chamber of Ahaz" are mentioned, evidently referring to Assyrio-Chaldean star-worship (see note below on the place mentioned). The chariots and horses of the sun which are there mentioned most probably belonged to the time of Manasseh. For the rest, Ahaz tolerated the Jehovah-worship after his return from Damascus; for the sacrifices which he commanded the high-priest Urijah to make (ver. 15) upon the new altar were not offerings to idols but to Jehovah. The weak man had not the courage formally to abolish the Jehovah-worship, for a party which could not be despised still clung to it. He worshipped all possible gods according to his own tastes and notions.* In his time there was in Judah complete religious anarchy and license. [See the bracketed note on ver. 3 under *Exegetical.* That note presents the facts in regard to the point discussed in this section according to the latest and best knowledge. It will be seen that it modifies and corrects some of the above statements.]

3. *The war which the confederated kings of Israel and Syria undertook against Judah* is "one of the most notable and most important events in the Israelitish history" (Caspari). It was the first time that one of the two sister-kingdoms formed an alliance, with the hereditary enemy against the other, in order to destroy it. This was a most unnatural alliance and was a sign of the process of dissolution which was commencing; for it showed that the consciousness of forming with Judah a common nationality based upon common blood and faith had been lost by Israel. The importance and the external prosperity, which had been won by Judah under Uzziah and Jotham (see above, § 1), had perhaps reawakened Ephraim's ancient, deep-rooted hate and envy of Judah (see 1 Kings xii.; *Hist.* § 1), and incited the faithless and ambitious Pekah to the alliance with Rezin. In addition to this was the fact that Israel had, under Menahem, fallen into a certain position of dependence upon, and subjection to, the growing and threatening Assyrian power, and that Syria had also, in this power, a dangerous neighbor. In order to recuperate Israel at the expense of Judah,

and to find a protection on the side of Assyria in the intervening nation of Syria, Pekah formed an alliance with Rezin, who was also eager for conquest, and these two "fire-brands" (Isai. vii. 4) formed the plan of putting an end to the nation of Judah and the house of David. They made their first efforts in this direction in the last years of Jotham, but without success (chap. xv. 37). When, however, the weak and incapable Ahaz came to the throne, the right time for carrying out their plan seemed to them to have come. But the Lord said: "Take counsel together and it shall come to naught; speak the word and it shall not stand" (Isai. viii. 10). At the moment when they were close to their object they were obliged to give up their plan, and they ran to their own destruction. Rezin lost his kingdom and his life; Pekah was made subject to Tiglath Pileser, and a part of his people were led away into exile (chap. xv. 29). Ahaz also lost his kingdom and his people, and had to bow beneath the supremacy of Assyria. The whole war was a heavy judgment upon the three kingdoms. The kingdom of Syria-Damascus, which had, up to this time, been the instrument of the divine judgments against Israel, disappeared forever from the scene. Israel went on with hasty steps to its destruction, for Pekah was murdered by Hoshea in consequence of his subjection to the Assyrians, and Hoshea, as he refused to pay the tribute to Assyria, was taken captive by Shalmaneser. Thus the kingdom of Israel came to an end (chap. xvii. 3 *sq.*). [See *Supp. Note*, p. 161.] "As the hostility to Judah had given it its origin, so the same hostility brought about its destruction: born from this, it also perished by it" (Caspari). Judah itself, finally, as a punishment for its apostasy from Jehovah, came into that contact with Assyria, from this time on, which had such a deep influence upon its history. From this time the conflicts with the small nationalities ceased and those with the great world-monarchies began. In so far this war was, for Judah also, the beginning of the end. It was a turning-point for both nations which had not heeded the chastisements nor the proofs of the goodness and long-suffering of God, but had hardened themselves more and more in their apostasy. "It was in the highest degree providential that the great world-monarchies began to interfere in Israel just at the time when this hardening took place" (Caspari). But this "war between Judah and the allied kingdoms of Ephraim and Syria is still further especially remarkable for this fact, that the grandest prophecies were spoken in it, and that it forms the historical basis of a product of the Old-Testament prophecy which is of the very highest, or, in fact, of unique significance. This fact stands in connection with the position of this war at the turning-point of the Old-Testament history; in the middle of the Israelitish history, at the end of the first and beginning of the second period, in which latter the fortunes of the people of God under the world-monarchy, its period of suffering, falls. It stood, therefore, at the point where a prospect offered itself to the eye of the prophet which reached out over the whole future development of the kingdom of God" (Caspari).

4. After his visit to Damascus, *Ahaz caused certain changes to be made in the arrangements of the temple at Jerusalem* which were of greater or less significance. The record mentions some of these very briefly, but speaks more at length of those which affected the altar of burnt-offering, because these were by far the most important. Since the entire cultus was concentrated in the sacrifice, and all sacrifices, those of the individual as well as those of the entire people, were to be offered on this one altar (Levit. xvii. 8, 9; Deut. xii. 13, 14), it formed the centre of the sanctuary, which, without it, would have lost its significance. Its form and shape, its position in the sacred edifice, its entire construction, were, therefore, by no means indifferent matters, but they were strictly prescribed in accordance with its character and purpose, so that any alteration of it seemed to be a sort of denial or contradiction of the religious idea which it was constructed to serve. Merely to take away the four horns from its four corners was to desecrate and destroy it (Amos iii. 14; Judith ix. 8. *Symbol. d. Mosaisch. Cult.* I. *s.* 473). Now when Ahaz caused this altar to be removed and another made on a pattern obtained from Damascus, this was nothing less than an indirect setting aside of the lawful Jehovah-worship, and it bore witness not only to an entire want of comprehension of that worship, but also to an unheard-of self-will. He ordained, indeed, that the priest should offer all the sacrifices which had hitherto been offered—that is to say, all the sacrifices to Jehovah—upon the new altar. He did not diminish the amount of worship to be paid to Jehovah; the crime and folly were that an idol-altar was used for the worship of Jehovah. It appears that Ahaz intended to gradually transform the Jehovah-worship in this way. Certainly the ground for it was not merely that the form of the altar which he saw "in a city where, according to all the indications which we possess, the fine arts were highly developed, pleased him better than that of the large brazen altar in the forecourt of the temple at Jerusalem" (Ewald), so that "he had rather an æsthetic than a religious reason for the change" (Thenius). For, aside from the fact that there is not an indication of any especial fondness for art in Ahaz, as, for instance, there was in Solomon, and that he was a weak and incapable man, we must notice that he removed even the works of art which were in the temple; he took away the brazen oxen and he destroyed the artistic "bases" upon which the laver rested. He desired that the new altar should be made exactly like the one he had seen at Damascus, and to this end he sent a model of it to Jerusalem. This shows that his object was not so much to have a beautiful work of art as it was to have an altar made on a pattern borrowed from Damascus; his interest in it was not artistic but political. "When he perceived the zeal of the Assyrian rulers for the propagation of their national cultus, he commanded his priests to change the arrangements of the temple so as to conform to this desire" (Duncker). His ordinance in this respect was simply a contemptible *captatio benevolentiæ* for the Assyrian king. The removal of the twelve oxen of the brazen sea, which he then placed upon a mere foundation of stone, was, if we consider the significance of this piece of the temple furniture as it is stated above (1 Kings vii., *Hist.* § 6), a degradation of the Israelitish priesthood and a contradiction of the destiny of Israel as the chosen priest-people, as well as an assault upon the character of the Israelitish religion. The

same is true in regard to the removal of the Misgeroth from the bases, for upon them were the characteristic emblems of the inner sanctuary, cherubim and palms (see above, 1 Kings vii., *Hist.* § 7). Movers' opinion (*Relig. der Phön.*), that Ahaz removed the oxen, &c., because the symbolism of animals was especially abominable to the Assyrians, who were addicted to star-worship, seems to us to be entirely erroneous. The changes, finally, which Ahaz made in the gallery and standing-place of the king are not more definitely specified. Possibly there were emblems upon them also which were peculiar to the Jehovah-worship. We hear nothing of any changes in the interior of the sanctuary. Those which were made affected only the objects which stood in the fore-court, so that they were prominently before the eye and might offend the Assyrians. The additional statement in Chronicles (2 Chron. xxviii. 24), that Ahaz closed the doors of the temple, is often brought in question, and asserted to be an exaggeration (Thenius, Bertheau, and others). As it does not stand alone, however, but is supported by the assertion in chap. xxix. 3, that Hezekiah opened the door again, which again is assumed in vers. 7 and 17, we have as little reason to reject this as any of the other additions to these books which are supplied by the Chronicles. The "upper chambers" with their altars, which, according to 2 Kings xxiii. 12, Ahaz caused to be made, are not mentioned in this place, although they were in existence. We must not forget that Ahaz did not do all at once, but went on from step to step in his apostasy. As it is certain that he did not begin with the sacrifice of his son in the valley of Hinnom, so it is certain also that he did not commence by closing the doors of the temple; on the contrary, these were the extremes to which he allowed himself to be driven under the influence of the heathen party. Fortunately, his reign was not a long one.

5. *The conduct of the high-priest, Urijah*, under the commands of the king, stands in glaring contrast with that of the high-priest Azariah and the eighty other priests when Uzziah attempted to usurp priestly functions (2 Chron. xxvi. 17 *sq.*). Instead of resisting the commands of the weak and capricious Ahaz, he keeps silence, bows in acquiescence under his will, "and does all that king Ahaz commanded him" (ver. 16). Neither did the other priests stir; they allowed everything to go on without opposition. We cannot believe that this was the same Urijah whom Isaiah designates as a faithful witness of Jehovah (Isai. viii. 2, 16). [*Cf. Exeget.* note on ver. 10.] We should have to suppose that he fell so low after a long interval. Nothing similar had ever been done before by any priest in Judah. It seems that he, like his companions in office, was only anxious for his revenues. At any rate, his conduct is a sign of the character and standing of the priests of that time. They were dumb dogs who could not bark; they all followed their own ways, every one his own gain (Isai. lvi. 10 *sq.*). Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, and Micah stand over against them, grand and noble, speaking without fear, rebuking the sins both of high and low, and announcing the threatening judgments of God.

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

Vers. 1–9. King Ahaz. *a*) The way in which he walked, vers. 1–4. (An apostate from the God of Israel even to the point of offering sacrifices to Moloch.) *b*) The distress into which he came, vers. 5 and 6. (2 Chron. xxviii. 5. The land was devastated; Elath, the fountain of the national prosperity, was cut off; the throne was in danger. He trembled like the trees of the forest in the wind. Isai. vii. 2.) *c*) The help which he sought, vers. 7–9. (Instead of seeking help from the living God, to whom the prophet pointed him, he seeks it from the king of Assyria. Ps. cxxiv. 8; Jerem. xvii. 5, 7. Instead of seeking it with prayer and supplication, he seeks it with silver and gold. Ps. l. 15.)—Vers. 1–3. WÜRT. SUMM.: Not all pious parents are blessed with pious children. It is, indeed, a great trial for parents when children do not turn out well, but when the parents have not failed in their discipline, then they can leave the rest to God, and have a good conscience that they have done their best.—Vers. 3 and 4. STARKE: Men are so blind that they think they serve God most truly by those very actions by which they sin most grossly against him.—The Moloch-sacrifice, or child-sacrifice, is a proof of the extravagance of error into which men can fall when they have not the knowledge of the living God and His revealed word, or when they have rejected the same (Rom. i. 21, 22). This abomination, which still continues among heathen nations, is the strongest and most direct call to all, who know the living God and who possess his word, to take part in the work of missions, and to help to bring it about that light may come to those who sit in darkness and the shadow of death, and that they may come to a knowledge of salvation (Luke i. 79; ii. 32).—God commands us to give our dearest and best to Him, but not to Moloch. There are no longer any sacrifices to Moloch in Christendom, but it happens often enough, even now, that parents sacrifice their children to the idols of the world, which consume them so that they are lost eternally.—PFAFF. BIB.: He who trains up his children to evil, sacrifices them to the Moloch of hell, that is, to the devil.—STARKE: As a corrupt atmosphere can taint a healthy body far more easily than a pure atmosphere can purify a tainted one, so also bad companions can lead good people astray more easily than good men can convert bad ones. Evil is more easily propagated than good.—For two hundred years the people in Judah had kept themselves free from idolatry and heathen abominations, and yet Ahaz succeeded in a short time in filling the land with these (Isai. i. 5, 6). The higher a people stands, the lower it may fall. Judah sank even lower than Israel. There have been, and there are even yet, Christian nations which have sunk lower than the heathen. The fall of one who has been most highly blessed is often the heaviest and deepest. Therefore, Be sober! &c., 1 Peter v. 8.—Ver. 4. Happy is he who, under every green tree and on every height, has learned, not to serve the world and its gods, but to praise the one holy, living, and gracious God.—Wherever God has a Church, the devil builds a temple by the side of it.—Vers. 5 and 6. The War of Rezin and Pekah against Judah (see *Histor. and Ethical*, § 3). The object, the result, and the significance of it (Isai. viii. 10; vii. 6, 7).—The unnatural alliance

of the two enemies against Judah. Compare the alliance of Herod and Pilate. Ps. xxxiii. 10 applies.—The allies could not succeed in their enterprise, not on account of a vigorous resistance, but because it was otherwise ordained in the counsels of God. He who says to the turbulent sea: "Hitherto shalt thou come and no further; and here shall thy proud waves be stayed" (Job xxxviii. 11)—He fixes limits and restraints for all human powers, however great and mighty, however victorious and proud they may be.—Ver. 7. CRAMER: He who will not be God's servant must be the servant of men, and must lose all his independence, his honor, and his dignity.—"I am thy servant and thy son, come and help me!"—Address this promise and this prayer in all your need and distress, not, as Ahaz did, to an earthly, human king, however great and mighty he may be, but to the King of all kings, in whom alone is our help (Hos. xiii. 9), for "It is better," &c. (Ps. cxviii. 9; cxlvi. 3, 5).—The friendship and help which is bought with silver and gold has no duration and no value. So it is said of Ahaz here: "He helped him not" (2 Chron. xxviii. 21). The great and mighty, when they listen to the prayer of the humble and the weak for aid, generally have no other object in view than their own advantage, and the increase of their own power.

Vers. 10–18. The Sacrilege upon the House of God. *a*) The king's self-willed assault upon the established institutions; *b*) the high-priest's concession. BERLEB. BIB.: See in this a clear picture of the lack of Christian spirit in the two highest ranks. The State desires to see everything arranged according to its whims: the Church yields for the sake of the temporal advantage.—It is the fashion of depraved rulers that they think they can command in religious as well as in secular matters, and can control everything according to their own good pleasure.—Those who tremble themselves and cringe before the great are almost always imperious and haughty to those who are below them.—Ahaz' sinful and insane arrangement of sacrificing and offering incense to the Lord upon an idol-altar, is one which may still be observed where the heart is addicted to sin and to love of the world, and is alienated from the living and true God, while yet homage is paid to him.—"Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the spirit of God dwelleth in you?" (1 Cor. iii. 16 *sq.*; vi. 19 *sq.*) Whosoever destroyeth the temple of God, him will God destroy. In this temple also there may be only one altar; he who sets up another by the side of it destroys it. —Ver. 16. NEUE WÜRT. SUMM.: There would not be so much harm done by wicked rulers if they did not find so many people who allow themselves to be used as instruments of their evil designs, and who approve of their undertakings in order to win their favor. OSIANDER: Ecclesiastics have always been found who esteemed the favor of great men more than the honor of Almighty God. Would that such men were no longer to be found in the Christendom of to-day!—WÜRT. SUMM.: We have in this high-priest a specimen of those hypocrites and belly-servants who say: "Whose bread I eat, his song I sing;" who veer about with the wind and seek to be pleasant to all men; "dumb dogs who cannot bark;" who wish to hurt no one's feelings, but teach and say just what any one wants to hear. But God's word alone, and not the favor of men, nor the goods and honors of the world, ought to be the rule and norm, from which we ought not to turn aside out of favor to any man, although it may involve risk of life or limb to speak the truth. For if any talk and teach according to the desires of their hearers, for the sake of their own comfort, their honor will come to shame and their end is condemnation (Phil. iii. 19; Acts iv. 19).—Ver. 18. "For fear of the king of Assyria." It is shameful to introduce changes in religious matters for political reasons.

C.—*The Fall of the Kingdom of Israel, under Hoshea.*

CHAP. xvii. 1–41.

1 IN the twelfth year of Ahaz king of Judah began [*omit* began] Hoshea
the son of Elah [became king] to reign [*omit* to reign] in Samaria over Israel
2 nine years. And he did *that which was* evil in the sight of the Lord, but not
3 as the kings of Israel that were before him. Against him came up Shalmaneser
king of Assyria; and Hoshea became his servant, and gave him presents
4 [tribute]. And the king of Assyria found conspiracy in Hoshea: for he had
sent messengers to So king of Egypt, and brought no present to the king of
Assyria, as *he had done* year by year: therefore the king of Assyria shut him
5 up, and bound him in prison. Then the king of Assyria came up throughout
6 all the land, and went up to Samaria, and besieged it three years. In the ninth
year[1] of Hoshea the king of Assyria took Samaria, and carried Israel away into
Assyria, and placed them in Halah and in [on *the*] Habor [,] *by* the river of
[*omit* of] Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes [Media].
7 For *so* it was, that [so it came to pass that when] the children of Israel had
sinned against the Lord their God, which had brought them up out of the land
of Egypt, from under the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt, and had feared other

8 gods, And walked in the statutes of the heathen, whom the Lord cast out from
before the children of Israel, and [*in those*] of the kings of Israel, which [*statutes*]
9 they [*i. e., the kings*] had made. [:—] And the children of Israel did secretly
those things that *were* not right against the Lord their God, and they built them
high places in all their cities, from the tower of the watchmen to the fenced
10 city. And they set them up images and groves [statues] in [on] every high
11 hill, and under every green tree: And there they burnt incense in [on] all the
high places, as *did* the heathen whom the Lord carried away [removed] before
12 them; and wrought wicked things to provoke the Lord to anger: For they
served idols, whereof the Lord had said unto them, Ye shall not do this thing.
13 Yet the Lord testified[3] against Israel, and against Judah, by all the prophets,[3]
and by [and by] all the seers, saying, Turn ye from your evil ways, and keep
my commandments *and* my statutes, according to all the law which I commanded
your fathers, and which I sent to you by my servants the prophets.
14 Notwithstanding, they would not hear [And they heard not], but hardened
their necks, like to the neck of their fathers, that did not believe in the Lord
15 their God. And they rejected his statutes, and his covenant that he made with
their fathers, and his testimonies which he testified against them; and they followed
vanity, and became vain, and went after the heathen that *were* round
about them, *concerning* whom the Lord had charged them, that they should not
16 do like them. And they left all the commandments of the Lord their God, and
made them molten images, *even* two calves, and made a grove [an Astarte-
17 statue] and worshipped all the host of heaven, and served Baal. And they
caused their sons and their daughters to pass through the fire, and used divinations
and enchantments, and sold themselves to do evil in the sight of the Lord,
18 to provoke him to anger. [:—] Therefore [*It came to pass, I say* (ver. 7), that
then] the Lord was very angry with Israel, and removed them out of his sight:
19 there was none left but the tribe of Judah only. [(] Also Judah kept not the
commandments of the Lord their God, but walked in the statutes of Israel
20 which they made. [)] And [then] the Lord rejected all the seed of Israel, and
afflicted them, and delivered them into the hand of spoilers, until he had cast
21 them out of his sight. For he rent Israel from the house of David; and they
made Jeroboam the son of Nebat king: and Jeroboam drave [seduced][4] Israel
22 from following the Lord, and made them sin a great sin. For the children of
Israel walked in all the sins of Jeroboam which he did; they departed not from
23 them:[5] Until the Lord removed Israel out of his sight, as he had said by all his
servants the prophets. So was Israel carried away out of their own land to
Assyria unto this day.
24 And the king of Assyria brought *men* from Babylon, and from Cuthah, and
from Ava, and from Hamath, and from Sepharvaim, and placed *them* in the
cities of Samaria instead of the children of Israel: and they possessed Samaria,
25 and dwelt in the cities thereof. And *so* it was [it came to pass] at the beginning
of their dwelling there, *that* they feared not the Lord: therefore the Lord
sent lions among them, which slew *some* of [slaughtered amongst] them.
26 Wherefore they spake to the king of Assyria, saying, The nations which thou
hast removed, and placed in the cities of Samaria, know not the manner of the
God of the land: therefore he hath sent lions among them, and, behold, they
27 slay them, because they know not the manner of the God of the land. Then
the king of Assyria commanded, saying, Carry thither one of the priests whom
ye brought from thence; and let them go and dwell there, and let him teach
28 them the manner of the God of the land. Then one of the priests whom they
had carried away from Samaria came and dwelt in Beth-el, and taught them
29 how they should fear[6] the Lord. Howbeit every nation made gods of their own,
and put *them* in the houses of the high places which the Samaritans had made,
30 every nation in their cities wherein they dwelt. And the men of Babylon made
Succoth-benoth, and the men of Cuth made Nergal, and the men of Hamath made
31 Ashima, And the Avites made Nibhaz and Tartak, and the Sepharvites burnt
their children in fire to Adrammelech and Anammelech, the gods of Sepharvaim.

32 So they feared the Lord, and made unto themselves of the lowest of them [from
the common people] priests of the high places, which sacrificed for them in the
33 houses of the high places. They [*i. e.*, these immigrants] feared the Lord, and
served their own gods, after the manner of the nations whom [whence] they
[were] carried away from thence [*omit* from thence].
34 Unto this day they [*i. e.*, the remnant of the Israelites] do after the former man-
ners: they fear not the Lord, neither do they after their statutes, or after
their ordinances, or after the law and commandment which the Lord commanded
35 the children of Jacob, whom he named Israel; With whom the Lord had made a
covenant, and charged them, saying, Ye shall not fear other gods, nor bow
36 yourselves to them, nor serve them, nor sacrifice to them: But [only] the Lord,
who brought you up out of the land of Egypt with great power and a stretched
out arm, him shall ye fear, and him shall ye worship, and to him shall ye do
37 sacrifice. And the statutes, and the ordinances, and the law, and the command-
ment, which he wrote for you, ye shall observe to do for evermore; and ye shall
38 not fear other gods. And the covenant that I have made with you ye shall not
39 forget; neither shall ye fear other gods. [;] But [only] the Lord your God ye
40 shall fear; and he shall deliver you out of the hand of all your enemies. Howbeit
[and] they did not hearken, but they did after their former manners.
41 So these nations [*i. e.*, all the mixed inhabitants of the northern kingdom] feared the Lord,
and served their graven images, both their children, and their children's chil-
dren: as did their fathers, so do they unto this day.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

[1] Ver. 6. [בשנת התשיעית The *stat. const.* is used in such cases, where only the second word has the article, in order to form a closer connection between the words. Ew. § 287*a*. 1.

[2] Ver. 18.—[On the hifil form ויער *cf.* וַיָּסַר, Gen. viii. 18; Gesen. § 72. 7.—W. G. S.]

[3] Ver. 18.—The keri נביא for the chetib נביאו is in so far correct that the ו belongs to the following word, כל, as a copula, and there is no sufficient reason why נביא should have the possessive pronoun and חזה not. The keri is followed by the Vulg. and the Syr. and Arab. versions, and is presented by several codices. Maurer and Keil prefer the chetib, but do not offer satisfactory reasons for it.—Bähr. [Ew. § 156 *a*. note 2, says that, if the chetib is to be kept, then חֹזֶה is a noun=*oracle*.

[4] Ver. 21.—[The chetib, וידא, is hifil from נדא, or, by an interchange of consonants which is frequent in books later than the Pentateuch, נדה. The form does not occur elsewhere from either of those stems. The keri proposes וידח, hif. of נדח. The signification is the same, *repel, remove*, or *seduce* (Deut. xiii. 14; Prov. vii. 21).

[5] Ver. 22.—[The fem. suff. in ממנה refers to the plural חטאות. Abstracts are expressed by the plur. or by the fem., and sometimes, where the words are far separated, such an interchange of the one for the other, in relative words, takes place. *Cf.* Job xxxix. 15; xiv. 19; 2 Kings iii. 3; x. 26. Ew. § 317 *a*.

[6] Ver. 23.—[Imperf. in an indirect question referring to something which at a past time was regarded as not to come to pass.—W. G. S.]

THE CHRONOLOGY OF THE PERIOD FROM THE REIGN OF JEHU UNTIL THE FALL OF THE KINGDOM OF ISRAEL.

[Compare the Appendix on the Chronology.]

This period, as well as that from Ahab to Jehu, presents chronological difficulties. Their solution can be successfully accomplished only by starting from the surest possible data, and bringing together and comparing all the separate chronological statements. For the starting-point we have the year 884 in which Jehu, in Israel, and Athaliah, in Judah, came to the throne; the date of the close of the period is also firmly established. The kingdom of Israel came to an end, according to the great majority of the chronologers, in the year 721 B.C. However much they may differ about the limits of the several reigns, they generally agree in this. So Petavius, Usher, Scaliger, Seyffarth, Winer, Tiele, Keil. See Herzog's *Encyc.* XVIII. *s.* 459, where Rösch has collected into a table the results of the investigations of twelve chronologers. [Rawlinson may be added to the number of those who advocate the date 721. On the other hand are Des Vignoles, 718; Bengel, 722; Ewald, 719; Thenius, 722; Bunsen, 709; Niebuhr, 719; and Lepsius still later, 693. It cannot be regarded as a satisfactory scientific procedure to thus borrow the results of a certain number of scholars. There is no such consensus of opinion as would enable us to simply proceed from these dates as results of science which are no longer questioned. In the absence of such a consensus it is mere building upon the sand to make them the foundation of a calculation which makes claim to reliability. It is to gain the appearance of certainty where there is no certainty. In the *Appendix on the Chronology* will be found a brief criticism of these chronological data and an estimate of their value.—W. G. S.] Bengel and Thenius adopt the date 722, but the difference is

not important. They agree with the others in placing Hezekiah's accession in the year 727, and Samaria fell (chap. xviii. 10) during his sixth year, that is, in the year 721. Ewald adopts the year 719 instead of 721. The cause of this difference is that he reckons the years of some of the reigns as complete years, which, as we shall see, is inadmissible. Bunsen differs very widely from the rest. He fixes this date as 709, but his entire calculation is founded upon data of the Assyrian chronology which are, as yet, in the highest degree uncertain, and which have not been yet regarded by anybody as correct. [See the *Appendix on the Chronology*, §§ 3 and 6.] They cannot, therefore, avail to shake our confidence in the two dates 884 and 721. This period accordingly covers 163 years, and, as the numbers given for the various reigns do not always apply to complete years, but sometimes to fragments of years (see Pt. II., p. 86), inasmuch as the year in which one died and another succeeded may be counted twice over, these 163 years give us the only reliable basis for estimating the length of the separate reigns. If then we calculate, commencing from the year 884, we reach the following results:—

a) *For the kings of Judah.* Athaliah reigned from 884 on for six years. In the seventh, that is in 877, Joash became king (chap. xi. 3; xii. 2). Since, however, he became king *in* the seventh year of Jehu, the forty years of his reign were not complete years, so that the accession of his successor falls in 838.—Amaziah reigned 29 years (chap. xiv. 2), that is to 809, or, if the years were not all complete, until 810, or possibly 811.—Uzziah (Azariah) reigned 52 years (chap. xv. 2), that is, until 759 or 758, for all the years of his reign can hardly have been complete twelvemonths.—Jotham reigned 16 years (chap. xv. 33), that is, until 743.—Ahaz reigned 16 years (chap. xvi. 2), that is, until 727, in which year Hezekiah came to the throne. In the latter's sixth year (chap. xviii. 10) Samaria fell; that is, in 721. If we add together the numbers representing the durations of these reigns we get 165 years, whereas the time from 884 to 721 is only 163 years. This difference is only apparent. It proceeds from the fact that fragments of years at the beginning or end of reigns are counted as years.

b) *For the kings of Israel.* Jehu reigned from 884 on for 28 years (chap. x. 36), that is, until 856.—Jehoahaz reigned 17 years (chap. xiii. 1), that is, till 840 or 839.—Jehoash ruled 16 years (chap. xiii. 10), that is, until 823.—Jeroboam II. reigned, according to chap. xiv. 23 only 41 years. But, as he is said in the same verse to have become king in the fifteenth year of Amaziah of Judah, and as this statement is consistent with chap. xiv. 1 and 17, he must have been king, as is shown above (chap. xiv., *Exeg.* on ver. 23), for 51 or 52 years, unless we are willing to assume that there was an interval of anarchy for 10 or 11 years. At any rate, his son Zachariah did not come to the throne before the year 773. He only ruled six months and his successor Shallum, in the following year, 772, only one month (chap. xv. 8, 13). Menahem reigned from 772 on for 10 years (chap. xv. 17), that is until 762.—Pekahiah reigned two years (chap. xv. 23), that is, until 760.—Pekah ruled only 20 years according to chap. xv. 27; but according to ver. 32 he ascended the throne two years before Jotham of Judah, survived him (he lived 16 years, ver. 33), and waged war with Ahaz, his successor. It was not until the twelfth year of the last-named king that Hoshea became king. Now 2+16+12=30; therefore, either Pekah reigned 30 years and not 20, or there was no king in Israel for a space of 10 years (see notes on chap. xv. 27). [See the *Supp. Note* after the *Exeg.* section on the fifteenth chapter.] This much is certain, that Hoshea became king 30 years after 760, when Pekah ascended the throne, that is, in 730. He reigned 9 years, that is, until 721.—The sum of all the reigns mentioned is 164 instead of 163 years, and this slight difference is accounted for as before in the case of the kings of Judah.

c) *The synchronistic data between the reigns in the two kingdoms.* Athaliah in Judah and Jehu in Israel began to reign in the same year 884. Joash, Athaliah's successor, became king in the seventh year of Jehu (chap. xii. 2), or, since the latter became king in 884, in 877.—Amaziah became king in the second year of Jehoash (chap. xiv. 1), or, since Jehoash ascended the throne in 840 or 839, in the year 838.—Uzziah became king, according to chap. xv. 1, in the twenty-seventh year of Jeroboam II., but this statement rests, as was shown in the comment on that passage, and as is generally admitted, upon an error of the copyist. We must read, according to chap. xiv. 17, *in the fifteenth year*, but this was not a full year, so that Josephus says: "In the fourteenth year of Jeroboam." Since now the latter became king in 823, Uzziah ascended the throne in 809.—Jotham became king in the second year of Pekah, chap. xv. 32, or, as the latter became king in 760, in 759.—Ahaz became king in the seventeenth year of Pekah (chap. xvi. 1), or, as the latter began to reign in 760, in 743.—Hezekiah finally became king in the third year of Hoshea (chap. xviii. 1), or, as he ascended the throne in 730, in 727.—In Israel, the successor of Jehu, Jehoahaz, began to reign, according to the correct reading in chap. xiii. 1 (see *Exeg.* note thereon), in the twenty-first year of Joash, king of Judah, or, as he became king in 877, in 856.—Joash became king in the thirty-seventh year of Jehoash of Judah (chap. xiii. 10), or, as the latter ruled from 877, in 840 or 839.—Jeroboam II. became king in the fifteenth year of Amaziah (chap. xiv. 23), or, as the latter began to reign in 838, in 823.—The accession of the five following kings: Zachariah, Shallum, Menahem, Pekahiah, and Pekah is defined (chap. xv. 8, 13, 17, 23, 27) in terms of the years of Uzziah's reign. Since, however, the year of the accession of this king is less certain than that of almost any other (Bengel and Thenius put it in 811, Usher and Keil in 810, Petavius and Winer in 809, Ewald and Niebuhr in 808), it is uncertain what year was his thirty-eighth, thirty-ninth, fiftieth and fifty-second. But this does not render the chronology radically uncertain. The year of accession of these kings can be very satisfactorily ascertained from other data (see above, under b). Moreover, the statements in terms of the years of Uzziah's reign are not perfectly accurate, as we see from chap. xv. 13 and 23. For, if Menahem became king in the thirty-ninth of Uzziah and reigned 10 years, Pekahiah must have followed in the forty-ninth, and not, as ver. 23 states, in the fiftieth of Uzziah. On the other hand, it is certain that Menahem and Pekahiah together reigned for 12 years, viz., from 722 to 760. The year in which

Zachariah began to reign (according to ver. 8 the thirty-eighth of Uzziah) may, therefore, have been the year 773; but it is also possible, inasmuch as he and Shallum did not both together reign for a year, that all these kings, Zachariah, Shallum, and Menahem, came to the throne in the same year, 772, and therefore, since the synchronistic data and the chronological data do not coincide, that the thirty-eighth and thirty-ninth of Uzziah both fell in the year 772.—Hoshea, finally, became king in the twelfth year of Ahaz (chap. xvii. 1), or, since he became king in 743, and this was the very beginning of his twelfth year, in 730.

d) From this review it follows that the chronological data in no less than fifteen places, however much they may traverse and interlace one another, nevertheless agree, for the difference of a single year which appears here and there is fully accounted for by the peculiarity of the Jewish mode of reckoning, and it cannot be regarded here, any more than in the former period, as a contradiction. [In making this comment on the chronology, Bähr must take it for granted that the reader has fresh in his mind those changes in the text which have been found necessary, and those assumptions which have been made in order to complete the construction of the chronology. With this modification the above may be allowed to pass as a just comment on what has gone before. Otherwise it would convey a very incorrect impression of the reliability of this chronology.—W. G. S.]

Now, on the other hand, there remains one datum which is utterly irreconcilable with these which have been considered. According to chap. xv. 30 Hoshea became king in the twentieth year of Jotham, son of Uzziah. This stands in contradiction to three other statements which are consistent with each other. According to chap. xv. 33 Jotham did not reign for 20 but only for 16 years, as is also stated in 2 Chron. xxvii. 1. According to chap. xvii. 1, Hoshea did not become king until the twelfth year of Ahaz the successor of Jotham. According to chap. xvi. 1, Ahaz commenced to reign in the seventeenth year of Pekah, and as Ahaz waged war with Pekah (chap. xvi. 5), it is impossible that Pekah's successor, Hoshea, should have begun to reign during the reign of the predecessor of Ahaz, Jotham. All sorts of attempts have been made to solve this flat contradiction (see Winer, *R.-W.-B.* 1, *s.* 614). We take notice here only of the two most common ones. The first is to this effect: Jotham was co-regent with his father Uzziah for four years, during his sickness (chap. xv. 5). If these four years are added to the sixteen of his reign, he was king for 20 years, and Hoshea became king in his twentieth. This attempt at a solution is disposed of, not to speak of other objections, by the statement in xvii. 1, that Hoshea did not become king until the twelfth year of Jotham's successor, Ahaz. The second attempt at a solution, the one which was adopted by Usher, and which has been lately designated by Keil as the only successful one, assumes that, in chap. xv. 30, 4 years of the reign of Ahaz are reckoned in the reign of Jotham, "because the history of Jotham's reign is not narrated until we come to ver. 32 *sq.*" But the years of the reign of a king cannot possibly be reckoned on after his death, least of all when, as here, his successor followed immediately; moreover, as above stated, Hoshea did not become king in the fourth of Ahaz (or, if so reckoned, the twentieth of Jotham) but in the twelfth of Ahaz. All attempts at a reconciliation are here vain. Hitzig and Thenius have attempted to escape the difficulty by text-conjectures, but these are so complicated that they do not fall, in point of improbability, at all behind the artificial attempts at reconciliation. When we examine the final words of chap. xv. 30: "In the twentieth year of Jotham the son of Uzziah," they strike us as strange and unusual. In other cases we do not find the date of a king's accession given in terms of the corresponding reign in the sister-kingdom until we come to the place where the history of the new reign begins (see the proof-passages quoted above, Pt. II., p. 89). Such is the case here also with reference to Hoshea, chap. xvii. 1. The author, who, in the usual place, viz., where the history of Jotham's reign begins, chap. xv. 33, states the duration of that reign at 16 years, in agreement with 2 Chron. xxvii. 1, cannot possibly have spoken, a few lines before, in ver. 30, of the twentieth year of Jotham. If he had, he must have been more forgetful than the most thoughtless copyist. In fact these words are, in this place, not only superfluous, because the statement of the year in which Hoshea became king is given farther on in its proper place (chap. xvii. 1), but they are even a cause of confusion. If they should be adopted as correct, it would be necessary to change a whole series of data to correspond with them. All this renders it very probable that the words are a false and late addition, in regard to which the case stands as it does with 2 Kings i. 17 (see Pt. II., pp. 87–8). Another circumstance which goes to prove this is that Jotham's father is called, in vers. 1, 6, 7, 8, 13, 17, 23, 27, Azariah; here all at once he is called Uzziah. Keil unjustly characterizes the erasure of this clause as "violent," for we are compelled to it, since fifteen other passages, all of which are consistent with one another, are in irreconcilable conflict with this one, so that it introduces contradiction and confusion into the entire chronology of the period. The question is simply whether we will correct all the other data to bring them into consistency with this one, or whether we will sacrifice it. If it is not "violent" to change the number "27," in chap. xv. 1, into 15, as Keil does, then it is not violent to regard the number 20, in chap. xv. 30, as incorrect.

e) In this period, as well as in the former one, some have thought it necessary to assume joint-reigns and interregna, that is, times of anarchy in which there was no king. So it is supposed that the two Israelitish kings Jehoahaz and Jehoash reigned together for 2 or 3 years, and the Jewish kings Jotham and Ahaz for 4 years. We have spoken above (Pt. II., p. 88) about the theory of joint-reigns in general, but besides this, the first of these cases is disposed of when we have discovered the correct reading in chap. xiii. 1 and 10 (see *Exeg.* notes thereon); and the second, when we have removed the false addition chap. xv. 30, upon which alone it rests. The assumed interregna have much more probability in their favor Formerly it was often assumed that there was an interregnum of 11 years between Amaziah and Uzziah in Judah, but this is now almost entirely abandoned, and rightly. On the other hand, two

others are still assumed in the history of Israel by almost all scholars, the first of 11 years, between Jeroboam II. and Zachariah; the second of 9 or 10 years, between Pekah and Hoshea, to which reference was made above under b). But the biblical text does not hint at any such interregna, though they must have been of great importance for the history of the kingdom. On the contrary, it always assumes that each king was followed immediately upon his death by his successor. The author makes especial mention of the fact about Edom that "there was no king in Edom" (1 Kings xxii. 48), and he mentions a king who reigned but 7 days (1 Kings xvi. 15), and another who reigned but a month (2 Kings xv. 13). Certainly he would not have passed in silence over the fact that Israel, at two different times, for periods of 9 or 11 years, was without a king. It is true, as Keil says, that "A period of anarchy in a time of the utmost confusion and distraction would not be anything astonishing," but it certainly would be astonishing that the text should be silent about such an important historical event. There are no historical statements whatsoever in the text which have led to the hypothesis of interregna. This hypothesis is the result solely of the desire to reconcile certain chronological data. We cannot, however, be induced to manufacture history to account for certain discrepancies in figures, discrepancies which can arise so easily from simple errors either of a copyist or of others. Josephus is as silent about any periods in which there were no kings as the Bible is. Ewald calls the hypothesis that there were such periods "erroneous in every respect. It contradicts the tenor of the text directly, and produces an utterly incorrect conception of the history." Bunsen also rejects the hypothesis decidedly. Wolff, in the work quoted above (Pt. II., p. 89) says: "We must, therefore, have done entirely with this notion of interregna as an escape from difficulties. It invents arbitrarily blank and empty periods and inserts them in the history." When, however, Wolff changes most of the chronological data of the text,—when he gives Jehoahaz 14 instead of 17 years, and Jehoash 19 instead of 16, when he makes Amaziah succeed in the fourth instead of the second year of Jehoash, Zachariah in the twenty-sixth instead of in the thirty-eighth year of Uzziah, Pekahiah in the thirty-eighth instead of in the fiftieth year of Uzziah, Pekah in the forty-first instead of in the fifty-second of Uzziah, and asserts that the two Israelitish kings Jehoash and Jeroboam II. ruled over Judah, the former for 4 years and the latter for 27 years, *that* is all as void of foundation and as arbitrary as is the "interregnum-hypothesis" which he rejects.

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

Ver. 2. **And he did that which was evil * * * but not as the kings of Israel,** *i. e.*, not to the same degree as his predecessors. As the formula: "He did that which was evil, &c.," always refers to the attitude towards Jehovah and the Jehovah-cultus, so the restriction: "But not," &c., must be understood as applying to the same, just as in chap. iii. 2. We are not told wherein Hoshea differed from his predecessors in this respect. It is not at all probable that he desisted from the calf-worship (Thenius). If he had done so he would have broken down the wall of separation between the two kingdoms, and the text would certainly have contained some mention of it. The old commentators for the most part follow the statement of the rabbis in the book, *Seder Olam*, chap. xxii., according to which Hoshea did not replace the golden calf-image at Bethel (Hos. x. 6), which had been carried away by the Assyrians, and made no opposition to his subjects' accepting Hezekiah's invitation to the passover-festival at Jerusalem (2 Chron. xxx. 6–11). But, according to the account in Chronicles, this invitation was laughed at and scorned; only "a few" accepted it, which shows that Jeroboam's cultus was still maintained under Hoshea. Moreover, Hezekiah's passover certainly did not take place before the three-year siege of Samaria, but rather after it. Perhaps Hoshea's better behavior was limited to this, that he was an opponent of the idolatry which had found entrance under his immediate predecessors.

Ver. 3. **Against him came up Shalmaneser, king of Assyria.** This king must have ruled between Tiglath Pileser (xv. 29) and Sennacherib (xviii. 13) in Assyria. It has hitherto been believed that *Sargon*, who is mentioned in Isai. xx. 1, ruled for a short time between these two, but, "through the deciphering of the cuneiform inscriptions it is placed beyond a doubt that the king of Assyria who is called in the biblical annals Shalmaneser or Shalman [Hos. x. 14], really bore the name of *Sargana*, so that he is identical with Sargon, who was the father and immediate predecessor of Sennacherib" (Wolff, in the above quoted work, *s.* 672. *Cf.* Brandis, *Ueber den historischen Gewinn aus der Entzifferung der assyrischen Inschriften*, *ss.* 48 and 53). [Later discoveries show that this statement is incorrect. Sargon and Shalmaneser are different persons, and not even of the same dynasty. See the *Supp. Note* at the end of this section, in which this whole subject is treated.] Among the countries mentioned in the inscriptions as having been conquered by Sargana is "Samirina" (Samaria). (See notes on chap. xviii. 13 below.) Hoshea does not seem to have provoked Shalmaneser's first expedition against him (ver. 3). It appears to have been an expedition of conquest on the part of the growing and spreading Assyrian power, yet it is also possible that Tiglath Pileser had imposed a tribute upon Pekah which Hoshea refused to continue to pay, and that the expedition was intended to compel him to do so. When he, however, at a later time, again refused the tribute (ver. 4), and had recourse to Egypt for help to resist, the king of Assyria came a second time and took away from him his country and his people. As Shalmaneser waged war with Tyre, but island Tyre resisted him for five years (Josephus; *Antiq.* 9, 14, 2), Ewald supposes, and very many of the latest authorities follow him, that the people of Samaria joyfully recognized in this a proof that the Assyrians were not invincible, and considered this a favorable opportunity to make an offensive and defensive alliance with Egypt; furthermore, that when Shalmaneser heard of this, he suddenly marched against Hoshea. It is impossible, however, to determine certainly whether the war against Island-Tyre took place before or after the fall of Samaria. Knobel, in fact, in his comment

on Isai. xx. 1, assumes that it took place after that event. Thenius unnecessarily desires to change קֶשֶׁר, *conspiracy*, to שֶׁקֶר, *falsehood, deceit.* We have to understand by "conspiracy" nothing more than a secret agreement. The name of the Egyptian king סוא is to be punctuated סֶוֵא, Seveh. In Manetho he is called Ζευεχὸς. He is doubtless "one of the two kings named Shebek of the twenty-fifth dynasty, belonging to the Ethiopic race" (Keil). Hoshea turned to him because Egypt was at that time the only great power which seemed at all able to cope with Assyria. It seems, however, that Seveh did not enter into the alliance, or, if he did, that he did not carry it out when the Assyrian attack was made. On the words: **The king of Assyria shut him up,** &c., Vatablus remarks: *Hoc dicitur per anticipationem; postea narratur, quomodo factum.* The final consequences which Hoshea's attempted revolt had for his own person are stated forthwith, and then in vers. 5 and 6 the particular description of the course of events in regard to the country and the people is given (Thenius). It is not, therefore, correct that "Shalmaneser ordered him to appear and give an account of his conduct" before the siege of Samaria, "and then, when he came in obedience to this command, made him prisoner" (Ewald, Schlier). The text does not say this; on the contrary, the words in ver. 6 and in chap. xviii. 10: "In the ninth year of Hoshea," assume that Hoshea was king when the city was taken. Moreover, it is very improbable that Hoshea, who had sought for, and was expecting, aid from Egypt, would have forthwith obeyed the summons of the king of Assyria, from which he could not anticipate any pleasant consequences, and that, *after* the king of Samaria had been made captive, that city should have resisted for three years. On the contrary, the captive king was taken in chains to Assyria after the city had been taken, and there he was put in prison, while his people were led into exile in distant regions. "Plate 100 in Botta's *Monum. de Ninev.* represents a king standing upon a war chariot, before whom a chained captive with apparently Hebrew features is being led. Plate 106 represents two figures with the same cast of countenance and appropriate costume, one of whom is presenting the model of a fortified city" (Thenius). עָצַר is used here as in Jer. xxxiii. 1; xxxvi. 5.—The three years of the siege were not thirty-six months, for, according to chap. xviii. 9 *sq.* it began in the seventh of Hoshea, and the city was taken in his ninth. Accordingly it can hardly have lasted for two years and a half. [The later discoveries have so changed the face of our knowledge of all this contemporaneous history that the above must all be modified by what is stated in the *Supp. Note* below.]

Ver. 6. **And carried Israel away into Assyria,** *i. e.*, into the kingdom of Assyria, which then included Mesopotamia, Media, Elam, and Babylon (Winer, *R.-W.-B.* I. *s.* 102). It is, therefore, a general designation of place which is followed by the names of the particular localities in this kingdom. The two first names, **in Halah and on the Habor,** belong together, as well as the two latter, **On the river Gozan and in the cities of Media,** as is evident from 1 Chron. v. 26: "And brought them unto Halah, and [to the] Habor, and [to] Hara [*i. e.*, Media] and to the river Gozan." This verse also shows that נְהַר גּוֹזָן is not, as has often been supposed, in apposition to בְּחָבוֹר: "To the Habor, the river of Gozan," so that Habor would be the name of this river. There is nothing else with which the name *Halah* can be identified but the district in the north of Assyria bordering upon Armenia, which Strabo (xi. 8, 4 and xvi. 1, 1) calls Καλαχανή, and Ptolemy (vi. 1) Καλακινή. [Lenormant takes it to mean Calah, the capital of Assyria at this time.] Habor is not כְּבָר (Ezek. i. 1 and 3) in upper Mesopotamia, the large river which flows into the Euphrates, but, because the name Halah precedes, it must be "the smaller river of this name which flows westward and empties into the Tigris to the north of Nineveh" (Ewald). Here, in northern Assyria, there is a river, "which is called *Khabur Chasaniæ* to distinguish it from the river *Chaboras* or *Chebar* in Mesopotamia. It still bears its ancient name" (Keil). The Jewish tradition also favors this. This designates northern Assyria, and, in fact, the mountainous region, the district on the border between Assyria and Media, on the side towards Armenia, as the place of exile of the ten tribes (*cf.* Wickelhaus; *Das Exil der zehn Stämme Israels,* in the *Deutsch-morgenländ. Zeitschrift;* V. *s.* 474). The river *Gozan* is "the Kisel-osen, which rises in the northern part of the Zagros range and flows into the Caspian Sea" (Fürst, Dictionary *s. v.*). It refers, therefore, not to the district of Mesopotamia which Ptolemy calls (v. 18) Γαυζανῖτις, but to the city of Media which he mentions (vi. 2) as Γαυζανία. This we see also from the passage in Chronicles quoted above, where "the river Gozan" is mentioned after Harah, Media. "If this river, which bounds Media, is the one meant, we can understand why the 'and' is, in this connection, omitted before it. The two first names and the two latter names then belong more closely in pairs" (Ewald). Thenius desires to change נְהַר into נַהֲרֵי, and עָרֵי into הָרֵי, because the Sept. here read: ἐν Ἐλαὲ καὶ ἐν Ἀβὼρ ποταμοῖς Γωζὰν καὶ ἐν ὁρίοις Μήδων, so that Halah also would have to be taken as the name of a river, that is, of the one anciently called Mygdonius and afterwards Saokaras. But the Sept. have, in the similar verse, chap. xviii. 11, the singular ποταμῷ. The plural ποταμοῖς is, therefore, evidently a mistake. This disposes of the rash supposition that Halah is the Saokaras. The proposed reading הָרֵי is, to say the least, unnecessary.

Ver. 7. **And it came to pass when the children of Israel,** &c. The frequently recurring וַיְהִי כִּי means always: "And it came to pass *when* (Gen. vi. 1; xxvi. 8; xxvii. 1; Exod. i. 21; Judges vi. 7, &c.). It is not correct, therefore, to translate as Bunsen, De Wette, and others do: "And it came to pass, *because.*" Ver. 7 does not carry on the narrative as it is taken from the original authorities, but the writer himself here begins a review of the history and fate of Israel, which ends with ver. 23 and forms an independent section by itself. The conclusion to the opening sentence: "And it came to pass, when," &c., follows in ver. 18: "That then the Lord was very angry." Vers. 8–15 contain merely a development of what is said in ver. 7, inasmuch as they go on to specify how, and by what means, the

children of Israel "sinned," viz., partly by apostatizing from Jehovah and falling into idolatry (Ex. xx. 2, 3), and partly by making for themselves molten calf-images to represent Jehovah (Ex. xx. 4). It is shown in the verses from 18 to 23 that these transgressions brought down judgments upon them, and what was the character of these judgments.—The words in ver. 7: **Which had brought them up out of the land of Egypt * * * king of Egypt** must not be taken as a parenthesis, as Luther takes them. They do not contain a mere incidental remark; rather the entire emphasis rests upon them, as is evident from Hos. xii. 10 and xiii. 4–6. The deliverance from Egypt was really the selection of Israel to be God's peculiar and covenant people (Ex. xix. 4–6). It was not only the beginning, but also the symbol, of all divine grace towards Israel, the pledge of its divine guidance. It therefore stands at the head of the covenant, or organic law (Ex. xx. 2; Deut. v. 6), and it is always cited as the chief and fundamental act of the divine favor (Levit. xi. 45; Joshua xxiv. 17; 1 Kings viii. 51; Ps. lxxxi. 10; Jer. ii. 6, &c.). Therefore this author also makes that the standpoint for his review and criticism of the history. He means to say, thereby: although no people on earth had experienced such favor from Almighty God as Israel had, nevertheless it abandoned this God and adored other gods. Vers. 8–12 state the manner in which this latter fault was committed. The worship of idols was the worship practised by the very people whom God expelled before the Israelites, and whose utter destruction he commanded, that is to say, of the nations of Western Asia (ver. 8, *cf.* Deut. xi. 23; 1 Kings xiv. 24; xxi. 26; 2 Kings xvi. 3; xxi. 2). But the Israelites erected places of worship all over the country, after the fashion of the heathen, instead of worshipping the one true God in the one central sanctuary (vers. 9–11). They also followed the example of the heathen in setting up idol images which they worshipped (ver. 12).—חֻקּוֹת, ver. 8, means religious ordinances (see notes on 1 Kings ii. 3; iii. 3). Instead of holding faithfully to the ordinances which Jehovah had given, the kings of Israel gave to the people ordinances made by themselves, which were obeyed and observed by them. The result is given in ver. 9. The words וַיְחַפְּאוּ דְּבָרִים are translated by Keil, who follows Hengstenberg: "They covered Jehovah, their God, over with words which were not right, *i. e.* they sought, by arbitrary distortions of God's word, to conceal the true character of Jehovah." It is clear however, from דְּבָרִים in ver. 11, and, still more certainly, from הַדָּבָר, ver. 12, where it cannot possibly be understood otherwise than as *thing;* that that is its sense here, and not *word.* The fundamental signification of חפא or חפה is *to cover, cloak over, envelop* (2 Sam. xv. 30; Esth. vi. 12; 2 Chron. iii. 5, 7, 9). The literal rendering of these words would therefore be: "They covered Jehovah with things which were not right" (2 Kings vii. 9), *i. e.* They concealed him by them, so that he could no longer be seen and recognized, which is as much as to say that they practically denied and ignored him. Compare the formula כִּפֶּר עָלָיו, to reconcile any one with Jehovah; primarily, to cover up his sins before Jehovah. The things by means of which, or with which, they denied Jehovah are mentioned forthwith, so that Luther correctly represents the sense when he puts *nämlich* before the following words. The translation of the Sept. is entirely incorrect: *καὶ ἠμφιέσαντο λόγους ἀδίκους κατὰ κυρίου θεοῦ αὐτῶν.* Thenius follows this, and explains thus: "They dressed up, decorated, and adorned things which were not right, against Jehovah; *i. e.* they made a parade of things which were not right against Him," and he calls attention, in this connection, to "the parade and pomp of the external forms of idolatry." It is equally incorrect to render the words as the Vulg. does: *et offenderunt verbis non rectis dominum suum;* or, as Gesenius does: *perfide egerunt res in Jehovam;* or, as De Wette does: "They wrought secretly things which were not right, against Jehovah." With words of covering עַל is never *against,* but always *over,* or *upon* (Ex. xxxvii. 9; xl. 3; Ezek. xxiv. 7).—[The uncertainty attaching to the interpretation of these words is apparent from these diverse renderings of the various expositors. Bähr's interpretation, which is closely akin to that of Keil and Hengstenberg, is fanciful and far-fetched. The idea of men covering God, that is, obscuring the sense of His presence, and of their responsibility to Him, by their sins, and thus *practically* denying Him, is, in a religious sense, most true and just; but it is very foreign to the simplicity of the conceptions which we find in the Old Testament, especially in the historical books. The meaning of חפא עַל is, *to cover a material over an object,* or, in the English idiom, *to cover an object with a material.* If the notion be not pushed farther than this, that they had put their evil lusts and deeds between themselves and God, and preferred these to Him, it offers a meaning which is satisfactory, and which agrees well with the latter half of the verse. I have, however, allowed the E. V., which agrees substantially with the rendering of Gesenius and De Wette, to remain unaltered. —W. G. S.]

Ver. 9. **From the tower of the watchmen,** &c., *i. e.*, from the lonely buildings erected as a protection for the flocks (2 Chron. xxvi. 10) to the largest and most strongly fortified cities.—On ver. 10 see chap. xvi. 4. On מַצֵּבוֹת see notes on chap. iii. 2. On אֲשֵׁרִים see note on 1 Kings xiv. 15. On the meaning of כַּעַס see 1 Kings xiv. 1–20; *Hist.* § 3.—In ver 12, the emphasis is on הַגִּלֻּלִים, which contains a subordinate contemptuous and abusive signification (see note on 1 Kings xv. 12). Israel sank so low that it worshipped lifeless idols, which it ought to have treated with contempt, and whose worship it ought to have disdained.

Ver. 13. The author now goes on in his review to the consideration of that which Jehovah had done in his faithfulness and truth, in contrast to the apostasy of the people, which has just been described. These dealings of God with His people had remained fruitless, or had produced exactly contrary results from those which were desired (vers. 13–17). Not only in Israel, of which kingdom he has hitherto been speaking especially, but also in Judah, which, according to ver. 19, had behaved in a similar manner, had Jehovah bo ne

witness to himself, not only by the law and testimony which had been given, but also by his prophets and seers. *Quacunque ratione vel forma illis cernendam proponebat voluntatem suam* (Piscator). The form of speech in ver. 14, *to harden one's neck*, *i. e.* to be stiff-necked or obstinate, is borrowed from Deut. x. 16. *Cf.* Exod. xxxii. 9. To disobedience and obstinacy (ver. 14) they added formal rejection and contempt of the commands and of the testimonies of Jehovah (ver. 15), and then followed complete decline into heathenism. This last is described by the words: **They followed vanity and became vain.** The same form of speech is used in Jerem. ii. 5, and St. Paul makes use, in reference to the heathen, in Rom. i. 21, of the same expression which the Sept. here use to render this: *ἐματαιώθησαν*. Heathenism deals with nothingness, vanity, that is, with what has no existence, so that it is folly and falsehood (Deut. xxxii. 21). As a proof that they have fallen into heathenism, that is, have become vain, a series of facts is detailed in vers. 16 and 17, from which this appears clearly. In the first place they made calf-images, then Ascheræ, then they adored the host of heaven (the stars or constellations), and finally they caused their children even to go through the fire (see note on chap. xvi. 3), and devoted themselves to soothsaying and augury. Besides all this, they **sold themselves,** that is, "they surrendered themselves into complete slavery to idolatrous practices" (Thenius). **All the host of heaven** is here mentioned between the worship of the Ascheræ and that of Moloch; that is, by the side of the Moon-goddess and the Sun-god, *cf.* Deut. xvii. 3; iv. 19. Perhaps the planets are to be especially understood by it. As the author has here only that period in view which fell *before* the Assyrian influence commenced, we cannot understand him to refer to the Assyrio-Chaldean worship of the constellations, which is not met with among the Hebrews before the time of Manasseh (chap. xxi. 3; xxiii. 5, 11), but only to that which was common in Western Asia, such as we find especially among the Arabs (Winer, *R.-W.-B.*, II. *s.* 528). Soothsaying and augury are mentioned with the same expressions in Numb. xxiii. 23 and in Deut. xviii. 10, by the side of the worship of Moloch. They seem to have been especially connected with this worship (Winer, *l. c.*, *s.* 672).

[As has been abundantly shown in the translator's notes on the two last chapters (see especially note on xvi. 3), the Assyrian religion became known to the Israelites in the time of Ahaz and Pekah. The subdivisions of the deity (if they may be so called), which these heathen believed in, have been described in that note. But, by the side of each such subordinate or local god, we find a goddess, as the passive principle by the side of the active. These couplets had different names in different places (*Bel* and *Belit* at Babylon; *Shed* and *Shedath* among the Hittites (שַׁדַּי, Gen. xvii. 1; Job v. 17; Ruth i. 20, &c.); *Hadad* and *Atargath* at Damascus). The couplet which the Israelites adopted, *Baal* and *Ashtaroth*, is that of Sidon, showing whence this religious idea came to them. On the Baal-worship and the rites of Moloch see note on xvi. 3. The astral idea in this heathen religion does not seem to have attracted the attention of the Israelites before the time of Pekah and Ahaz, although Ashtaroth always had a distinctly sidereal character among the Phœnicians. The whole religious conception which has been above described, and which prevailed in Western Asia, was carried out by the Chaldeans and Assyrians into an astral system of deities. When the hierarchy of divinities, or deified emanations and attributes, with their corresponding masculine and feminine forms, had been elaborated, they were identified with the luminaries visible in the heavens. The sun, moon, planets, constellations, and stars formed a corresponding hierarchy whose members were identified. Eight cabirim or planets were reckoned; one was supposed to be invisible because it was nearer to the ultimate and original source, the ALL. It is not difficult to perceive the step by which they passed from this to astrology, divination, and sorcery. If the heavenly bodies are gods, or represent gods, and if they are seen to be in motion, then it is natural to suppose that those motions correspond with and cause the mutations of earthly events and fortune. Since the time of Ahaz and Pekah these religious notions had been introduced into Israel and Judah and accepted there. It is to them that the text refers.—W. G. S.]

Ver. 18. **That then the Lord was very angry,** &c. Here begins the real conclusion to ver. 7 [see the amended translation]. As we had, in vers. 8–17, the more complete development of ver. 7, so we have here, in vers. 19–23, that of ver. 18. **Out of his sight,** *i. e.* out of the Holy Land where Jehovah has His dwelling; out of the land of the covenant and the land of revelation. *Cf.* Ezek. xi. 15 *sq.* On **the tribe of Judah only,** see 1 Kings xi. 13, 31, 36 (*Exeg.* notes).—In ver. 19 the old expositors thought they saw the statement of a still farther reason for the rejection of Israel by God, which consisted in this, that it had, by its apostasy, tainted Judah also (Hos. iv. 15), but the context shows that this notion is false. The verse is rather a parenthesis, as the *Berleberg. Bibel* observes. It contains an incidental remark which is brought out by the "only" in ver. 18. It means to say that "in truth Judah was also ripe for punishment" (Thenius). Ver. 20 follows directly upon ver. 18 in the connection of thought. We must understand by **all the seed of Israel,** not the entire people, Israel and Judah (Keil), but only the ten tribes; for the rejection of Judah had not yet occurred. The inhabitants of certain districts had been taken into exile, during the reign of Pekah (chap. xv. 29). The inhabitants of the entire country were now, under Hoshea, taken away. Before that Jehovah had given them, for their chastisement and warning, into the hands of plunderers or "spoilers;" first into the hands of the Syrians (chap. x. 32; xiii. 3), and then into those of the Assyrians (chap. xv. 19, 29).—כִּי, in ver. 21, connects back, not only with ver. 18, but also with what has been said in vers. 18–20. Grotius says justly in regard to ver. 21: *ἐπάνοδος ad ostendendam malorum originem*. Jeroboam's calf-worship, which led to pure idolatry, was a consequence of the revolt from the house of David and the separation from Judah, so that these were the cause of all the misfortune. The Vulg. therefore renders, according to the sense: *Ex eo jam tempore quo scissus est Israel a domo David.* It cannot be correct to take Jehovah as the subject of קָרַע, as the old expositors did, and as Keil still does.

This is a deduction from 1 Kings xi. 11 and 31, but the final cause of the apostasy and rejection of Israel is here given, and that cannot lie in Jehovah himself. The separation from the House of David took place indeed according to God's decree; but it was only intended to serve as a humiliation to the House of David, and was not to last "forever" (1 Kings xi. 39). It took for granted, moreover, that Jeroboam would remain faithful to the covenant and to the Law of Jehovah (1 Kings xi. 38). But Jeroboam broke with these in order to make the separation permanent. The separation thereby became the germ of all calamity for Israel. The natural subject of קרע is יִשְׂרָאֵל (see 1 Kings xii. 16), and it is not necessary to read, as Thenius does, נִקְרַע, *i. e.* "Israel had torn itself away;" nor to supply, as De Wette does, אֶת־הַמַּמְלָכָה: "Israel had torn away the royal authority from the House of David," for it is not the monarchy as such which is here in question, but the separation between Israel and Judah, that is, the disruption of the theocratic relation. The words mean simply: *secessionem fecerant* (Clericus).—Ver. 22 is not a mere repetition of ver. 21, but it means: Israel not only fell into this sin of Jeroboam, but it persevered in it in spite of all the divine warnings and chastisements.—Ver. 23. **As he had said by all His servants the prophets.** *Cf.*, for instance, Hos. i. 6; ix. 16; Amos iii. 11, 12; v. 27: Isai. xxviii. 3. **Unto this day,** *i. e.* until the time at which the author was writing, which does not mean to affirm that the exile did not last any longer.

Ver. 24. **And the king of Assyria brought.** This king the old expositors supposed to be Esarhaddon (chap. xix. 37), because (Ezra iv. 2) the Samaritans who desired to take part in the erection of the second temple, say to Zerubbabel: "We do sacrifice unto him [your God] since the days of Esarhaddon, king of Assur, which brought us up hither." Keil still maintains this, because he thinks that ver. 25 shows "that considerable time must have elapsed between the leading of the Israelites into exile and the introduction of new colonists into the depopulated country." But this does not by any means follow from the words: **It came to pass at the beginning of their dwelling there.** The context forbids us to think of any other king than the one above mentioned, Shalmaneser. Esarhaddon was not even his immediate successor, for [Sargon and] Sennacherib intervened. He did not come to the throne until 695 [681] B.C., that is, twenty-six years after the Israelites were led into exile by Shalmaneser in 721. Nothing is more improbable than that the latter should have left the country destitute of population, and that this state of things should have lasted for twenty-six years. The colonists who speak in Ezra iv. 2 are [descendants of] later ones, whom Esarhaddon may have sent, for some reason unknown to us, to join those already there. Why does not the author mention by name the king who is spoken of in chap. xix. 37, if that is the one he here meant? [This point also is treated in the *Note* below, at the end of *Exeg.* section.] *Babel* is here not the city, but the province, as in Ps. cxxxvii. 1. The position of Cuthah is entirely uncertain. Josephus says: τὸ Χουθαίων ἔθνος, οἱ πρότερον ἐνδοτέρω τῆς Περσίδος καὶ τῆς Μηδίας ἦσαν. According to Gesenius and Rosenmüller, Babylonian Irak must be thought of as lying somewhere in the region of Nahar Malka. Clericus considers the Cuthæans as identical with the Kosseans, in Susiana, in the northeast of what is now Khurdistan, and this opinion is the best founded (*cf.* Winer, *R.-W.-B.* I. *s.* 237). As the Samaritans are called by the rabbis simply כותיים, it seems probable that the Cuthæans composed the main body of the colonists. [Cuthah was close to Babylon,—a suburb of it. See the *Supp. Note* below.] The location of the city or district *Ava* is also uncertain. It has been sought in Persia, in Syria, and in Mesopotamia. Perhaps it is to be identified with the Ivah which is mentioned in chap. xviii 34; xix. 13; Isai. xxxvii. 13. [Ivah, however, is unknown. In ver. 31 it is said that "the Avites made Nibhaz," a Chaldean god. Hence this place was unquestionably in Chaldea, near the others except Hamath. Whoever caused this migration had just conquered Chaldea. See the *Supplementary Note* below.] *Hamath* (1 Kings viii. 65; 2 Kings xiv. 25), in the north of Palestine, on the Orontes, had then already fallen under Assyrian dominion. *Sepharvaim* is generally believed to be the Σιπφάρα mentioned by Ptolemy (v. 18, 7), the southernmost city of Mesopotamia, on the eastern bank of the Euphrates. However, as it is mentioned in Isai. xxxvi. 19, together with Hamath and Arpad, Syrian localities, we might be rather led, with Vitringa and Ewald, to the supposition that it was a Syrian city. [It is undoubtedly Sippara, called by the Greeks Heliopolis. (Its divinity was *Shamash*, the sun, שֶׁמֶשׁ). The Chaldean legend of the flood says that Xisuthrus, warned by the gods of the approach of the flood, buried at Sippara tables on which were written an account of the origin of the world and of the ordinances of religion. His children dug them up after the flood, and they became authorities for the Chaldean religion (Lenormant). The primitive Chaldeans were Turanians; but if the word has a Semitic etymology it would seem to mean the Scripture-city (ספר).—W. G. S.] (On these different names, see Winer, *R.-W.-B. s. v.*, [and the Dictionaries of the Bible]. This is the first time that שֹׁמְרוֹן is used of the entire kingdom. It is incorrect to infer, as Hengstenberg does, from the words: **Instead of the children of Israel,** that all the inhabitants, to the last man, were taken into exile, for, see 2 Chron. xxxiv. 9. [Samaria was now reduced from the tributary to the provincial position, as Damascus had been twelve years before.]

Ver. 25. **And it came to pass at the beginning of their dwelling there,** &c. The land became desolate in consequence of the exile of its inhabitants, especially as some time, no doubt, elapsed before the new colonists arrived and brought the land once more under cultivation. It is also probable that their number was not nearly as great as that of the exiles. So it came to pass that the lions, which had been in the country in small numbers before the exile, multiplied to such a degree as to be dangerous to the new inhabitants. Under the circumstances this was not purely a natural incident, but a divine dispensation. The author so considers it, having in mind

Levit. xxvi. 22 (Exod. xxiii. 29; Deut. xxxii. 24; *cf.* Ezek. xiv. 15). The colonists saw in this an interposition of the god of the country, because they had not worshipped him. In order to escape from the plague they sent a request (ver. 26) to the king who had located them in this country, that he would send some one to them who could teach them how to worship the local deity, so that he might release them from the calamity. [See, on the heathen conception of local deities, Pt. II. p. 57.] With a genuine heathen judgment they considered the external worship a means of appeasing the god of whom they knew nothing. The priest who was sent to them was, as ver. 27 expressly states, one of the exiles—that is to say, one of the priests of Jeroboam's calf-worship. He took up his residence at Bethel, the chief seat of the calf-worship (1 Kings xii. 29), although the Assyrians had carried away the golden calf (Hos. x. 5). Perhaps they erected there new images, not molten images, but less artistic and less expensive ones. The sending of this priest seems to be so particularly narrated, because it shows how it came that the country did not become entirely heathen.

Ver. 29. **Every nation made gods of their own.** The new inhabitants, who had been brought from very different countries, set up, in the houses on the high places, which the Samaritans had prepared as places of worship (see *Exeg.* on 1 Kings iii., 2 and 3), the images of their gods. Selden (*De Diis Syr.* ii. 7) understands סֻכּוֹת בְּנוֹת in the literal meaning of the words: "Daughter-huts," and most of the expositors since his time have followed him in this interpretation. It is then understood to refer to the huts or tents in which the young women prostituted themselves in honor of Mylitta, *i. e.* Venus, a custom which Herodotus speaks of, I. 199. However, this is clearly against the context, for, whereas ver. 29 treats of the places of worship, ver. 30 gives the names of the gods whose images were set up in them. *Succoth-Benoth* is the first-mentioned amongst these. It is not, therefore, an appellative any more than the following names: Nergal, Asima, Nibhaz, and Tartak. The old versions all give it as a proper name. The Sept. have *τὴν Σωκχὼθ* Βανώθ or Βενίθ. They therefore understood by it a female divinity. "סִכּוּת (Amos v. 26) was the name of a female divinity, and בְּנוֹת or בֶּנִית appears only to contain a modification of it. Neither word is to be referred to a Hebrew etymology" (Fürst). We must not, therefore, understand it as referring to "little temples or shrines which were worshipped, together with the image which they contained" (Gesenius), but to the image of a particular divinity of which we know nothing further. The rabbis assert that it was a hen with her chickens, representing the constellation of the "Clucking Hen" [the Pleiades]. This is possible, but no further proofs of it can be produced. Movers' interpretation of it, as female genitals, is entirely without foundation. The passage 2 Kings xxiii. 7, which is often referred to for the above-mentioned ordinary interpretation, has no pertinency here.

[For an exhaustive summary of the different interpretations of these words heretofore offered, see Herzog's *Encyc.* XV. *s.* 253. The Babylonian goddess Bilit or Mylitta (see note on ver. 17) took two forms, just as Venus did in the classical mythology. The one, *Taauth*, was austere, the other, *Nana* or *Zarpanit*, was voluptuous. She had a temple at Babylon, where every woman was forced, once in her life-time, to surrender to a stranger as an act of worship to the goddess. At Cutha she was worshipped as *Succoth-benoth*, a name referring to these prostitutions. In the astral system she is *Ishtar*. In her "austere" form she is sanguinary and is the "Goddess of Battles—the Queen of Victories;" in her voluptuous form she presides over reproduction. Moreover two *Ishtars* are distinguished, each of which presides over two weeks of the month (hence called the "Goddess fifteen"). This accounts for the Phœnician plural form Ashtaroth. (Lenormant.)]

The names Nergal, Asima, Nibhaz, and Tartak have hitherto been explained very diversely upon etymological grounds, some of which are fictitious, and all of which are very uncertain. (See Gesenius' *Thesaurus;* Winer's *R.-W.-B. s. v.*) We therefore pass over these attempts at explanation. The rabbis ascribe to *Nergal* (probably Mars) the form of a cock, which certainly does occur frequently on the old Assyrian monuments; to *Asima*, the form of a goat; to *Nibhaz*, that of a dog; to *Tartak*, that of an ass. But these statements also rest upon very uncertain etymologies. The case is not much better with the names *Adrammelech* and *Anammelech.* We can only infer from the child-sacrifices which were offered to these idols so much as this, "that they were akin to Moloch" (Keil). The interpretations of Movers and Hitzig are very uncertain and doubtful.

[In an inscription of Nebuchadnezzar, now in the British Museum, is read: "I consecrated the portico of the god Nergal and of the god Nibhaz, the gods of the temple Valpitlam at Cutha." (See note on ver. 24.) "The special god of this town was Nergal, and we learn from some mythological details given in the tablets of the library of Asshurbanipal, that he was worshipped there under the form of a lion." (Lenormant, I., 485.) His image is rare. He stands on the legs of a cock and has a sword in his hand. His epithets are: "the Great Hero, the King of Fight, the Master of Battles, Champion of the Gods." Hence he is identified with Mars.—*Adrammelech=Adar-Malik, i. e.* "Adar the king." Adar (fire) was also called Samdan (the powerful). He was the Assyrian Hercules. *Anammelech=Anu-Malik, i. e.* "Anu," or "Oannes, the king." "Oannes, the 'Lord of the Lower World, the Lord of Darkness,' was represented on the monuments under the strange figure of a man with an eagle's tail, and for his head-dress an enormous fish, whose open mouth rises above his head, while the body covers his shoulders." (Lenormant.)]

According to ver. 32, the worship of heathen gods and the worship of Jehovah, under the form of the calf, existed side by side. In regard to the priests "from the mass of the people" see note on 1 Kings xii. 31.—Ver. 33 repeats and brings together the contents of vers. 28–32.

Ver. 34. **Unto this day they do after the former manners.** Even at the time at which the author was writing they still followed the way of the first colonists, that is, those which are described in vers. 28–33. Some did not worship Jehovah, but served idols (vers. 25 and 29); these were the heathen who had immigrated, who had

brought their national divinities with them and still worshipped them; the others worshipped Jehovah indeed (vers. 28–32), but not according to the ordinances which had been given them by Him; these were those of the Israelites who remained, and those who adopted the worship taught by the priests of Jeroboam's calf-worship, who were sent back for the purpose (ver. 27). The words in ver. 34: **After their statutes or after their ordinances,** do not, therefore, stand "in contrast" with those which immediately follow, as Keil thinks, that is, with the words: **After the law and commandment which the Lord commanded the children of Jacob,** so that the meaning would be: "Until this day the Samaritans have retained their peculiar worship, which consists of idolatry and the worship of Jehovah through the calf-image, and do not worship according to the manner of the ten tribes, nor according to the Mosaic law." The ו before כַּתּוֹרָה cannot have any other meaning than that which it has before the preceding and the following words. It does not, therefore, mean "still," but "and" in the sense of "namely," in which sense it so often occurs. The words "וכתורה וגו׳" form an epexegesis to "כחקתם וגו׳," as Thenius justly remarks *cf.* 1 Kings ii. 3).—The sentence: **Whom he named Israel** has the same sense here as in 1 Kings xviii. 31.—In reference to those who at the time of the author still persisted in illegal worship, or even in idolatry, he points expressly, in order to show the heinousness of their offence, in vers. 35–39, to what Jehovah had done amongst His people and for them, and how earnestly he had warned them against any breach of the covenant. —On ver. 36 see note above on ver. 7. The breach of the covenant was the more base inasmuch as the Lord had miraculously removed all the hindrances, even the greatest ones, and had held faithful to His people. In ver. 37 particular stress is laid upon the fact that the Law was *written*, and not merely *spoken*. The existence of the written law is, therefore, assumed as undoubted.—**And they did nôt hearken** (ver. 40); *i. e.* "Those descendants of the ones to whom this warning and exhortation had been addressed, who had remained in the land" (Thenius). **Their former manner,** *i. e.* the worship introduced by Jeroboam. Ver. 41 brings the author's review of the history to a close with a reference to the posterity of the apostates who had not desisted from the sins of their fathers. [There is great obscurity in the verses 33–41, probably because the writer has in mind different classes of the Samaritan population whom he does not distinguish or define. Thus the subject changes in vers. 33 and 34 without being specified in such a manner as the laws of grammar require. If we paragraph as is done in the amended translation, and identify the subjects as is there suggested, we reach a clear meaning.—The new population of the northern kingdom might be classified thus: (*a*) Sincere worshippers of Jehovah in the old theocratic sense. These were very few, if indeed there were any. (*b*) Worshippers of Jehovah under the form of the calf, *i. e.*, adherents of the old worship of the northern tribes. (*c*) Israelites who adhered to the calf-worship, but had adopted also the idolatry of the heathen colonists. (*d*) Heathen colonists who had adopted the calf-worship.—Thus there were very few, possibly none, whom this theocratic author could approve. The third and fourth were the largest classes, and are the ones referred to in the text. Those under (*c*) "feared not the Lord," *i. e.* in the religious sense. They knew him and should have been his servants, but were not, while they apostatized to idolatry. Those under (*d*) "feared the Lord," not in the religious sense,—they never had been taught to fear God in that sense,—but they were afraid of Him, and paid Him deference, but served, *i. e.*, gave their faith and worship to their heathen divinities.—W. G. S.]

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[SUPPLEMENTARY NOTE *on the references to contemporaneous history* in chap. xvii. (See similar notes after chaps. xv. and xvi.) The great king Tiglath Pileser died in 727. In the same year Ahaz died and was succeeded by Hezekiah on the throne of Judah. Shalmaneser (IV. Rawlinson; VI. Lenormant), the next king of Assyria, seems to have been a less able ruler. We have no records of him save some bronze weights in the British Museum. The dates, however, are furnished by the canon. Hoshea's revolt against Pekah, as we saw at the end of the note on chap. xv., was a success for the policy of submission to Assyria. However, this entire history is nothing but a series of revolts against Assyria, and Hoshea, in his turn, soon renewed the attempt. In 725 the Ethiopians, who had for some time held dominion over Upper Egypt, invaded Lower Egypt under a king named *Shebek* (Sabacon, Shabaka). This name is really Shaba or Shava, with the Cushite article *ka* appended. It is therefore written in Hebrew סוא. The Massoretes punctuated this סֹוא. (See note on ver. 4 above.) This king succeeded in overrunning all of Egypt, and conquering it, although the native dynasty preserved its succession, being confined to the western half of the delta "in the marshes" (Herod. II. 137). The appearance of this great conqueror on the scene infused hope into the small nations of Western Asia that they might be able at least to change masters; that this new Egyptian power might form a counterpoise to the Assyrian; and that his rule might be found milder. Hoshea was seduced by this hope. He plotted a revolt, but Shalmaneser hastened to crush the attempt before union with Shebek might make it formidable. He captured Hoshea, conquered the province of Samaria, and in December, 724, laid siege to the capital by investment. In 722 he died. He left a son who was a minor. The Tartan or general-in-chief, *Sargon*, a member of the royal family, seized the throne in spite of some opposition. An eclipse of March 19, 721, was influential in some way at this crisis. For three years he was nominally regent for the young prince (Samdan-Malik = Samdan [Hercules] is King). From 718 on he reigned alone. He was a great conqueror, one of the most famous of the kings of Assyria. He regained all the territory which had been lost and extended the empire beyond any limits which it had ever attained. "The long inscriptions found by M. Botta in the palace of Khorsabad make us even better acquainted with the details of his reign than with those of more than one of the Roman emperors." A long inscription, called commonly the "Acts of Sargon," details the events of fifteen campaigns. The following are the contents, so far as they are interesting to us in the present connection:

"I besieged, took, and occupied the city of Samaria, and caried into captivity 27,280 of its inhabitants. I changed the former government of the country, and placed over it lieutenants of my own." Thus he counts the capture of Samaria among his own achievements. In place of the inhabitants whom he forced to emigrate, he introduced colonies from Elam which he had just conquered.

". . . . and Sebeh, Sultan [so Lenormant translates a rare title which is said to mean suzerain, referring probably to Shebek's position as a recent conqueror and not regular king] of Egypt, came to Raphia to fight against me; they met me and I routed them. Sebeh fled."

Pursuing the record in order to find traces of the recolonization of Samaria, we notice the following:

From 720 to 715 the Assyrians were occupied in an unsuccessful siege of Tyre. "Yaubid of Hamath . . . . persuaded . . . Damascus and Samaria to revolt against me, and prepared for battle. . . . . I killed the chiefs of the rebels in each city and destroyed the cities." [This revolt of Samaria, after its reduction to a province, is not mentioned in the Bible. It may have been after this conquest of Hamath that some of the inhabitants of that country were colonized in Samaria.]

The inhabitants of Papha in Pisidia were transported to Damascus.

In 710 he marched against Ashdod, which had revolted (Isai. xx. 1).

In 709, according to the canon of Ptolemy, Sargon defeated Merodach Baladan at the battle of Dur Yakin. By this victory he resubjugated Chaldea, which had been independent since 747. The prisoners taken in Chaldea were colonized in Samaria. In August, 704, Sargon was assassinated.

He was succeeded by *Sennacherib*, whose glory rivalled that of his predecessor. In regard to him see the *Note* after the *Exeg.* section on the next chapter. In 681 he was assassinated by his two sons.

Another son, Esarhaddon, succeeded him, and reigned from 681 to 667. On him also see below. We are only concerned here with one statement in his annals.—At the close of his first campaign, which was in Phœnicia, he says: "I settled the inhabitants of Syria and the sea shore in strange lands. I built in Syria a fortress. called *Dur-asshur-akhiddin*, and there established men whom my bow had subdued in the mountains, and towards the sea of the rising sun (Caspian)." [Whether Syria here includes Samaria is indeed doubtful, but it is probable that, as the policy of transportation was practised more and more, it became more thorough and comprehensive. Probably this was a large migration, since the name of a country is given for the new seat of the colonists instead of the names of cities. Hence the memory of this migration was perpetuated while the lesser migrations under Sargon were forgotten. It is not at all likely that the different migrations remained distinct from one another, and remembered each the time and occasion of its own migration. The second temple was finished in 516 (Ewald), so that from the time of Esarhaddon to the time of the speakers in Ezra iv. 2 there must have been 160 years. This is sufficient to account for the fact that they ascribe their origin to Esarhaddon.] In this account we have followed Lenormant's *Manual* very closely.—W. G. S.]

HISTORICAL AND ETHICAL.

1. Only so much is narrated in regard to *the nine years' reign of Hoshea* as pertains to this fact, that he was the last king of the kingdom of the ten tribes. "Hoshea's chief aim was to become independent of Assyria. He saw what a mistake Menahem had made when he called Pul into the country, and what had been the sad consequences to Pekah, who had subjected himself to Tiglath Pileser" (Schlier). [See the last paragraph of the *Supplementary Note* on chap. xv.] He therefore refused the tribute which had been imposed, turned to Egypt for help, and defended himself for three years bravely and perseveringly against the Assyrian power. From this it is evident that he was not a weak ruler, but that he had a strong will and was an able general. But the despairing resistance was useless; the measure was full, the days of the northern kingdom were numbered, and the long threatened ruin drew on unchecked. The criticism upon Hoshea's reign, and his conduct in general, which is given in ver. 2, is often understood as if it asserted that he was the best of all the kings of the northern kingdom. Ewald says: "It seems like a harsh jest of fate that this Hoshea, who was to be the last king, was better than all his predecessors. The words of the noble prophets who, during the last fifty years, had spoken so many and such grand oracles in regard to this kingdom, had perhaps had more influence upon him. But as these prophets had always foretold the destruction of the kingdom as certain, so the irresistible power which works in history was now to show that an individual, though a king, better than all his predecessors, is too weak to arrest the ruin of the commonwealth when the time for reformation is past." The *Calwer Bibel* also says of Hoshea: "When he was at length seated upon the throne he showed himself personally better than all his predecessors, and nevertheless it was in his reign that the destruction was consummated." Schlier also supposes that Hoshea, in the conflict, through which it is assumed that he won the throne, "turned to the Lord more sincerely than his predecessors." There is not a word of all that, however, in the text. The words in ver. 2 do not say that he was better than all his predecessors, but only that he was not as bad as the kings before him (לְפָנָיו). This can only be understood, however, as applying to his immediate predecessors (Menahem, Pekahiah, and Pekah), for the word "all" is not in the text. [It is arbitrary and untenable to restrict the application of the words to these kings. The "all" is not in the text, but it is a fact that the author introduces a modification here into the standing formula which goes farther towards lessening the sweeping condemnation than any which is introduced at the mention of any other king of the northern kingdom. Jehoram is said to have been bad, but not as bad as Ahab and Jezebel (2 Kings iii. 2). In the other cases the condemnation is utter and complete. The modification introduced in reference to Hoshea, slight as it is, is, therefore, by comparison, very weighty.—W. G. S.] The statement does not apply to his personal and moral character, but to his attitude as king towards the national religion. He made his way to the throne by conspiracy and murder (chap. xv. 30), as several of his predeces-

sors had done. He did not, therefore, have any "better principles," and was not a "better man" than they. If he had listened to the warnings of the true prophets, he would not have turned to Egypt for help, for they warned him against this as much as against Assyria. The least probable supposition of all is that Hoshea gave up the cultus which Jeroboam had introduced, for, if he had done so, then *his* fate would have been undeserved. [This argument is presumptuous and unfounded. All such inferences from the dispensations of Providence to the desert of those who suffer calamity are precarious and unbecoming. The special fact here at stake is insignificant, but the general principle involved in this method of argument is of the first importance.—W. G. S.] The review of the history which the author appends to the story of this reign assumes that the king adhered to Jeroboam's cultus. His case is similar to that of Jehoram, of whom it is said (chap. iii. 2): "He wrought evil in the sight of the Lord, but not like his father and like his mother, for he put away the image of Baal that his father had made. Nevertheless he cleaved unto the sins of Jeroboam." Hoshea may have differed from his immediate predecessors in the same way. Probably he was led more by political than by religious considerations, at least we find no sign at all of the latter. We have no reason at all to imagine that he was genuinely converted. For the rest, it has several times occurred in the history of the world, as Keil remarks, that the last rulers of a falling kingdom have been better than their predecessors.

2. The *somewhat lengthy review* which the author appends to the story of the downfall of the northern kingdom is, as Hess observes: "Almost the only instance in the Old Testament where the author departs from his usual habit of simply narrating, without inserting any comments of his own." We see from this that he was interested not only in the narrative, but also in something further. Here, where the kingdom of the ten tribes comes to an end, and disappears forever from history, was the place, if there was any, for casting a glance back upon its development and history, and for bringing together the characteristics of the story in a summary. This he does from the Old Testament stand-point, according to which God chose the people of Israel to be His own peculiar people, made a covenant with it, and took it under His especial guidance and direction for the welfare and salvation of all nations. The breach of the covenant by the northern kingdom is, therefore, in his view, the first, the peculiar, and the only cause of its final fall, and this fall is the judgment of the holy and just God. By showing this in careful detail he makes it clear to us that this is the only light in which the history can be or ought to be criticised. His mode of criticism, therefore, stands in marked contrast with that of modern critical science, which considers it its task to set aside this point of view,—to measure the history of the people of God by the same standards as that of any other ancient people. There is no other passage in the Bible where what we have called in the *Introduction*, § 3, the theocratic-pragmatic form of representation, is so clearly and distinctly evident as in this review. This is a proof that the author of these books was a prophet, or belonged to the prophet-class, and so that it is properly reckoned among the נְבִיאִים. This review, however, is noticeable also in another respect, viz., that the existence of the תּוֹרָה, with all its מִצְוֹת, חֻקּוֹת, עֵדוֹת, and מִשְׁפָּטִים, long before the time of the monarchy, and that too in a written form (ver. 37), is assumed in it as unquestioned. If the author had not known that this Law, in the form in which he was familiar with it, had existed long before the division of the kingdom, he could not have declared so distinctly and decidedly that the fall of the kingdom of the ten tribes was a divine judgment upon it for its apostasy from that Law.

3. *The forced emigration of the ten tribes* to Assyria was a result of the despotic principle which was accepted throughout the entire Orient, that it was right to make any revolt of subjugated nations impossible (see *Exeg.* on 1 Kings viii. 50). In this case it was not merely a transportation into another country, but also the commencement of the dissolution of the ten tribes as a nationality. No one particular province in Assyria was assigned to them as their dwelling-place, but several, which were far separated from one another, so that, although this or that tribe may have been kept more or less together, as seems probable from Tob. i., yet the different tribes were scattered up and down in a foreign nation, without the least organic connection with one another. They never again came together; on the contrary they were gradually lost among the surrounding nations, so that no one knows, until this day, what became of them, and every attempt to discover the remains of them has been vain. (See, on the attempts which have been made, Keil, *Comm. zu den Büchern d. K. s.* 311, *sq.*) In this particular the exile of the ten tribes differs from that of Judah and Benjamin. The exile in Babylon was temporary. It lasted for a definite period which had been foretold by the prophets (2 Chron. xxxvi. 21; Jerem. xxix. 10). It was not like the Assyrian exile, a period of national dissolution. Judah did not perish in exile; it rather gained strength, and finally came back into the land of promise, whereas, of the ten tribes only a few who had joined themselves to Judah, and become a part of it, ever found their way back. The ten tribes had, by their violent separation from the rest of the nation, broken the unity of the chosen people, and, in order to maintain this separation, they had revolted from the national covenant with Jehovah. The breach of the covenant was the corner-stone of their existence as a separate nationality. Thereby also they had given up the destiny of the people of God in the world's history. They were the larger fragment of the entire nation, but they were only a separate member which was torn away from the common stock, a branch separated from the trunk, which could only wither away. After 250 years of separate existence, when all the proofs of the divine grace and faithfulness had proved vain, it was the natural fate of the ten tribes to perish and to cease to be an independent nation. "The Lord removed them out of his sight; there was none left but the tribe of Judah alone" (ver. 18). The case was different with Judah. Although it had sinned often and deeply against its God, yet it never revolted formally and in principle from the covenant, much less was its existence built upon a breach of the covenant. It remained the supporter and the preserver of the Law, and therefore

also of the promise. Its deportation was indeed a heavy punishment and a well-deserved chastisement, but it did not perish thereby, nor disappear as a nation from history, but it was preserved until *He* came of whom it was said: "The Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David, and He shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end" (Luke i. 32, *sq.*).

4. *The population of the country of the ten tribes after their migration* consisted, in the first place, of the few of the ancient inhabitants who had remained. That such a remnant did remain is certain, whether we assume that there were two immigrations, one under Shalmaneser and the other under Esarhaddon, or only one under the latter (see note on ver. 24 under *Exegetical* [See, also, the bracketed note under *Exeget. and Crit.*, on ver. 41, for the classes among the population, and the *Supplementary Note* above, at the end of the *Exeg.* section, for the details of the re-population of the country by Sargon and Esarhaddon.]). This is proved beyond question by 2 Chron. xxx. 6, 10; xxxiv. 9; Jerem. xli. 5. Furthermore this is supported by "the analogy of all similar deportations, in which only the mass of the population was carried off, especially the classes from whom revolts might be expected, and by the fact that, in a mountainous country, it would be impossible to seize every man of the population" (Keil). [For the number of persons carried away see the Inscription quoted in the *Supp. Note* above.] The new inhabitants, however, formed the chief portion of the population. The king of Assyria had brought them from different parts of his kingdom, which was already far extended. They did not, therefore, belong to one, but to many diverse nationalities and races. They worshipped various national divinities, and each nation amongst them had its own cultus which it retained (vers. 29–31). Their common life in the same country produced unavoidably a mixture of the various nationalities with each other as well as with the remnant of the Israelites. A nation was thus formed which lacked all unity of worship, and which, socially and religiously, formed a complete chaos. As the exiles, scattered in different localities, lost their national unity and character, so did also the few Isralites who remained in the country and formed connections with the immigrants. In place of unity there arose a complete dissolution and disintegration of the nationality of the ten tribes. They never regained their unity. The author means to say in the passage from ver. 24 on that this was the judgment of God upon the covenant-breaking and apostate people which had resisted every chastisement and every warning to reform.

5. *The cultus which prevailed in the northern kingdom* after the exile of the ten tribes, is commonly designated as an "amalgam of Jehovah calf-worship, and heathen idolatry" (Keil and others). But the text speaks, not of an amalgamated cultus, but of an amalgamated population (see notes on ver. 34). Jeroboam's Jehovah-worship, although it was illegal, was nevertheless monotheism. As such it simply and utterly excluded polytheism. So, for instance, Jehu, who maintained Jeroboam's cultus, rooted out idolatry with violence (chap. x. 28 *sq.*). Now a cultus which had for its object the one true God, and at the same time many gods, a cultus in which monotheism and polytheism were combined, is inconceivable, because it involves a fundamental contradiction. [This is unquestionably true in logic, but such inconsistencies are very common in history. The population of Samaria (see bracketed note on ver. 41 under *Exeg.*) had no such clear and well-defined devotion to the Jehovah-worship, even under its degraded form, and no such pure consciousness of the bearings of the various parts of their cultus upon one another, as to feel this contradiction and try to escape it. A truer conception of the state of things would be that the Jehovah calf-worship, when reëstablished, took its place among the other acknowledged forms of worship. The remains of the ancient Israelitish population cultivated this worship especially, the other nationalties cultivated each its own cultus especially, and thus the various forms existed side by side, doubtless not without mutual influence on one another. This is substantially the view advocated by Bähr below, and it is far more consistent with all we know of the state of things than the amalgamation theory. The latter cannot be disposed of, however, by showing its logical inconsistency.—W. G. S.] It seems that the exiles maintained in their banishment the worship of Jehovah through Jeroboam's calf images (Tob. i. 5). It is still more probable that those who remained in Samaria did the same. The priest who was sent back to Samaria (ver. 27) was to "teach them the manner of the God of the land." He therefore took up his residence at the chief seat of Jeroboam's worship, at Bethel, which thus became once more the centre of this worship. It was not, however, the source of a new worship which combined the ancient form with idolatry. That the Jehovah-worship was maintained in the country without mixture with heathenism is shown by the statement of those who, 200 years afterwards, came to Zerubbabel and said: "Let us build with you; for we seek your God as ye do; and we do sacrifice unto him since the days of Esarhaddon, king of Assur, who brought us up hither" (Ezra iv. 2). In later times this Samaritan people "was more strict in its adherence to the Mosaic law than even the Jews" (Von Gerlach). How could this have been the case if their cultus had been mixed with idolatry from the time of the Assyrian exile onwards? The form of Jehovah-worship which Jeroboam had introduced, and heathen idolatry, existed, as a consequence of the mixed population, *alongside* of one another, but not *in* one another. Although individuals may have tried to practise both worships at once, or may have turned now to one and now to the other, the mass of the Israelites who remained held firmly to the illegitimate Jehovah-worship, so that this gradually gained the upper hand of heathenism. At the time of Christ we hear no more of the latter in Samaria. As the Samaritans recognized the authority of the whole Pentateuch, the Jews could not regard them as idolators. They were not willing, however, to have any intercourse with them, because, in blood, they were no longer pure Israelites, and so were not a portion of the people which was sharply separated, in blood, from all heathen nations. They were considered ἀλλογενεῖς, and as such they were held in about the same estimation as the heathen (Luke xvii. 16, 18; Matt. x. 5; John iv. 9; viii. 48). The bitter hostility between the Samaritans and the Jews is to be ascribed, in great part, to the an-

cient, deep-rooted, never extinguished hatred of the tribes of Judah and Ephraim for one another (see 1 Kings xii., *Hist.* § 1.). On the Samaritans see Winer, *R.-W.-B.* II. *s.* 369; Herzog, *Real-Encyc.* XIII. *s.* 363.

6. Finally, we may here briefly take notice of *the manner in which modern historians represent and judge the fall of the Kingdom of the Ten Tribes.* "Samaria," says Duncker (*Gesch. d. Alt. s.* 443, *sq.*), "defended itself with the energy of despair in the determination either to preserve its independent national existence or to perish. It was only after a siege of three years' duration, and the most obstinate resistance, that the capital fell, and with it the kingdom. Without proper preparation or energetic leadership, unsupported by the natural allies in Judah or by Egypt, Israel fell after brave resistance, and so not without honor." Weber speaks in like manner of the "glorious" fall of Israel. Menzel (*Staats- und Religionsgesch. s.* 229) passes his judgment as follows: "The energetic prophet class, which had had so much to do with the foundation of the kingdom of Israel, had found its grave with Elisha. The prophets Amos and Hosea, who appeared during the reigns of the last kings of the house of Israel, saw their activity limited to rebukes and reproofs. The former was banished from Bethel as an inciter of sedition. The ancient prophets do not seem to have recorded anything which would cast upon the kings or the people of Israel the reproach of an idolatry which was stained by human blood, as the historical and prophetical books do for several of the kings of Judah, although they are severe enough in their denunciations of the vices, and of the illegitimate forms of worship, of the northern kingdom. It is true that the institution of the prophets had shown itself incapable of arresting the decline of the northern kingdom, or of setting up a strong dynasty in the place of the regular succession which had been broken by the overthrow of the house of Omri, and that, in Judah, the duration of the kingdom of the house of David had been preserved, by the help of the priesthood, yet even there the final ruin had only been postponed for a century." As for this last conception of the history, which in fact makes the prophets responsible for the fall of Israel, in the first place it runs directly counter to the entire history of the redemptive scheme, and in so far needs no refutation. It only shows how far astray we may go, if we give up and abandon the stand-point from which alone this history claims to be considered, and from which alone it can be understood. But the first representation quoted above is, to say the least, destitute of foundation, for the text, which says no more than that Shalmaneser, after 2½ years' siege, took the city, does not by any means intend by this to chant a song of praise and glory over the fallen city. There is no syllable to imply that this siege was lengthened out by the brave and "heroic resistance" of the inhabitants. The great allied army of the Syrians and the Israelites besieged Jerusalem for a long time, and nevertheless could not take it (chap. xvi. 5), though the cowardly Ahaz did not offer heroic resistance. Shalmaneser was at the same time carrying on war with the surrounding people, by which the strength of his army was divided. Moreover, Samaria had a very strong site on a hill. Still other circumstances which are not mentioned may have conspired to lengthen out the siege. Although the city may have been bravely defended, which certainly is very possible, yet it does not follow that the northern kingdom "fell with honor." It is impossible to speak of the "glorious end" of a kingdom which was in a state of anarchy, and which was politically, morally, and religiously rotten and shattered, as the contemporary prophets testify in the plainest and strongest terms. The praise which is awarded, however, is most plainly shown to be undeserved by the review which the ancient historian himself gives of the decline and fall of Israel.

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

VERS. 1–6. The last King of Israel. *a*) "He did, &c., yet not, &c.," ver. 2. (Though he did not go so far in wickedness as the 18 who preceded him, nevertheless he did not walk in the way of salvation. Half-way conversion is no conversion. In order to bring back the nation from its wicked ways, he should have been himself devoted to the Lord with all his heart. When people are not fully in earnest in their conversion, then there is no cessation of corruption, whether it be the case of an individual or of a State.) *b*) He makes a covenant with the king of Egypt, ver. 4. (By this he showed that his heart was not perfect with God. Egypt, the very power out of whose hand God had wonderfully rescued His people, was to help him against Assyria. But: "Cursed be the man," &c., Jerem. xvii. 5, 7; Hos. vii. 11–13. "Woe to them," &c., Isai. xxxi. 1. "It is better," &c., Ps. cxviii. 8, 9; xci. 1. *sq.*). *c*) He loses his land and his people and is cast into prison, vers. 4–6. (By conspiracy and murder he had attained to the throne and to the highest pitch of human greatness, but his end was disgrace, misery, and lifelong imprisonment, Ps. l. 1–6. Thus ended the kingdom of Israel, Isai. xxviii. 1–4.)—CRAMER: Godless men think that they will escape punishment though they do not repent. They therefore fall into discontent; as a result of such discontent they have recourse to forbidden means, such as perjury, treachery, and secret plots. They hew them out cisterns that can hold no water, Jerem. ii. 13, for it is vain to make covenants with the godless, and to neglect the true God (Hos. vii. 11).—STARKE: Upon him who will not be humbled by small evils God sends great and heavy ones (1 Peter v. 6).

Vers. 7–23. The fall of the kingdom of the ten tribes. *a*) It was the result of the sin and guilt of the people. (Separation from the other tribes and dissolution of the national unity—revolt from the national covenant and overthrow of the Law—degeneration into heathenism—persistence in sin—moral and religious corruption, Matt. xii. 25; Hos. xiii. 9.) It was a judgment of the just and holy God. ("I, the Lord, . . . give to every man according to his ways;" Jerem. xvii. 10; Rom. ii. 5, 6: "The Lord God, merciful and gracious," etc., Ex. xxxiv. 6: "God is not mocked," Gal. vi. 7. He guarded the kingdom of Israel for 250 years in patience and long-suffering. He warned, and threatened, and taught, and chastised, and sent messengers to summon them to return. When all proved vain He sent the Assyrians, the rod of His wrath and the staff of His indignation, Isai. x. 5, 6. He removed them from before His face.

The judgment never fails to come. It does not come at once, it is often delayed for centuries, but it comes at last, upon States as well as upon individuals, 1 Cor. x. 11, 12.)—BERLEB. BIBEL: Would that men, when they read such passages, would stop and think, and would enter upon a comparison between the people of God of that time and of this, and would thus make application of the lesson of history. The people of Israel were hardly as wicked as the Christians of to-day. The responsibility to-day is far greater, for they were called to righteousness under the old Law, we under the Gospel of free grace. The people of the ten tribes did not reject belief in the God who had brought them out of Egypt, when they founded the kingdom of Israel (1 Kings xii. 28), but they made to themselves, contrary to the law of this God, an image of Him. This was the beginning of their downfall, the germ of their ruin, which produced all the evil fruits which followed. This led from error to error. They commenced with an image of Jehovah; they finished with the frightful sacrifices of Moloch. He who has once abandoned the centre of revealed truth, sinks inevitably deeper and deeper, either into unbelief or into superstition, so that he finally comes to consider darkness light, and folly wisdom. So it was in Israel, so it is now in Christendom. He who abandons the central truth of Christianity, Christ, the Son of God, is in the way of losing God, for "Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father" (1 John ii. 23).—A nation which no longer respects the word of God, but makes a religion for itself according to its own good pleasure, will sooner or later come to ruin.—Vers. 9–12. External rites of worship were not wanting in the land of Israel. In all the cities, on all the mountains and hills, under all the green trees, there were places for prayer, altars, and images, but nevertheless the true God was not known (Acts xvii. 22, 23), and no worship of the true God in spirit and in truth existed. Their heart was darkened in spite of all their worship (Rom. i. 21, 23), because they did not revere the word of God, and placed their light under a bushel. So it was at the time when Luther appeared, and so it is yet everywhere where the light of the Gospel is not set upon a candlestick that it may give light to the whole house. What is the use of crucifixes if the Crucified One dwell not in the heart, and if the flesh with its lusts be not crucified?—Vers. 13, 14. STARKE: Before God sends forth His judgments and chastisements, He sends out true and upright teachers who call the people to repentance (2 Chron. xxxvi. 15, 16).—The Lord still provides a testimony of Himself, and sends to the unbelieving and perverse world this message by His faithful servants: Turn ye from your evil ways! But, as it was with Israel, so it is still; those who preach repentance are laughed to scorn. He, however, who does not listen to the exhortation to repentance, does not remain as he was, he becomes continually worse and worse. If such a heavy punishment fell upon those who would not hear the prophets, what must those expect who do not listen to the words of the Son of God, but persevere in their unbelief and in their sins? Heb. iv. 7; x. 29. Vers. 15–17. Contempt for the covenant and for the testimonies of God makes men "vain," that is, insignificant and empty, like the heathen whose gods are nothingness. [A heathen god is nothing, a nullity, it is emptiness, a name for something which does not exist, vanity. People who worship them make themselves empty, insignificant, and vain.] The further a man removes himself from God, the more vain and insignificant he becomes, however learned and cultivated he may be, and however highly esteemed he may appear.—If an entire people falls into slavery and misery, or even loses its national existence, the reason for it must not be sought merely in external, political circumstances, but, first of all, in its apostasy from the living God and His word. —BERL. BIBEL: They rejected His ordinances, not indeed by a declaration in words, but by their life and conduct. What can be regarded among us as more explicit rejection and contempt of God, than to assert and to try to convince one's self that it is impossible to keep God's ordinances? Only look at Christ's ordinances in Matt. v., vi., and vii., and compare them with the maxims which we profess, and then say whether more of us accept than reject the former. How do we keep the covenant which we have made in baptism, to conduct ourselves as those who belong to God (Gal. v. 24)? But that covenant is the covenant of a good conscience towards God (1 Peter iii. 21). If we take up the point of "vanity," we may use the words of Eccl. i. 2. Our speeches, our works, our dress, our buildings, our food, and all our habits of mind bear testimony of its truth. *They* served Baal; *we* serve the belly, mammon, the world, nay, even the devil himself, Rom. vi. 16. *They* caused their children to pass through the fire; through how many dangerous fires of worldly lust we cause our children to pass? Most of them are so corrupted by false education, and so much trained to evil by false example, that finally parents and children fall together into the eternal fire.—Ver. 18. KYBURZ: The kingdom of Israel had nineteen kings, and not one of them was truly pious. Wonder not at the wrath but at the patience of God, in that He endured their evil ways for many hundred years, and at their ingratitude, that they did not allow themselves, by His long-suffering, to be led to repentance. Is it any better nowadays?—Ver. 19. RICHTER: Judah was corrupted by Israel as Germany was by France. Observe: Israel was never improved by the good which still remained in Judah, but Judah was only too often corrupted by the evil in Israel. Evil conquers and spreads faster than good.—Vers. 20–23. PFAFF. BIBEL: When the measure of sin is full, then at last the judgments of God begin to fall (Ps. vii. 11–12).—WÜRT. SUMM.: We should see ourselves in this mirror and not bring on and hasten the ruin of our fatherland by our sins, for what here befell the kingdom of Israel, or even more, may befall us (Rom. xi. 21).

Vers. 24–41. The Land of the Ten Tribes after their Exile. *a*) The substitution of foreign and heathen nations for the Israelitish population, vers. 24–33. *b*) The religious state of things in the country, which was produced by this. CRAMER: It is indeed a great calamity when the inhabitants of a country are expelled, with their wives and children, by the invasion of foreign nations; but it is a still greater misfortune when the devil's temple is set up in places where the worship of the true God has been celebrated (Ps. lxxiv. 3).—WÜRT. SUMM.: The land in which Christ and His Apostles preached has fared as did the land of Israel; the Koran now prevails there. So also have many

other cities and States fared, which now hear the doctrines of Antichrist, instead of the doctrines of Christ. Therefore we ought to guard ourselves against contempt of the word of God, that God may not be led to chastise our land and church also (Rev. ii. 5).—Vers. 25-28. The heathen immigrants imagined that, in order to get rid of the plague of the lions, it was necessary to observe particular religious ceremonies. This fancy prevails yet to a considerable extent even in Christendom. People think that they can be delivered from all sorts of evil by practising certain rites, whereas no religious acts are pleasing to Almighty God, or have value, unless they are an involuntary, direct expression of living faith, and of surrender of the heart to God.—Ver. 27. The king of Assyria, a heathen, took care that the religious necessities of his subjects should be provided for. He even sent a priest of Jehovah to teach them. Would that all Christian rulers were like him in this! Vers. 29-33. A country cannot fall lower than it does when each man makes unto himself his own god. *We* are indeed beyond the danger of making to ourselves idols of wood and stone, silver and gold, but we are none the less disposed to form idols for ourselves out of our own imaginations, and not to fear and worship the one true God as He has revealed Himself to us. That is the cultivated heathenism of the present day. Some make to themselves a god who dwells above the stars and does not care much for the omissions or commissions of men upon earth; others, one who can do everything but chastise and punish, or one in whose sight men forgive themselves their own sins; who does not recompense each according to his works, but forgives all without discrimination, and who opens heaven to all alike, no matter how they have lived upon earth (Jerem. x. 14, 15).—Ver. 29. CRAMER: Sketch of the papacy, under which each country, city, and house has its own divinity, its saint and patron. ("O Israel! . . in me is thine help:" Hos. xiii. 9; see also ver. 39 of this chapter).—Ver. 33. BERL. BIB. They feared the Lord and worshipped their own idols! Is not that exactly the state of things amongst us? We want to serve more than one Lord. We have invented a kind of fear of God with which the worship of gold, fame, and worldly enjoyment, and, above all, of selfishness, is not inconsistent, nay, it is rather a component part of it.—Ver. 34, *sq.* Decay in religious matters, lack of unity of conviction in the highest and noblest affairs, prevents a nation from ever becoming great and strong. It is a sign of the most radical corruption. Similarity of faith and community of worship form a strong uniting force, and are the condition of true national unity. The existence of different creeds and confessions by the side of one another is a source of national weakness. It is an error to try to produce this unity by force; it is a blessing only when it proceeds from a free conviction (Eph. iv. 3-6).—J. LANGE: The correct application of the lesson of this passage is to abstain from communion with whatever is inconsistent with the Christian religion, for, outside of Christianity there are, besides the errors which undermine the foundation of faith, also those ordinances of men, and service of the world and sin, which, alas! the majority, even in evangelical churches, while they have knowledge of the pure truth of the gospel, yet endeavor to unite with pure religion. Verily, to serve God and sin at the same time is as radical an apostasy from true religion as ever the errors of the Samaritans were.

THIRD PERIOD.

(727–588 B.C.)

THE MONARCHY IN JUDAH AFTER THE FALL OF THE KINGDOM OF ISRAEL.

(2 KINGS XVIII.–XXV.)

FIRST SECTION.

THE MONARCHY UNDER HEZEKIAH.

(CHAPS. XVIII.—XX.)

A.—*The Reign of Hezekiah; the Invasion by Sennacherib, and Deliverance from it.*

CHAPS. XVIII. AND XIX. (ISAI. XXXVI. AND XXXVII.)

1 Now it came to pass in the third year of Hoshea son of Elah king of Israel,
that Hezekiah the son of Ahaz king of Judah began to reign [became king].
2 Twenty and five years old was he when he began to reign [became king]; and
he reigned twenty and nine years in Jerusalem. His mother's name also *was*
3 Abi, the daughter of Zachariah. And he did *that which was* right in the sight
4 of the Lord, according [like] to all that David his father did. He removed the high
places, and brake the images, and cut down the groves [Astarte-statues], and
brake in pieces the brazen serpent that Moses had made: for unto those days
the children of Israel did burn incense to it: and he [they][1] called it Nehush-
5 tan.[2] He trusted in the Lord God of Israel; so that after him was none like
6 him among all the kings of Judah, nor *any* that were before him. For he clave
to the Lord, *and* departed not [did not swerve] from following him, but kept
7 his commandments, which the Lord commanded Moses. And the Lord was with
him; *and* he prospered whithersoever he went forth [in all his goings-forth;—
i. e., in everything which he went out to do]: and [*omit* and—*Insert* —] he rebelled against the
8 king of Assyria, and served him not. [;] [*and*] He smote the Philistines, *even*
unto Gaza, and the borders thereof, from the tower of the watchmen to the
fenced city.
9 And it came to pass in the fourth year of king Hezekiah, which *was* the
seventh year of Hoshea son of Elah king of Israel, *that* Shalmaneser king of
10 Assyria came up against Samaria, and besieged it. And at the end of three
years they took it: *even* in the sixth year of Hezekiah, that *is* the ninth year of
11 Hoshea king of Israel, Samaria was taken. And the king of Assyria did carry
away Israel unto Assyria, and put them in Halah and in [on the] H· bor [,] *by*
12 the river of [*omit* of] Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes [Media]: Because

they obeyed not the voice of the Lord their God, but transgressed his covenant,
and all that Moses the servant of the Lord commanded, and would not hear
them, nor do *them*.
13 Now in the fourteenth year of king Hezekiah did Sennacherib king of As
14 syria come up against all the fenced cities of Judah, and took them.[3] And
Hezekiah king of Judah sent to the king of Assyria to Lachish, saying, I have
offended [erred]; return from me: that which thou puttest on me will I bear.
And the king of Assyria appointed unto [put upon] Hezekiah king of Judah
15 three hundred talents of silver and thirty talents of gold. And Hezekiah gave
him all the silver that was found in the house of the Lord, and in the treasures
16 of the king's house. At that time did Hezekiah cut off [strip] *the gold from*
[*omit the gold from*] the doors of the temple of the Lord, and *from* [*omit from*]
the pillars[4] which Hezekiah king of Judah had overlaid, and gave it [them] to
the king of Assyria.
17 And the king of Assyria sent Tartan and Rabsaris and Rab-shakeh from
Lachish to king Hezekiah with a great host against Jerusalem: and they went
up and came to Jerusalem. And when they were come up, they came and stood
by the conduit of the upper pool, which *is* in the highway of the fuller's field.
18 And when they had called to the king, there came out to them Eliakim the son
of Hilkiah, which *was* over the household, and Shebna the scribe, and Joah the
19 son of Asaph the recorder. And Rab-shakeh said unto them, Speak ye now to
Hezekiah, Thus saith the great king, the king of Assyria, What confidence *is*
20 this wherein thou trustest? Thou sayest, (but *they are but* [*omit* they are but]
vain words, [*it is* a saying of the lips only]) [:] *I have* [*There is*] counsel and
strength for the war. Now on whom dost thou trust, that thou rebellest against
21 me? Now, behold, thou trustest upon the staff of this bruised reed, *even* upon
Egypt, on which if a man lean, it will go into his hand, and pierce it: so *is*
22 Pharaoh king of Egypt unto all that trust on him. But if ye say unto me, We
trust in the Lord our God: *is* not that he, whose high places and whose altars
Hezekiah hath taken away, and hath said to Judah and Jerusalem, Ye shall
23 worship before this altar in Jerusalem? Now therefore, I pray thee, give
pledges to [make a bargain with] my lord the king of Assyria, and I will deliver
thee two thousand horses, if thou be able on thy part to set riders upon them.
24 How then wilt thou turn away the face of [*i.e.*, repulse, put to flight] one captain of
[amongst] the least of my master's servants, and put thy trust on Egypt for
25 chariots and for horsemen? Am I now come up without the Lord [uninsti-
gated by Jehovah] against this place to destroy it? The Lord said to me, Go up
26 against this land, and destroy it. Then said Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, and
Shebna, and Joah, unto Rab-shakeh, Speak, I pray thee, to thy servants in the
Syrian language; for we understand *it*: and talk not with us in the Jews' lan-
27 guage in the ears of the people that *are* on the wall. But Rab-shakeh said
unto them, Hath my master sent me to thy master, and to thee, to speak these
words? *hath he* not *sent me* to the men which sit on the wall, that they may
28 eat their own dung, and drink their own piss with you? Then Rab-shakeh
stood and cried with a loud voice in the Jews' language, and spake, saying, Hear
29 the word of the great king, the king of Assyria: Thus saith the king, Let not
Hezekiah deceive you: for he shall not be able to deliver you out of his [my][5]
30 hand: Neither let Hezekiah make you trust in the Lord, saying, The Lord will
surely deliver us, and this city[6] shall not be delivered into the hand of the king
31 of Assyria. Hearken not to Hezekiah: for thus saith the king of Assyria,
Make *an agreement* [terms,] with me by a present [*omit* by a present], and come
out to me, and *then* eat ye every man of his own vine, and every one of his fig-
32 tree, and drink ye every one the waters of his cistern: Until I come and take
you away to a land like your own land, a land of corn and wine, a land of bread
and vineyards, a land of oil olive and of honey, that ye may live, and not die:
and hearken not unto Hezekiah, when he persuadeth you, saying, The Lord will
33 deliver us. Hath [Have] any of [*omit* any of] the gods of the nations delivered
at all [*omit* at all] [each] his land out of the hand of the king of Assyria?

34 Where *are* the gods of Hamath, and of Arpad? where *are* the gods of Sephar-
vaim, Hena, and Ivah? have they delivered Samaria out of mine hand [that
35 *any* delivered Samaria out of mine hand]? Who *are* they [there] among all
the gods of the countries, that have delivered their country out of mine hand,
36 that the Lord should deliver Jerusalem out of mine hand? But the people
held their peace, and answered him not a word: for the king's commandment
37 was, saying, Answer him not. Then came Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, which
was over the household, and Shebna the scribe, and Joah the son of Asaph the
recorder, to Hezekiah with *their* clothes rent, and told him the words of Rab-
CHAP. xix. 1 shakeh. And it came to pass, when king Hezekiah heard *it*, that
he rent his clothes, and covered himself with sackcloth, and went into the house
2 of the Lord. And he sent Eliakim, which *was* over the household, and Shebna
the scribe, and the elders of the priests, covered with sackcloth, to Isaiah the
3 prophet the son of Amoz. And they said unto him, Thus saith Hezekiah, This
day *is* a day of trouble [distress], and of rebuke [chastisement], and blasphemy
[rejection]; for the children are come to the birth [opening of the womb],' and
4 *there is* not strength to bring forth. It may be the Lord thy God will hear all the
words of Rab-shakeh, whom the king of Assyria his master hath sent to reproach
[blaspheme] the living God; and will reprove the words which the Lord thy
5 God hath heard: wherefore lift up *thy* prayer for the remnant that are left. So
6 the servants of king Hezekiah came to Isaiah. And Isaiah said unto them,
Thus shall ye say to your master, Thus saith the Lord, Be not afraid of the
words which thou hast heard, with which the servants [minions] of the king
7 of Assyria have blasphemed me. Behold I will send a blast upon him [I will
inspire him with such a spirit that], and [when—*omit* and] he shall hear a
rumour, and [he—*omit* and] shall return to his own land; and I will cause him
to fall by the sword in his own land.
8 So Rab-shakeh returned, and found the king of Assyria warring against Lib-
9 nah: for he had heard that he was departed from Lachish. And when he heard
say of Tirhakah king of Ethiopia, Behold, he is come out to fight against thee;
10 he sent messengers again unto Hezekiah, saying, Thus shall ye speak to Heze-
kiah king of Judah, saying, Let not thy God in whom thou trustest deceive thee,
saying, Jerusalem shall not be delivered into the hand of the king of Assyria.
11 Behold, thou hast heard what the kings of Assyria have done to all lands, by
12 [in] destroying them' utterly: and shalt thou be delivered? Have the gods
of the nations delivered them which my fathers have destroyed; *as* Gozan, and
13 Haran, and Rezeph, and the children of Eden which *were* in Thelasar? Where
is the king of Hamath, and the king of Arpad, and the king of the city of
Sepharvaim, of Hena, and Ivah?
14 And Hezekiah received the letter of the hand of the messengers, and read it:
and Hezekiah went up into the house of the Lord, and spread it before the Lord.
15 And Hezekiah prayed before the Lord, and said, O Lord God of Israel, which
dwellest *between* the cherubim, thou art the God, *even* thou alone, of all the
16 kingdoms of the earth; thou hast made heaven and earth. Lord, bow down
thine ear, and hear: open, Lord, thine eyes, and see: and hear the words of
Sennacherib, which [he] hath sent him [*omit* him] to reproach the living God.
17 Of a truth, Lord, the kings of Assyria have destroyed the nations and their
18 lands, And have cast their gods into the fire: for they *were* no gods, but the
work of men's hands, wood and stone: therefore they have destroyed them.
19 Now therefore, O Lord our God, I beseech thee, save thou us out of his hand,
that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that thou *art* the Lord God, *even*
thou only.
20 Then Isaiah the son of Amoz sent to Hezekiah, saying, Thus saith the
Lord God of Israel, *That* which thou hast prayed to me against Sennache-
21 rib king of Assyria I have heard. This *is* the word that the Lord hath spoken
concerning him:

[ORACLE OF GOD IN REGARD TO THE IMPENDING DANGER.]

[I. *Scornful Rebuke of Sennacherib's Boast.*]

She despises thee, she scorns thee,—the virgin daughter, Zion!
She wags her head at thee, the daughter, Jerusalem!
22 Whom hast thou insulted and blasphemed? against whom hast thou lifted voice?
Thou hast even lifted thine eyes on high against the Holy One of Israel!
23 Through thy messengers thou hast insulted the Lord, and hast said:
"I come up with my chariots on chariots"[10] to the top of the mountains, to Lebanon's summit;
And I hew down its loftiest cedars and its choicest cypresses;
And I come to its summit as a resting-place,
To its forest-grove.
24 I dig, and I drink the waters of foreign nations;
Yea! I parch up with the sole of my foot all the rivers of Egypt!"

[II. *Refutation of his Self-assumption.*]

25 Hast thou not heard?—Of old time I made it—
From ancient days I ordained its course;
Now I have brought it to pass,—
And thou art [my instrument] to reduce[11] fortified cities to heaps of ruins.
26 THEREFORE their inhabitants were short-handed;
They despaired and were terror-stricken;
They were grass of the field and green herb;
Grass of the house-top, and corn blasted in the germ.
27 So, thy resting in peace, and thy going out, and thy coming in, I know;[12]
Also thy violent rage against me;
28 For thy violent rage and thine arrogance are come up into mine ears,
And I will put my hook in thy nose, and my bridle in thy lips,
And I will lead thee back by the way by which thou camest.

[III. *Encouragement to Judah and Hezekiah.*]

29 And this be the sign to thee:—
Eating one year what springs of itself from the leavings of the previous crop,
And the second year the wild growth,
And the third year sow, and reap, and plant vineyards, and eat their fruit.
30 And the surviving remnant of the house of Judah shall take root again downwards,
And shall bear fruit again upwards;
31 For from Jerusalem shall go forth a remnant, and from Mount Zion a rescued band:—
The zeal of Jehovah (of Hosts)[13] shall do this!

[IV. *God's Decree in regard to the Crisis.*]

32 Therefore, thus saith the Eternal in regard to the king of Assyria:—
He shall not come against this city,
Nor shoot an arrow there,
Nor assault it with a shield,
Nor throw up a siege wall against it.
33 By the way by which he came he shall return,
And he shall not come against this city;—is the decree of the Eternal;
34 But I will protect this city to save it,
For mine own sake and for the sake of David, my servant.

35 And it came to pass that night, that the angel of the Lord went out, and
smote in the camp of the Assyrians a hundred fourscore and five thousand: and
36 when they arose early in the morning, behold, they *were* all dead [,] corpses. So
Sennacherib king of Assyria departed, and went and returned, and dwelt at Nine-
37 veh. And it came to pass, as he was worshipping in the house of Nisroch his
god, that Adrammelech and Sharezer his sons [13] smote him with the sword: and
they escaped into the land of Armenia [Ararat]. And Esarhaddon his son
reigned in his stead.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

[1] Ver. 4.—[ויקרא is singular, but with the indefinite subject, equivalent to an English indefinite plural.

[2] Ver. 4.—[נחשתן, *the thing of brass.*

[3] Ver. 18.—[ויתפשם ;—The masculine suffix is used (though the feminine would be correct) as the more general and universal. This is not rare. *Cf.* Gen. xxxi. 9; Amos iii. 2; Jerem. ix. 19; 2 Sam. xx. 3; Ew. § 184, c.—In the classical passages ("Prose of the priests") such irregularities do not occur, but in the prose of less cultivated writers (laymen), in popular poetry, and in the later language, they are frequent. See ver. 16, and chap. xix. 11 (Böttcher, § 677, 3).

[4] Ver. 16.—[האמנות :—Elsewhere we find מְזוּזוֹת for *door-posts.* Bähr says that the words are synonymous, but Thenius' explanation is better. He thinks that האמנות refers, not only to the door-*posts*, but also the door-*frame*, sill, and lintel; *i. e.*, all which gives stability, strength, and shape, (אמן), to the door-opening.—On the suffix in ויתנם, see *Gramm.* note 3, above.—The patach in קִצַּץ is due to the guttural which follows. *Cf.* chap. xxi. 3: אִבַּד חזקיה (Böttcher, § 378. 1.)—W. G. S.]

[5] Ver 29.—Instead of מִיַּרְדֵּן, which is wanting in the text of Isaiah, we must read, with all the old versions, מִקֶּרִי.—Bähr.

[6] Ver. 30.—[The אֶת before הָעִיר is wanting in Isai. xxxvi. 15. It is important as bearing on the question whether אֶת ever stands with a proper nominative. Ewald admits that, if the אֶת in this place were properly in the text, we should have one instance. He adopts the reading in Isaiah, erases the אֶת, and says that this particle "never becomes unfaithful to its primary force so far as to designate a simple nominative" (*Lehrb.* § 277, d, note 2). Böttcher (§ 516. β) affirms that אֶת occurs with the nominative. *Cf.* Gen. vii. 23; Deut. xx. 8; 2 Sam. xxi. 22; Jerem. xxxvi. 22. These are cases where it occurs with the passive. It is used with the active, also, in the sense of "self," or "even," or "very" (this very one). *Cf.* chap. vi. 5, and viii. 26, *Gramm.* notes. The instances are certainly sufficiently strong to support the reading with אֶת which our text offers us:—"This very city," or, "This city here."

[7] Chap. xix. ver. 3.—[מַשְׁבֵּר : *orificium uteri.*

[8] Ver. 11.—[On the suffix in להחרימם, see *Gramm.* note on chap. xviii. 13 (note 3, above).

[9] Ver. 15.—[In Isaiah we find שְׁלָחוֹ instead of שְׁלָחוֹ. "The suffix refers to דברי as a singular object,—the *message*" (Thenius), so also Ewald and Keil.

[10] Ver. 23.—[I prefer the chetib. Bähr adopts the keri (see *Exeg.* on the verse). However, as he says, the sense is the same. The idiom in the chetib is similar to the one by which it is rendered in the translation.—W. G. S.]

[11] Ver. 25.—לַהְשׁוֹת is shortened from the keri לְהַשְׁאוֹת, which is found in Isai. xxxvii. 26.—Bähr.

[12] Ver. 27.—[It is impossible to reproduce in English the pregnant brevity of this line. Whether thou abidest at home (abstainest from any interference with other nations), or goest forth (with plans of attack and conquest), or returnest (victorious), all takes place under my cognizance (by my ordinance, and under my permission). It is folly, therefore, for thee to boast of *thy* deeds, as against me; it is false for thee to cite my approval; and I will punish thine arrogance which rages against my controlling hand, and only claims my approval to serve its own purpose.—W. G. S.]

[13] Ver. 31.—The words "of Hosts" are furnished by the keri, which inserts here the word: צְבָאוֹת, as in Isai. xxxvii. 32, and ix. 6.—Bähr.

Preliminary Remarks.—We have, besides the narrative before us in chaps. xviii., xix., and xx., two other accounts of *Hezekiah's reign*, one in Isai. xxxvi.–xxxix., and the other in 2 Chron. xxix.–xxxii. To these authorities may be added some of the prophecies, especially of Isaiah, who had great influence at this time. The first question which arises, therefore, is this: what relation do these various accounts bear to one another?

a) *The narrative in Isaiah*, xxxvi.–xxxix., agrees with the one before us from chap. xviii. 13 on, with the exception of a few subordinate details, so literally, that the two cannot possibly have been produced by different authors independently of one another. The question is: whether the one served as the original of the other? or, whether both were derived independently from the same source? Different opinions are maintained in answer to these questions, but it is not necessary here to enter into a careful examination of them in detail. We limit ourselves to general and necessary considerations. Gesenius (*Commen. zum Jesai.* II. *s.* 392 *sq.*), following Eichhorn, sought to show in detail that the account before us is the original, and that the one in Isaiah is borrowed from it. De Wette, Maurer, Köster, Winer, and others take the same view. The chief ground for this opinion is that the text in Isaiah is comparatively more condensed, that it presents common and simple words in the place of those in the text which are rare and obscure, and that forms which belong to the later usage of the language appear in it. On the contrary, Grotius, Vitringa, Paulus, Hendewerk, and, most recently, Drechsler, have asserted the originality and priority of the account in Isaiah. In proof of this they bring forward the following considerations: The account in Isaiah cannot be borrowed from that in Kings because it contains Heze-

kiah's long and highly important hymn of gratitude (chap. xxxviii. 9–20), which is entirely wanting in the latter: The language in Kings is the "more careless dialect of common life," the style is "inferior," while the version in Isaiah is more rich, "more correct, and more elegant." When the opinions in regard to the style and language of the two versions are so diverse, it is impossible to deduce any arguments from this consideration for the priority of either. The truth is, as will appear from the detailed exegesis, that, as far as expression and language are concerned, sometimes one and sometimes the other version is to be preferred. The *omissions* are more important. The account in Isaiah cannot be borrowed from that in Kings on account of the hymn of Hezekiah; but it is just as certain that the account in Kings is not based upon that in Isaiah, for it contains additions which cannot be regarded as simple assumptions of the redactor; such, for instance, as the passages chap. xviii. 14, 15, and especially chap, xx. 7–11, compared with Isai. xxxviii. 7, 8, 21, 22. In view of the omissions which occur sometimes in one account and sometimes in the other, the majority of the modern expositors, Rosenmüller, Hitzig, Umbreit, Knobel, Ewald, Thenius, Von Gerlach, Keil, suppose that both narratives are borrowed from a common source which we no longer possess. This seems to us also to be the correct view, though we cannot agree in the opinion that the "Annals of the Kingdom" were the common source, for both accounts bear the character of prophetical, and not of mere civil, historical records. The source was more probably that collection of histories of the separate reigns, composed by different prophets, of which we spoke in the *Introduction* § 3. According to 2 Chron. xxxii. 33, Isaiah was the author of the history of Hezekiah, which had a place in this collection. Neither this narrative, therefore, nor the one in Isai. xxxvi.–xxxix., is Isaiah's original composition, but both are borrowed from this, which, unfortunately, we no longer possess. Both come from Isaiah originally, but neither reproduces accurately and fully the original account. Sometimes one and sometimes the other approaches nearer to the original. This view is, on the whole, the one which the editors of Drechsler's *Commentar zu Jesaia* (II. *s.* 151 *sq.*), Delitsch and Hahn, and the former also in his own *Comm. zu Jes.* (*s.* 24, 351 *sq.*), maintain. But they evidently contradict themselves when they admit, on the one hand, "that the text in the book of Kings is, in many cases, and, perhaps, in the most, to be preferred to that in Isaiah," and yet, on the other hand, assert that "the author of the book of Kings cannot have obtained the parallel account xviii. 13–20, xix. from any other source than the book of Isaiah." It is true that Delitsch appeals again and again to the relation between Jer. chap. lii. and 2 Kings xxiv. 18, *sq.* and chap. xxv. as "an analogous proof that the text of a passage may be more faithfully preserved in the secondary recension than in the original one, from which it was borrowed;" but, although it is possible to render a pure fountain impure, it is impossible that a pure stream should flow from a more or less impure fountain. How, then, can a secondary text be better and purer than the primary one? [The author agrees with the authorities mentioned above that both the accounts are borrowed from a third document as their source. Neither one of the accounts, therefore, *as we have them*, can be said to have superior claims to the other, as the *primary* recension. No one will deny that the ultimate human source of the words of *the oracle* was the brain and lips of Isaiah. Whether he himself collected and arranged his prophecies in the form in which we have them, is a question to be treated in its proper place. If we assume that he did, then it is indeed fair to suppose, wherever any doubt arises, that he cited his own words more accurately than another could do it. But now we have to take account of the history of the two texts since they left the hands of those who put the book of Kings and the book of Isaiah in the form in which they have come down to us—whoever they may have been. In the course of time the primary recension may have been copied more frequently, and by other means also have incurred more corruptions than a recension which, in the first place, was a secondary one. This is what Drechsler means when he says that a secondary recension may have *retained the text until our time* in a purer form than the primary recension. An element is here introduced which interferes materially with any *apriori* claim to superior weight which either the one or the other of *the texts before us* may make, as having come more directly from the hand of the original author. We are thrown back upon the critical examination of each individual variant in each account to determine which reading is more probably the "original" and correct one. The question which text presents, in the most cases, the preferable reading, is one which can only be decided by reviewing the results of these separate critical investigations.—W. G. S.] Nevertheless, we believe that the version in Isaiah was written earlier than the one in Kings, for, whatever opinion one may hold in regard to the time of composition of the second part of Isaiah (chaps. xl.–lxvi.), no one can assert that the first part (chaps. i.–xxxix.) was not composed before the end of the Babylonian Exile, which is the time of composition of the book of Kings (*Introd.* § 1). It does not by any means follow that this account was borrowed from Isaiah. The two accounts are independent recensions from the same original. The reason why the same passage occurs in two different books of the Bible is simply this, that in the one it is given for the sake of the prophet, and in the other for the sake of the king. The whole forms an important incident in Isaiah's work, and an important incident in Hezekiah's reign, which was an important part of the history of the kings of Judah, on account of the deliverance from Assyria.

b) *The account in Chronicles* condenses into very concise form the contents of the other accounts, but it contains also additions peculiar to itself. It gives (chap. xxix. 3–xxxi. 21) detailed descriptions of the rites and ceremonies which Hezekiah prescribed; especially of the Passover which he celebrated. All that has been brought forward against the credibility of this narrative has been refuted by Keil (*Apolog. Versuch über die bibl. Chron. s.* 399 *sq.*). Although it is still asserted that the Chronicler allows himself "to treat the historical facts with more freedom," yet it is admitted that his account "has the foundation of an exact historical tradition" (Bertheau, *Comm. zur Chron. s.* 396), and Winer says: "There is, generally speaking, nothing in it which represents the facts and incidents in a manner false to history." The ac-

count before us especially emphasizes the fact, in regard to Hezekiah's reform in worship, that he abolished idolatry, and even the Jehovah-worship upon the high places. It is a matter of course, however, that the zealously pious king did not stop with the destruction and abolition of the false worship, but also positively put in its place the one which was prescribed in the Law. This the Chronicler states distinctly, and he describes this reformed cultus in detail, in complete consistency with the tendency and stand-point of his work. For him, neither the prophetical institution nor the monarchy stands in the foreground, but the levitical priesthood. While the author of Kings fixes his attention upon the political and theocratic side of the history of Hezekiah's reign, and writes from the stand-point of the theocracy, the Chronicler fixes his attention upon those incidents of it which were important for the levitical priesthood, and writes from the stand-point of a levite. His statements are, in this case, therefore, an essential addition to the story in Kings and in Isaiah, as indeed his peculiar contributions generally supplement the narratives elsewhere found. The source from which he obtained this information was, as he himself tells us (2 Chron. xxxii. 32), "the חָזוֹן of the prophet Isaiah, the son of Amoz, in the book of the kings of Judah and Israel," that is to say, the same work to which the author of Kings refers (chap. xx. 20) for the history of Hezekiah.

c) *The prophetical oracles in Isaiah and Micha* contain, it is true, most important descriptions of the moral and religious state of things at the time when these prophets lived, but no *history*, in the proper sense of the word. Definite facts, which might supplement the historical narrative, cannot be derived from them, and it is especially vain to attempt this, since, up to the present day, there is no consensus of opinion in regard to whether particular oracles are to be assigned to the time of Hezekiah, or to that of some other king, during whose reign Isaiah also exerted influence. For instance, the first chapter of Isaiah refers, according to some modern critics, to the time of Hezekiah; according to others, to that of Uzziah; according to still others, to that of Jotham; and yet again, according to others, to that of Ahaz. We therefore adhere, in this place, since we have to deal with the firm substance of history, as closely as possible to the historical narratives, and leave it to the exposition of the prophetical books to show to what events, recorded in the historical books, the separate oracles refer.

[The author would probably be greatly misunderstood, if any one should infer from this that he estimated as unimportant the light which the prophetic oracles of the Old Testament throw upon the Jewish history. It is one of the unique and most remarkable features of the Old Testament that it presents to us side by side a section of human history, and a criticism of the same from the stand-point of the highest, purest, and most intense religious conviction. The historical narratives of the Old Testament are simple, brief, and dry annals of events and facts. The seventeenth chap. of 2d Kings presents a solitary example in which the author comes forward to discuss causes, to weigh principles, and to review the moral forces at work under the events he records. All that we call nowadays the "philosophy of history" is wanting in the strictly *historical* books. It is supplied by the books of the prophets. They give us an insight into the social and political status, into the vices, the moral forces, the ambitions, and the passions which were at work under the events and produced them. To modern minds the history is not by any means complete until these are elucidated. "History" is not bare events or facts. If it were, we might save ourselves the trouble of ever studying it. It would be a pure matter of curiosity. But history is the fruit of certain moral forces. We study the forces in their fruits. We deduce lessons of warning and encouragement from the study. The forces are the same now as ever since mankind lived upon the earth, and they act, under changed outward circumstances, in the same way. They will produce the same results, and the whole practical value of history is that we may profit by the accumulated experience of mankind, as the individual profits by the mistakes and sufferings of the years through which he has lived. To this end, however, insight into the moral causes of events is the valuable thing, and it is that which we must aim at in studying history. What is peculiar to the prophets of the Old Testament, *as such*, is that their criticisms of Jewish history were not bare literary or scholarly productions, but appeals, rebukes, and warnings, of the most personal and practical description. That is a characteristic of them which has ethical and perhaps homiletical interest, but does not contribute to our historical knowledge, while their analysis of the social condition under which these events took place, and their statement of the moral causes which produced them, are of the highest importance for the history. These fill up the back-ground, and give the light and shade, and the perspective, to a picture of which the historical books have only sketched the outline. We have a sort of parallel in the works of the ancient orators, which have contributed essentially and undeniably to our knowledge of ancient history. Such being the case, it is evident that any one who undertakes to expound the historical books must give good heed to the light which the prophetical books throw upon them. It is indeed true that it is often very difficult to assign particular oracles to their time and circumstances, but we have only to observe the wonderful light which the oracle before us (Chap. xix. 22–34), and its historical setting, throw upon one another, now that we have them in undoubted juxtaposition, to see what we may hope for, if we can succeed in fixing the connection and relations of other and similar oracles. The light to be derived from the prophecies for the history is not by any means to be lightly set aside, but it is to be regarded as one of the fruits of critical science most highly to be valued, and most earnestly to be labored for.—W. G. S.]

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

VER. 1. **Now it came to pass, &c.** It must be carefully observed that vers. 1–8 contain a summary account of the entire reign of Hezekiah, like the one given of Ahaz' reign in chap. xvi. 1–4. In the first place there is given, as usual, his age, the time of his accession, and the duration of his reign (vers. 1 and 2); then, what he did in regard to the Jehovah-worship (vers. 3 and 4); then, what spirit animated his life and conduct in general (vers. 5

and 6); finally, what successes were won, during his reign, against foreign nations (vers. 7 and 8). After this general summary follows, from ver. 9 on, the narrative of the chief events during his reign, in chronological order, viz., the overthrow of the Kingdom of the Ten Tribes, in his fourth year (vers. 9–12), and the oppression of the Assyrians, which began in his fourteenth (ver. 13 *sq.*).—**In the third year of Hoshea.** Since the fourth and sixth years of Hezekiah correspond to the seventh and ninth of Hoshea, according to vers. 9 and 10, it has often been thought that the "third year" in this statement must be incorrect (see Maurer on the passage), and it has been believed that it ought to read "in the fourth year." Josephus, in fact, has ἔτει δὲ τετάρτῳ. But the explanation is that the years of the two kings do not run exactly parallel. The difficulty is removed, and the text is assured "as soon as we assume that Hoshea came to the throne in the second half of 730, and Hezekiah in the first half of 727, before Hoshea's third year had expired" (Thenius); or, "If we assume that Hezekiah's accession took place near the end of Hoshea's third year, then his fourth and sixth years correspond, for the most part, with the sixth and ninth of Hoshea" (Keil).—חִזְקִיָּה is the shortened form for יְחִזְקִיָּהוּ, which is found in Chronicles, and in 2 Kings xx. 10; Isai. i. 1; Hos. i. 1. In Isai. xxxvi.–xxxix. the name always has the form חִזְקִיָּהוּ. This form is also found several times in Kings. In Micah i. 1. we find יְחִזְקִיָּה. Gesenius gives, as the signification of the name, "Jehovah's strength." Fürst's explanation is better: "Jah is Might." In like manner אֲבִי is shortened from אֲבִיָּה which is found in Chronicles. Which *Zachariah* was her father, we cannot determine.

Ver. 4. **He removed the high-places.** On בָּמוֹת see notes on 1 Kings iii. 2. Here, as in 1 Kings iii. 2, and xv. 12, 14, we have not to understand by the word, places of idolatry, but elevations on which Jehovah was worshipped, in contrast with the temple as the central place of worship. This is clear from ver. 22. On the **images** (probably of stone), and the wooden **Astarte-columns,** see note on 1 Kings xiv. 23. Instead of the singular אֲשֵׁרָה, all the old versions have the plural, which is also found in 2 Chron. xxxi. 1. Therefore Thenius reads אֲשֵׁרִים, but this change is unnecessary. According to Keil the singular is here "used collectively."—**And brake in pieces the brazen serpent,** &c. (*cf.* Numb. xxi. 5 *sq.*). It is commonly assumed that this refers to the serpent-image which was made by Moses in the wilderness. Von Gerlach says: "It was perhaps preserved in a side-chamber of the temple as a highly revered treasure and memorial. . . . In the times of manifold idolatry it had been brought out, and an idolatrous worship had been practised with it." It is not impossible, in itself, that the image was still in existence after 800 years, and was preserved in the temple as a relic. We have no hint, however, that such was the case, and it is hardly supposable that Moses, who so carefully avoided everything which could nourish the inclination of the people towards idolatry, should have taken this image with him during his entire journey through the wilderness. Moreover, the tabernacle had no side-chamber in which it could have been kept. Even if we suppose that it was still in existence when the temple was built (480 years after the exodus), yet there is no mention of it at all amongst the objects in the tabernacle which Solomon caused to be brought down into the temple (see 1 Kings viii. 4); neither is there any mention of the fact that any later king caused it to be brought out and set up where it would be possible for the people to offer incense to it. It is reckoned as a merit in Hezekiah that he caused it to be broken in pieces, but it is hardly probable that he would have been the one to destroy a symbol which had been set up and preserved by the great Lawgiver himself, and which had survived so long, as a sacred memorial and treasure, all the storms of time. Winer (*R.-W.-B.* II. *s.* 415) therefore infers "The brazen serpent mentioned in 2 Kings canno be the very one which was set up by Moses." If the sensuous people wished to see their God and to have an image of Him, scarcely any image would suggest itself more immediately than the one which Moses had himself once made and commanded them to look upon, and of which the people were so directly reminded by their history. In the time of idolatry, therefore, they made an image like the one which Moses had set up, and offered incense to it. The text, seems to us not only to admit this supposition, but also, when taken with the context, even to require it. The clause: **that Moses had made,** distinguishes this image expressly from the statues and images mentioned just before. *They* had been borrowed from the heathen, but *that,* though it had been made by Moses in the first place, had been abused for idolatry. Moreover, Moses had not made it with his own hands, but had caused it to be made. This also does away with the oft-repeated assertion that the serpent-worship in Israel had its origin in Egypt, where this cultus was very widespread. The serpent was there the symbol of healing power (Winer, *l. c.*), whereas in the book of Numbers it is represented as bringing death and destruction, wherefore Moses, who certainly was far enough from intending to thereby set up an image of idolatry, hung up a serpent-image as a sign that it could not bring death to those who, with faith in Jehovah's death-conquering power, should look up to it.—**Unto those days,** *i. e.,* not from Moses' time on uninterruptedly until the time of Hezekiah, but "from time to time, and the idolatrous worship which was practised with this image continued until Hezekiah's time" (Keil). The subject of וַיִּקְרָא is not Hezekiah, as the Vulg. and Clericus understand, but Israel. Sept. ἐκάλεσαν. [It is better to take it as a singular with indefinite subject (one called) = they called, or it was called. See note 1 under *Grammatical.*] The name נְחֻשְׁתָּן, *i. e.,* "a brazen thing," shows that the "brass" was not an accidental circumstance in the construction of this image, but was essential, perhaps on account of its glowing-red color, in which it resembled the "fiery" serpents (Numb. xxi. 6; Deut. viii. 15; *cf.* Rev. i. 15), whose bite burned and consumed. נְחֻשְׁתָּן, therefore, meant, The Glowing-red One, The Consuming One, The Burning One. There is no contemptuous sense in it, such as: "A little bit of brass," as those

think who assume that Hezekiah is the subject (Dereser). Still less is it correct that the image had that name only in contrast with the other idols which were of wood or stone. Neither is the designation: "The so-called Brass-God" (Ewald), an apt rendering of the word.—The sentence in ver. 5: **After him was none like him,** &c., has been incorrectly understood as a proverbial form of expression for something which is very rare, the parallel of which is not on record. It "is not in contradiction with chap. xxiii. 25, for its application must be restricted to the single characteristic of trust in God. In this particular Hezekiah showed himself the strongest, whereas, in xxiii. 25, strict fidelity to the (Mosaic) Law is applauded in Josiah" (Thenius).—**He clave to the Lord** (ver. 6). This appeared from the fact that he never gave himself up to idolatry, but kept the commandments of God.

Ver. 7. **And the Lord was with him,** &c. יַשְׂכִּיל has exactly the same sense as in 1 Kings ii. 3. The words בְּכֹל ותו are not to be translated as by Luther and De Wette [and the E. V.]: "Whithersoever he went forth," but, as by the Vulg.: *in cunctis, ad quæ procedebat.* His prosperity appeared in two points; in his escape from the Assyrian supremacy, under which Judah had disgracefully fallen during Ahaz' reign (chap. xvi. 7); and in his war against the Philistines, who had, during Ahaz' reign, made conquests in Judah (2 Chron. xxviii. 18). Luther's translation, *Dazu* [*d. i. ausserdem*] *ward er*" [Moreover he rebelled], destroys the connection of thought. The ו before יִמְרֹד is the simple copula, and is equivalent to the German *nämlich* [*that is to say*, or, *for instance*]. As those two facts only are mentioned here as instances of his prosperity, we must not infer from their position in the story that they took place at the outset of his reign. It is to be observed that his revolt from Assyria is not mentioned here as something blameworthy, but as something which redounded to his praise. The apostate Ahaz subjected the kingdom to Assyria; Hezekiah, who was faithful to Jehovah, made himself independent of the Assyrian yoke. As to the time at which he resolved to do this, see note on ver. 13.

Ver. 9. **And it came to pass in the fourth year of King Hezekiah,** &c. Vers. 9–12 repeat what has been already narrated in chap. xvii. 3–6. This is due, according to Thenius, to the fact that the author found these words not only in the annals of Israel, but also in those of Judah, and that he reproduces his authorities with "complete fidelity." But the repetition cannot be due to any such merely mechanical procedure; it has a further and deeper cause. In the first place, the overthrow of Samaria was an event of the highest importance for Judah also, and it deserved especial mention here on account of the contrast with vers. 1–8. Hezekiah carried out a reformation in his kingdom. He remained faithful to the Lord, and he succeeded in what he undertook. Israel, on the contrary, had come into conflict with the Assyrian power. The king of Assyria, encouraged and stimulated by his success in this conflict, now turned his arms against Judah. But this kingdom, although it was weaker and smaller, did not fall, because Hezekiah trusted in the Lord. This is what the historian desired to show by the repetition, so that it is exactly in its right place between vers. 8 and 13.—For the detailed exposition of vers. 9–12, see notes on chap. xvii. 3 *sq.*

Ver. 13. **Now in the fourteenth year . . . did Sennacherib . . come up,** &c. Herodotus calls this king Σαναχάριβος; Josephus, Σεναχήριβος. Nothing but guesses, which we do not need to notice, have yet been brought forward in regard to the signification of this name. [The true form of the name is Sin-akhe-rib, and it means: "Sin (the Moon-god) has multiplied brothers."—Lenormant.] Sennacherib was the immediate successor of Shalmaneser, for Sargon (Isai. xx. 1) is, as was remarked above on chap. xvii. 3, one and the same person with Shalmaneser. [For a correction of this error see the *Supplementary Note* after the *Exeg.* section on chap xvii., and also the similar note at the end of this present section.] Delitsch (on Isai. xx. 1) has lately once more denied this on the authority of the Assyrian inscription published by Oppert and Rawlinson, and has ventured this assertion: "He [Sargon], and not Shalmaneser, took Samaria after a three years' siege. . . . Shalmaneser died before Samaria, and Sargon not only assumed command of the army, but also seized the reins of power, and, after a conflict of several years' duration with the legitimate heirs and their party, he succeeded in establishing himself upon the throne. He was, therefore, a usurper." The biblical text is wholly silent in regard to all this; nay, it even contradicts it. For the "king of Assyria" mentioned in chap. xvii. 4, 5, and 6, is necessarily the same one who is mentioned in ver. 3 just before, viz., Shalmaneser. It is impossible to insert another king, and he a usurper, between these four successive verses. If Sargon was a different person from Shalmaneser, the statements of the biblical text in chap. xvii. 3–6 are incorrect; if these are correct, then either the Assyrian inscriptions are incorrect, or they are incorrectly read and interpreted. Sennacherib would hardly have called his predecessors his "fathers," if the supposititious Sargon had been a usurper who had come to the throne by the overthrow of the reigning dynasty.

[The reading and interpretation of the cuneiform inscriptions cannot yet, it is true, be regarded as beyond all question, yet there are certain results which are now placed beyond doubt. They constitute the highest authority for Assyrian history, and by them nothing is more satisfactorily established than the fact that Sargon succeeded Shalmaneser and was a usurper, and Sennacherib was his son. The above quotation from Delitsch correctly states the facts of the case. If the inscriptions are not correctly interpreted it remains for those who are competent to do so to make the necessary corrections; but those who have not mastered the subject (and it is a very difficult one) are not justified in treating the authority of Assyrian scholars with neglect and contempt, even upon the supposed authority of the biblical text. The author of the book of Kings was an inhabitant of Judah. Before the time of Sennacherib this kingdom had had very little to do with Assyria. Even Israel knew "the king of Assyria" only as an enemy, the head and representative of the great and threatening world-monarchy. They did not fear Shalmaneser or Sargon as individuals: they feared the head of the hostile nation, "the king

of Assyria." Shalmaneser was celebrated for his campaign against Tyre as an individual who bore this dreaded title. If, as is supposed, he began the siege of Samaria, but died during it, and if Sargon finished it, but then returned to Assyria to secure his usurped power—(Rawlinson seems to think that he was not at Samaria, but took advantage of the discontent of the people of Nineveh at Shalmaneser's long absence to raise a rebellion against him, and then counted among the great deeds of his first year the conquest of Samaria, which Shalmaneser, or his generals, had nearly accomplished)—then it is not strange that his name is not mentioned here among those individuals who were known to the author of these books to have worn the crown of Assyria. Sennacherib was his son, and again so far from his mention of "his fathers" being an argument that he was not the son of a usurper, it is rather in character for such a person to boast of his ancestors, to try to obliterate the recollection of his origin and title to the throne, and to endeavor to avail himself of the prestige of the old dynasty. The Bible is silent in regard to all this, it is true, but it is generally silent in regard to contemporaneous Assyrian, Babylonian, Egyptian, and Greek history. Of China, India, and Arabia it tells us nothing. For our knowledge of these things we are thrown upon the proper authorities. The silence of the Bible is no disparagement of the Bible, and no argument against the conclusions to which we may be led by such separate national authorities as we possess. For the facts in regard to the question here before us, as they appear from the Assyrian inscriptions, see the *Supplementary Note* at the end of this *Exeg.* section, and for a list of the Assyrian kings, with the dates of their reigns, see the right-hand column of the *Chronological Table* at the end of the volume.—W. G. S.]

The fourteenth year of Hezekiah, who became king in 727, is the year 713. The fall of Samaria took place in 721 (see the *Chron. Table*). How long after that Shalmaneser reigned cannot be determined [by biblical data]. The ordinary opinion that he lived until 718, and that Sargon reigned from 718 to 715 or 714, falls to the ground when the identity of the two is established. Sennacherib seems to have reigned a year or two before he undertook the great expedition. Probably the change of occupant of the throne of Assyria had encouraged Hezekiah to make himself independent of the oppressor (ver. 7). It is not likely, as Niebuhr supposes, that he attempted this soon after his accession, for then Shalmaneser would not have retired from Samaria in 721 without chastising him for this revolt. It is not especially stated what caused the expedition of Sennacherib, but it certainly was not the revolt of Hezekiah alone. It was an expedition of conquest, directed especially against Egypt, which was then the great rival of Assyria, under whose protection the small kingdoms of Western Asia ranged themselves against Assyria. We do not know certainly whether Hezekiah entered into an alliance with Egypt after he revolted from Assyria. It is clear from Isai. iii. 1; xxxi. 1, compared with vers. 21 and 24 of this chapter, that the authorities at Jerusalem were much inclined to this course, and that they had taken preliminary steps towards it. We shall recur to the subject of Sennacherib's expedition against Egypt below, at the end of the *Exegetical* notes. [See the *Supplem. Note* after this *Exeg.* section. The facts as established by the inscriptions, are there briefly stated. All that is said above about the relations of Jewish and Assyrian history must be corrected by what is stated in the *Note* below.]—**Against all the fenced cities of Judah, &c.** The statement in Chronicles is more accurate: "He encamped against the fenced cities and thought to win them for himself" (2 Chron. xxxii. 1). It is clear from xix. 8 that he did not take them all. When he approached with his great army, Hezekiah armed himself to resist, and, as he could not risk a battle in the open field, he set Jerusalem in the best possible condition for defence (2 Chron. xxxii. 2 *sq.*; Isai. xxii. 9, 10).

Ver. 14. **And Hezekiah . . . sent to the king of Assyria, &c.** Vers. 14 to 16 are entirely wanting in Isaiah, and are an important addition to the narrative there given. They are evidently taken from the common source. They are not, therefore, "a mere annalistic insertion" (Delitzsch). The text of Isaiah is here condensed as it is in the following verse (17), where he only mentions Rabshakeh, and says nothing about Rabsaris and Tartan.—*Lachish*, whither Hezekiah sent his messengers, was fifteen or eighteen hours' journey southwest of Jerusalem on the road to Egypt (see note on chap. xiv. 19). Sennacherib had, therefore, already passed Jerusalem on his way to Egypt. "The possession of this city was, on account of its position, a matter of great importance to an army which was invading Egypt" (Thenius). Hezekiah, therefore, had grounds for extreme anxiety, more especially as there was no sign of movement on the part of any Egyptian force to meet Sennacherib, and Judah seemed to have been abandoned by Egypt. He determined to try to make terms with the powerful enemy, and rather to submit to a heavy tribute in money than to risk the possession of his capital and the independence of his kingdom. חָטָאתִי does not mean: I have sinned against God by my revolt from thee (that would require that לַיהוָֹה should be added, as we find it Gen. xiii. 13; xxxix. 9; 1 Sam. vii. 6; 2 Sam. xii. 13 and elsewhere); nor, as the ancient expositors supposed: I have, in thy opinion, sinned; nor, *imprudenter egi*. We have simply to adhere to its original signification, *to fail*, *to err* (Job v. 24; Prov. xix. 2). "It is an acknowledgment wrung from him by his distressed circumstances" (Thenius). Hezekiah admits, in view of the great danger to which he has exposed himself and his kingdom, that he has committed an error.—The sum which Sennacherib demanded was certainly a very large one. Thenius estimates it at one and a half million thalers ($1,080,000), and Keil at two and a half million thalers ($1,800,000). The reduction to terms of our modern money is very uncertain. The fact that Hezekiah stripped off the metal which he had himself put upon the door-casings shows how difficult it was for him to raise this sum.

Ver. 17. **And the king of Assyria sent Tartan, &c.** Josephus thus states the connection between vers. 16 and 17. Sennacherib had promised the ambassadors of Hezekiah that he would abstain from all hostilities against Jerusalem, if he received the sum which he had demanded. Hezekiah, trusting in this, had paid it, and now believed

himself to be free from all danger. Sennacherib, however, "did not trouble himself about his promise. He marched in person against the Egyptians and Ethiopians, but he left the general (*στρατηγόν*) Rab-shakeh, with two other high officers (*σὺν δυσὶν ἄλλοις τῶν ἐν τέλει*) and a large force to destroy Jerusalem." This undoubtedly fills up correctly the omission of the biblical text. The two last of these names are clearly official titles, but the first is not a proper name. See Jerem. xxxix. 3, 13, where these titles stand by the side of the proper names. תַּרְתָּן is the title of the general or military commander, as we see from Isai. xx. 1. Probably it is equivalent to רַב־טַבָּחִים (chap. xxv. 8; Jerem. xxxix. 9; Gen. xxxvii. 36), captain of the life-guard. We pass, without discussion, Hitzig's suggestion that the title is of Persian origin and means, "Skull of the body," that is, "Person of high rank." רַב־סָרִים is the chief of the eunuchs, who, however, was not himself a eunuch (chap. xxv. 19; *cf.* Gen. xxxvii. 36; xxxix. 1, 7; Dan. i. 3, 7). This officer is now one of the highest at the Turkish court (Winer, *R.-W.-B.* II. *s.* 654). All the officers and servants of the court were under his command. רַבְשָׁקֵה is the chief cup-bearer, who is more distinctly designated in Gen. xl. 2, 21 as שַׂר־הַמַּשְׁקִים. This was also a post of high honor at Oriental courts. Nehemiah once filled it (Nehem. i. 11; ii. 1). These court dignitaries were at the same time the highest civil and military officers (*cf.* Brissonius *de regno Pers.* i. *p.* 66, 138. Gesenius on Isai. xxxvi. 2). Sennacherib sent *three* such officers in order to give importance to the matter.—The **upper pool** is the one called Gihon (2 Chron. xxxii. 30; 1 Kings i. 33) outside of the city, on the west side. A canal ran from this to the field of the fullers or washers, which, partly on account of the impurity of the water collected in the pool, and partly on account of the uncleanliness of that occupation, was outside of the city. The same designation of this locality is found in Isai. vii. 3, from which it is clear that this canal existed in the time of Ahaz and earlier, and is not the one mentioned in 2 Chron. xxxii. 30.—**And when they had called to the king,** &c., *i. e.*, "They made known to those upon the wall their desire to speak with the king. He, however, did not yield to their demand to speak with him in person, not, as Josephus thinks, *ὑπὸ δειλίας*, but because it was beneath his dignity. The chief officers of the king appeared" (Thenius). On the offices which they filled, see notes on 1 Kings iv. 3 *sq.* From Isai. xxii. 15–22 it is commonly inferred that *Shebna*, who there appears as the officer עַל־הַבַּיִת, but is threatened with deposition from that office, had been degraded to a סֹפֵר, in which rank he appears here, and that *Eliakim* had been put in his place. Other expositors, Vitringa for instance, will not admit that he is the same person. It is at best very uncertain. Nothing can be inferred from this in regard to the comparative rank of these officers, for in 1 Kings iv. 3 *sq.* the *Sopher* and the *Maskir* stand before the *Master of the Palace.*

Ver. 19. **And Rab-shakeh said unto them,** &c Probably he was more familiar with the Hebrew language (ver. 26) than either of the others, and otherwise better fitted to be spokesman. The rabbis falsely consider him an apostate Israelite and even a son of Isaiah.—Rab-shakeh calls his king "the great king," because he had kings for his vassals, Isai. x. 8; Hos. viii. 10. *Cf.* Ezek. xxvi. 7; Dan. ii. 37, where Nebuchadnezzar is called a "king of kings." In Ezra vii. 12, the name is applied to the Persian king.—בִּטָּחוֹן does not mean *defiance* (Bunsen: "What is this defiant confidence with which thou defiest"?), but *confidence, reliance: cf.* בטח in ver 5. The question does not contain a rebuke (Gesen.: *qualis est fiducia ista:* i. e., *quam insanis ea est*); but rather astonishment. "What reliance hast thou that thou darest to revolt from me? I look about in vain for any satisfactory answer to this question" (Drechsler).—אָמַרְתָּ in ver. 20 is to be preferred to אָמַרְתִּי in Isaiah. **A saying of the lips only** is not object: "Thou speakest but a word of the lips [when thou sayest]: counsel and strength, &c." (Knobel). Still less is the sense: "Thou thinkest that my words are only empty talk." The sense is rather: "Thou sayest" (it is, however, no well-considered expression of a conviction, but a mere pronunciation of the lips) "counsel and strength," &c., *cf.* Proverbs xiv. 23; Job xi. 2. The Vulg. translates very arbitrarily: *Forsitan inisti consilium, ut præpares te ad prælium.* Ver. 21 is not a question (Vulg. Luther). Rab-shakeh himself gives the answer to his own question in ver. 20, and "affirms roundly that Judah is in alliance with Assyria's arch-enemy, Egypt" (Knobel). The image of the staff (מִשְׁעֶנֶת, *cf.* Isai. iii. 1) of a reed is a very striking one. As it is used also in Ezek. xxix. 6 in reference to Egypt, it evidently is suggested by the fact that the Nile, the representative river of Egypt, produced quantities of reeds (Isai. xix. 6). The reed, which at best has a feeble stem, bent hither and thither by the wind, is moreover "bruised," so that, although it appears to be whole, yet it breaks all the more easily when one leans upon it, and moreover, its fragments penetrate the hand and wound it (*cf.* Isai. xlii. 3, where רצץ and שבר are accurately distinguished from one another). [For רצץ, Germ. *knicken*, we have no precise equivalent. It is a kind of breaking which applies peculiarly to green reeds. The stem may be broken in such a way as to destroy its *rigidity*, its power to sustain any weight upright, and yet the *tenacity* of the fibre is such that the parts hold together, and the external form is maintained. A reed is not available as a staff under any circumstances. One which has been thus impaired will give way at once under any weight.—W. G. S.] Thenius: "Sennacherib compared Egypt to a reed thus snapped or bent, not because he had broken the Egyptian power, but because, in his arrogance, he regarded it already as good as broken." Delitsch thinks that he calls it so "in consequence of the loss of the dominion over Ethiopia, which had been lost by the native dynasty of Egypt (Isai. xviii)." What is here said about Pharaoh agrees exactly with Isai. xxx. 1–7.

Ver. 22. **But if ye say unto me,** &c. In Isai. xxxvi. 7 we find instead of תֹּאמְרוּן, תֹאמַר. *thou sayest.* Keil considers this the original reading, because in ver. 23 *sq.* Hezekiah is once more directly addressed in his ambassadors. The majority, how-

ever, from Vitringa on, are in favor of תאמרון, because Hezekiah is immediately afterwards referred to in the third person. In this case the words are not addressed simply to the ambassadors but to the entire people. Thenius takes the question, **Is not that he,** &c., as a continuation of the speech of those who trust in Jehovah, and who thus refer to Hezekiah's zeal for the centralization of the national cultus as a ground for hoping for God's help. But 2 Chron. xxxii. 12 is opposed to this notion. According to that passage the words are an objection raised by Rab-shakeh in order to overthrow the confidence of the people, and thus they are understood by nearly all the commentators, ancient and modern. The conclusion of the speech, ver. 25, requires the same interpretation. The argument is: God is not with the one who has removed His altars and restricted His worship to one single place, but with the one who, at His command, has taken possession of the country, and has already won such great success. Rab-shakeh desires to inspire them with suspicion of Hezekiah, who, according to ver. 30 and 2 Chron. xxxii. 7, had encouraged them to trust in Jehovah. He knew how much the people were accustomed to the worship on the high-places, and how much more convenient it was for them.

Ver. 23. **Now, therefore, make a bargain with,** &c., ועתה *i. e.*, Take account, moreover, of the lack of a proper military force, of which cavalry forms an important part. התערב does not mean: "Promise to my Lord" (Luther), nor, "lay a wager with my Lord" (Bunsen, Von Meyer). ערב means *to change, exchange, barter* (Ezek. xxvii. 9, 27). In the hithpael it means *to enter into intercourse with* (Ps. cvi. 35; Prov. xxiv. 21). The reference here is to a mutual giving and taking, not to entering into a contest (Knobel). The sense is: Even if any one should give thee ever so many horses, thou hast not men who are fit to ride upon and use them. [It is a strong expression of contempt for the military power of the Jews. You talk about opposing me by force, but even if I, your enemy, should furnish you with horses, you could not find men to form cavalry. If you should make terms with me so that I gave you these odds, it would not do you any good.—W. G. S.]. השיב means literally: *to cause to face about, i. e., to put to flight.* The פחות, the governors of provinces, were likewise commanders in the army in time of war, 1 Kings xx. 24 (*cf.* xxii. 31); "the least" is the one who commands the smallest number of soldiers. Drechsler's interpretation seems to us to be entirely mistaken. According to him there is no reference here to war, and השיב, &c. has the signification: *to reject a suppliant,* so that the sense is, "He [Hezekiah] will have to concede every demand and yield to every wish which is brought before him by such a person [as one of these governors]."—On the **chariots** see 1 Kings x. 28 *sq.*—In ver. 25 Rab-shakeh presents the matter in a light exactly contrary to that in which the Jews look at it: So far from *thy* being justified in relying upon Jehovah, He is, on the contrary, on *our* side, and it is by His command that we are come hither to destroy Jerusalem. This was, as Clericus says, *purum putum mendacium.* As an Assyrian he did not believe at all in the God of Israel, but only made use of this form of statement, *cf.* vers. 34 and 35. It can hardly be that he meant to refer to the successes which the Assyrians had had up to this time as proofs that they were under the guidance and approval of Jehovah (Calmet, Thenius). Still less can we suppose that he "had heard of the declarations of the prophets, who had predicted this distress as a punishment sent by Jehovah" (Knobel, Von Gerlach, Keil, Vitringa and others.) [At the same time, if we impute to Rab-shakeh such a disbelief in the existence of Jehovah as makes his reference to His providence here a pure fiction, merely assumed for the purpose of producing an effect upon the listeners who *did* believe in Jehovah, we shall introduce a modern or monotheistic idea into the speech of an ancient heathen and polytheist, to whom it was foreign. The characteristic of the Jewish monotheistic religion was exclusiveness, intolerance. The polytheistic heathen religions did not deny the existence of the national divinities of each separate nation. The fact that Rab-shakeh believed in the Assyrian divinities does not, therefore, exclude all belief on his part in Jehovah. In ver. 12 he assumes the existence of gods of the countries mentioned. In xvii. 26 we have another instance of the usual heathen conception. That was, that every nation had its own divinities. These were conceived of as existing and being true gods, one as much as the other, in all the sense in which heathen ever conceived of gods as truly existing. Each nation held its own god or gods to be greater and mightier than those of other nations, but thought it necessary, especially when in a foreign country, to pay proper respect to the local divinity. Rab-shakeh no doubt went thus far, at least, in his "belief in" Jehovah, and his claim to enjoy the favor of Jehovah was either a pure assumption, good at least until the event contradicted it, or it was founded upon the successes hitherto won, or it took advantage of such prophecies of the Jewish prophets as he may have heard of. *Cf.* the bracketed note on p. 57 of Pt. II. in regard to Naaman's idea of Jehovah.—W. G. S.]

Ver. 26. **Then said Eliakim,** &c. As the haughty words of Rab-shakeh, especially what he had last said (ver. 25), might have a depressing effect upon the soldiers posted on the wall, the king's ambassadors interrupted him and begged him, in a friendly manner, to speak Syriac. To this he gives a rude answer. ארמית *i. e.*, Syriac,—[more strictly and correctly, Aramaic. The name Syriac is commonly restricted to a later dialect of the Aramaic.—W. G. S.]—"was spoken in ancient times in Syria, Babylonia, and Mesopotamia" (Gesenius). It was "the connecting link between the languages of Eastern [middle] Asia and the Semitic languages of Western Asia" (Drechsler). On account of the intercourse between the Hebrews and these nations, the high court-officials especially were acquainted with Hebrew. The Hebrew and the Aramaic were closely related languages (Ez. iv. 7). Rab-shakeh spoke Hebrew in this case, not out of politeness, but in order that he might be understood by the listening people, who were not acquainted with any other language. His object was to influence the common people. על and אל in ver. 27 have no distinction of meaning.

In Isai. xxxvi. 12 we find אֶל for עַל. Rab-shakeh pretends to be a friend of "the people." So he says, in substance: Ye are abusing your common people. In exposing them to a wasting siege ye are bringing them, with yourselves, into the direst extremity, so that they will at last be compelled to consume their own excrement. (Compare similar abominations, chap. vi. 28, *sq.*) "Instead of the vulgar word חֲרָאֵיהֶם, *excrementa sua*, and שֵׁינֵיהֶם, *urinas suas*, the keri substitutes the euphemisms צוֹאָתָם *their out-going*, and מֵימֵי רַגְלֵיהֶם, *the water of their feet*. The text is punctuated for these readings" (Knobel). וַיַּעֲמֹד stands here as in 1 Kings viii. 32. Ewald: "He now, for the first time, took up a position directly in front of the wall." It can hardly mean what Keil understands: "He took up a position calculated for effect. He does exactly the contrary of what they begged him to do. He approaches nearer in order to be still more distinctly heard by the people," and "follows still more directly his object of influencing the minds of the common soldiers" (Drechsler).

Ver. 31. **Make terms with me, &c.** *Vulg.*: *Facite mecum quod vobis est utile.* Luther: *Accept my favor.* But בְּרָכָה means *blessing*, and implies the same as שָׁלוֹם, *peace, prosperity* (Josh. ix. 15), for peace was concluded with mutual blessings, and expressed wishes for prosperity on either hand (1 Chron. xviii. 10). **Come out to me**, the usual expression for besieged who "go out" and surrender to the besiegers (1 Sam. xi. 3; Jerem. xxi. 9; xxxviii. 17). The threats are now followed by wheedling and promises. **Then eat ye,** &c.; *i. e.*, ye shall lead a life which is in every way peaceful and happy. See 1 Kings iv. 25. **Until I come,** ver. 32. Not, "until I come back from Egypt" (Knobel), but, in general; I will come and take you away. It appears, therefore, that, "Even in case of a capitulation, the Assyrians proposed to transport the Jewish population, according to their usual custom. For the proofs that they were accustomed to adopt this measure with all subjugated nations see Hengstenberg, *De rebus Tyriis*, p. 51. *sq.*" (Keil). [On these deportations see the *Supplementary Note* after the *Exeg.* section on chap. xvii. The first one on record is there noticed, as well as a large number both out of, and into, Syria and Samaria.] We need not attempt to define the land referred to. The whole promise was a mere pretext. זֵית יִצְהָר is the olive-tree which bears oil-producing fruit, in distinction from the wild olive-tree.

Ver. 33. **Have the gods of the nations delivered each his land,** &c. Finally the speaker puts the Assyrian power (the "king of Assyria" is here used generally for the Assyrian imperial power, not for Sennacherib in particular) above the might of all the national divinities, and therefore above the supposititious god Jehovah, and proves the justice of the assumption by those successes of the Assyrian power which no one could deny. It is very skillful of him to close his speech with this argument which he considers the strongest and most effective. He means to say: If all the gods of these numerous and mighty nations could not resist the might of Assyria, "much less will Jehovah, the insignificant god of an insignificant nation, be able to do so" (Knobel). It is true that he thereby falls into a contradiction of what he had himself said in ver. 25, and this shows that his words there were empty pretence.—In ver. 34, Drechsler translates אֱלֹהֵי both times by the singular, following the Vulgate. But as it must be taken as a plural in ver. 33, so also here, especially as it is a fact that those nations had more than one god each. On *Hamath*, *Sepharvaim*, and *Joah* see notes on chap. xvii. 24, 30 *sq.* Many hypotheses have been suggested in regard to *Arpad*. As it is mentioned her eand Isai. x. 9, xxxvii. 13, and Jerem. xlix. 23, in connection with Hamath, it must have belonged to Syria. We have "no trace of it either in writings or elsewhere" (Winer). It cannot be certainly affirmed that the district Arfad in northern Syria, seven hours' journey north of Haleb (Keil), is the same place. *Hena* is also mentioned with Joah in chap. xix. 13, and in Isai. xxxvii. 13, but its location is as little ascertainable as that of the latter place. It is more probable that we must look for it in Mesopotamia (Winer) than on the Phœnician frontier (Ewald). [In 742, when Tiglath Pileser conquered Syria (see *Supp. Note* on chap. xv. p. 161), the city of Arpad alone resisted him with any success. It held out for three years. The same city joined Samaria and Damascus in the revolt mentioned in the *Supp. Note* on chap. xvii. p. 189. Sargon reconquered it. It is, therefore, certain that it was in Syria, though the identification with Arfad is doubtful. It was a large and important city, for it is mentioned in the acts of Sargon, together with Hamath, Damascus, Syria, and Samaria, as among the chief cities of that part of the world.—Some good maps offer Hena in the Euphrates valley and identify it with Anah, or Anatho. Sepharvaim was certainly in the Euphrates valley (see *Exeg.* note on xvii. 24) and it is very probable that Hena and Ivah were also there.—W. G. S.] The Vulg. which Luther, Clericus, and Thenius follow, takes כִּי־הִצִּילוּ as a question. Thenius even considers הֲכִי the original reading. But it cannot well be taken differently from כִּי־יַצִּיל in the following verse, where there certainly is not a question, but an inference, as in ver. 20. The sentence is abbreviated. In full it would read: Where are the gods of Samaria that they should have saved it? Jehovah will be just as unable to save Jerusalem. The gods of Samaria are included in those "of the nations."—**But the people held their peace,** ver. 36. In Isaiah the word הָעָם is wanting, so that וְהֶחֱרִישׁוּ only refers to the three officers. Of course Hezekiah had forbidden *them* to reply, or to enter into any negotiations, partly because he reserved this responsibility to himself, and partly in order not to provoke the enemy still more. Because they kept silence, the people, to whom Rab-shakeh had addressed his last words, also kept silence. Hezekiah could not have commanded the people to keep silence, because he did not know beforehand that Rab-shakeh would address himself to them instead of to the ambassadors. The latter returned with rent garments, in grief and sorrow, not only for the hard message which they had to bring, but also on account of the insults to the king, and still more on account

of the blasphemies against Jehovah, which they had been obliged to hear. See chap. vi. 30.

Chap. xix. ver. 1. **And it came to pass when king Hezekiah heard it, &c.** The sackcloth which Hezekiah put on was not only a garment of sorrow, but also a garment of penitence, as in 1 Kings xx. 32; 2 Kings vi. 30. The king saw in this event a divine chastisement (ver. 3). The rabbis use the passage to prove that when blasphemies are uttered, not only those who hear them, but also those to whom they are reported, ought to rend their garments (See Schöttgen, *Hor. Hebr.* on Matt. xxvi. 65). Hezekiah goes into the temple, "in order to humble himself before God and to pray for help" (Thenius). At the same time he sends a solemn embassy of the highest officers and the most important men to the prophet Isaiah. **The elders of the priests** are the most notable amongst them. "Embassies are often sent to the prophets by the kings in times of extraordinary distress" (Von Gerlach), *cf.* Numb. xxii. 5; Jerem. xxi. 1). It is very significant of the comparative position of prophets and priests that the latter were chosen as ambassadors to the former. The priests were officers only by virtue of their birth. The prophets were chosen men of God, filled with His Spirit. "Isaiah was the only one to whom the nation could turn under the circumstances, the one to whom it must turn. From the point of time referred to in Isai. vii. 3 *sq.* he presided over this work of divine discipline" (Drechsler). Thenius' remark: "This official embassy was intended to encourage the people," is an error. It was not sent with any politic intention at all, but sprang from the need of reliable counsel in a desperate situation. Hezekiah desired first of all to know God's will. He therefore sent to the approved and highly honored prophet.—**A day of distress, &c.**, ver. 3. Luther incorrectly, following the Vulg. (*et increpationis et blasphemiæ*): *und des Scheltens und Lästerns* [E. V. of rebuke and blasphemy]. תּוֹכֵחָה means *chastisement, punishment* (Hos. v. 9; Ps. cxlix. 7). נְאָצָה means *disdain, abhorrence,* especially of the people by God (Deut. xxxii. 19; Lament. ii. 6). [The meaning here is that it is a day on which God has disdainfully rejected his people, and left them to their enemies.—W. G. S.] —**For the children are come to the opening of the womb, &c.** The proverb is taken from the crisis in child-bearing, where the child is in the midst of the birth, but the strength of the mother fails on account of the continuous pains, so that she and the child are both in danger. Clericus, therefore, interprets it of the situation of those in great peril, who know what they must do in order to escape, but who feel that it is beyond their power to take the necessary measures, and who fear that, if they should make the attempt, all would be lost.—אוּלַי, ver. 4, *non est dubitantis particula, sed bene sperantis* (Clericus). He hopes that God will not allow the words which have been spoken to go unnoticed. **The Lord thy God,** inasmuch as the prophet is in an especial sense His servant. **The remnant** are those who, like Jerusalem, were not yet in the power of the Assyrians, who had already overrun the country and captured the strongholds.

Ver. 6. **And Isaiah said unto them, &c.** The prophet does not call the officers of the king עֲבָדִים, but נְעָרִים. He does not thereby simply designate them as "servants," or, in fact, "body-servants," as Thenius insists. There is rather a contemptuous significance in the word, which is never used of old men, such as these officers were. Knobel: "The youths, the youngsters." Ewald and Umbreit even render it: "The boys"; Drechsler: "The guards, the rank and file, who have no discretionary judgment." [Herein lies the contumely of the epithet. These high officers are called by a name applicable only to those who have nothing to do but mechanically obey orders. It is like calling cabinet ministers, who are, in a good sense, "servants" of the State, public lackeys.—W. G. S.]—**I will inspire him with such a spirit, &c.**, ver. 7. Malvenda's rendering: *Veniet per aërem nuncius seu rumór*, is entirely erroneous. "Others understand by 'spirit' here, a wind, especially a noxious wind, the Simoom, or something of that kind, which can sweep away a whole army, and which the angel (ver. 35) may have used as an instrumentality" (Richter). That, however, is not the meaning. רוּחַ is often used for *disposition, state of mind.* (Knobel: I will awaken in him such a state of mind. Thenius: a despondent disposition or mood. Similarly Theodoret: πνεῦμα, τὴν δειλίαν οἶμαι δηλοῦν). Here it evidently means more than that, and refers to the "extraordinary impulsion of a divine inspiration which is to hurry him blindly on" (Drechsler). This spirit is to leave him no rest, so that, as soon as a certain rumor reaches his ears, he shall hurry away. The sense is, therefore: I will bring it about that he shall feel himself powerfully impelled to retreat. The "rumor" which he is to hear is not the news of the defeat of his army (Lightfoot, Thenius), for he was with his army in person, but the news of Tirhakah's approach (ver. 9). This news was the first and immediate occasion of his retreat. The destruction of his army was then added, and this hastened his steps. The prophet does not, therefore, refer expressly to the latter. Drechsler finds in this a kind of "pedagogic wisdom, for thus he forced Hezekiah and the people to put *implicit* faith in the word of God upon which they had to rely."—**And I will cause him to fall by the sword in his own land.** The assertion that this declaration is put in the mouth of Isaiah by the historian, *post eventum*, is both arbitrary and violent. It appears also in the other narrative, Isaiah xxxvii. 7, in the same words. It therefore belongs to the common source of both, which Isaiah himself wrote.

Ver. 8. **So Rab-shakeh returned.** He did not, therefore, forthwith commence the siege, although he had come to Jerusalem with a large force (chap. xviii. 17), but first reported to his master that he had accomplished nothing by his speeches, and had found Jerusalem strongly fortified. He found Sennacherib making war before *Libnah.* In regard to this city, see note on chap. viii. 22. It lay some distance north [north-west] of Lachish, about as far from it as from Jerusalem, which lay to the northeast of both. [The position is uncertain. On the authority of Eusebius, Gesenius, Thenius, and Keil place it in the neighborhood of Eleutheropolis or Beit Jibrin. Lenormant puts Libnah on his map S. E. of Lachish.] It fol-

lows that Sennacherib had not, in the mean time, advanced southwards, towards Egypt, but northwards, that is, he had retreated. This he had done, no doubt, on account of Tirhakah's advance. It can hardly be, as Keil and Thenius suppose, that he had taken Lachish, for, if he had done so, he would probably have remained in that place, and not have retreated. Lachish appears to have been so strong by nature that he could not take it at once, and therefore desired to get possession of Libnah at least. He heard the news of Tirhakah's advance, not at Libnah, but while he was besieging Lachish. In the first place he passed by Jerusalem, but it was now of the utmost importance to him to get possession of this strong position, so as not to have it in his rear. [On this point also see the *Supplementary Note.*]—*Tirhakah*, who is called by Manetho, Ταρακός, by Strabo, Τεάρκων ὁ Αἰθίοψ, on Egyptian monuments Tahrka or Tahraka, "is represented on the Pylon of the great temple of Medinet-Abu in the guise of a king, who is slaughtering, before the god Ammon, enemies from the conquered countries, Egypt, Syria, and Tepopa (a country which cannot be identified)" (Keil). When, and how long, he ruled over Egypt, are questions which do not here concern us further. (See Niebuhr, *Gesch. Assyr.*, *s.* 72 and 458). He is described, like Sesostris, as one of the great conquerors of the ancient world (Strabo i. 45). This was the ground for the effect which his approach produced.

Ver. 9. **He sent messengers again unto Hezekiah.** Instead of וַיָּשָׁב we find in Isai. xxxvii. 9 וַיִּשְׁמַע. Drechsler thinks that this word is much more forcible, and that it is repeated from the beginning of the verse, in order to show that Sennacherib sent the messengers as soon as he heard the news. The text before us, however, seems to be the better one, as Delitsch also admits in this case. The point to be emphasized is, not that Sennacherib sent *at once* upon hearing this news, but that he sent *again*, made another attempt to get possession of Jerusalem by capitulation, without drawing the sword, for Jerusalem was far stronger than Samaria, and the latter cost Shalmaneser a three years' siege.—On ver. 10 see chap. xviii. 30, and on ver. 11 *cf.* the similar piece of boasting, Isai. x. 8–11. This time Sennacherib addresses himself directly to Hezekiah by a letter, and hopes for better success than was won by his servants. The letter contains the same arguments as Rab-shakeh's speech, with this difference, that still more countries which had been conquered by the Assyrian arms are here enumerated, in order to heighten the effect. לְהַחֲרִימָם (ver. 11), not: *in order to destroy them*, but; *so that they destroyed*, or: *by this, that they destroyed them*; strictly: *by devoting them to destruction. Cf.* Deut. ii. 34; iii. 6; Josh. viii. 26; 1 Sam. xv. 3, 8; Numb. xxi. 3.—In ver. 12 the countries which Rab-shakeh had not mentioned are mentioned first, and then, in ver. 13, those which he had mentioned. On *Gozan* see note on chap. xvii. 6. The mention of this place in connection with Haran in Mesopotamia (Gen. xi. 31) does not force us to conclude that it refers to Gauzanitis in that country. "The enumeration is founded on historical, not on geographical facts" (Keil). *Rezeph* was a place in the district of Palmyra, in eastern Syria, which Ptolemy calls (5,15) 'Ρησάφα. It was a day's journey west of the Euphrates (Winer, *R.-W.-B.*). Jalkuti mentions nine cities of this name in his geographical dictionary. The one here referred to was probably the most important amongst them. *Eden* is certainly not the Syrian Eden (Amos i. 5), for the reference here is to Assyrian conquests; but is the Eden mentioned in connection with Canneh and Haran, in Ezek. xxvii. 23. It must, therefore, be sought in Mesopotamia. It is quite uncertain where *Thelasar* was, and whether it was a city or a district. Perhaps it was in Mesopotamia, like the other places here mentioned, or perhaps it was in Babylon, for תֵּל (hill) occurs at the first part of many Babylonian geographical names. Ewald considers it identical with Theleda, near Palmyra. According to Delitsch, it is "Thelser of the *Tab. Peuting.*, on the east side of the Tigris." The **children of Eden** "may have been a tribe which had just then acquired importance, had established itself in Thelasar, a place which did not originally belong to it, and had founded a kingdom there, as the Chaldeans did in Babylon" (Drechsler).—On ver. 13 see notes on chap. xvii. 24 and xviii. 34.

Ver. 14. **And Hezekiah received the letter.** The plural, סְפָרִים, has here a singular signification; *litera*, *epistola*, as the suffix in וַיִּקְרָאֵהוּ shows. Hezekiah went into the temple to pray, after the receipt of Sennacherib's letter, as he had done after Rab-shakeh's speech (ver. 1). He **spread it before the Lord,** as it were before the throne of Jehovah. It is incomprehensible that Gesenius should have asserted that Hezekiah did this with the same motive with which the Thibetans set up their prayer-machines before their gods, in order that the gods may read the prayers for themselves. The substance of the prayer itself (ver. 15–19) contradicts any such notion most distinctly, for the conception of the one sole God of heaven and earth, as opposed to all heathen conceptions of divinity, which here appears, excludes totally any such coarse anthropomorphic fantasy. It is impossible to impute any such gross superstition to that king of Israel, who displayed zeal against idolatry such as no king since David had shown, and who stood in such relation as we have seen to Isaiah, the most gifted of the prophets. Nor can we explain to ourselves Hezekiah's action in spreading the letter before God, with Keil and Von Gerlach, as "child-like faith and confidence," for it would have been more than "childish" if Hezekiah had believed that this letter must be presented to God for Him to see and read it Himself. Still less can we suppose that his object was *ut populum earum literarum conspectu ad deum orandum excitaret* (Clericus). It was rather a significant, or symbolic, act. Hezekiah solemnly hands over the letter, the documentary blasphemy, to Jehovah. He spreads it before Jehovah and leaves to Him the work of punishing it. Lisco: "The act of spreading out the letter before Jehovah is a symbolic presentation of the great distress into which he has been brought by Sennacherib, and to which his prayer refers." Delitsch: "It is a prayer without words, a prayer in action, which then passes into a spoken prayer." He calls upon Jehovah as the **God of Israel,** *i. e.*, as the one who has chosen Israel out of all the nations of the earth to be His own people, and has made a cove-

nant with this nation, and who, therefore, sits between the cherubim, and dwells amongst His chosen people (see the dissertation on the *Significance of the Temple* under 1 Kings vi., § 6, *c* and *d*), is not, however, a mere national divinity like the gods of the nations which the Assyrians had conquered, as Sennacherib supposed, but is the One, Almighty Creator of heaven and earth. In Isai. xxxvii. 16 we find with יְהוָה the word צְבָאוֹת, παντοκράτωρ (2 Sam. v. 10; vii. 8). This would hardly have been left out if the author had found it in the original document which served as his authority. "הוּא in אַתָּה־הוּא is an emphatic repetition, and so a reinforcement, of the subject, as in Isai. xliii. 25; li. 12, &c.; *tu ille* (not, *tu es ille*), that is, *tu, nullus alius*" (Delitsch).

Ver. 16. **Lord, bow down thine ear.** Drechsler: "This express mention of the two chief senses, the development of each of the two chief ideas, according to their details, into a twofold prayer, the complete symmetry of the two clauses of the sentence, the repetition of יְהוָה in the second clause —all these conspire to give to the prayer the greatest urgency and emphasis." The singular, "thine ear," with the plural, "thine eyes," is a standing formula (Ps. xvii. 6; xxxi. 2, &c.). "When we wish to hear, we bend down *one* ear to the speaker; when we wish to see, we open both eyes" (Gesenius). That "open thine eyes" does not mean: "Read the letter" (Knobel) is evident from Isai. i. 15, where the reference is not to a letter at all, but only to a prayer. The second "hear" is equivalent to "notice," "pay heed to." [The anthropomorphism is plain. The explicit mention of the senses in addressing God is intended to express the most urgent prayer for attention.—W. G. S.]—In ver. 17 Hezekiah admits the truth of what Sennacherib had boasted of, namely, the subjugation of all those peoples and countries. By the following words he means to say: This was possible for him because they had no protection and no help in their gods of wood and stone; but thou, O Jehovah! our God, art the only God, the Almighty One, Who canst help. Help then thy people for thine own glory, that all nations may know Thee as the One True God (ver. 19). הֶחֱרִיב does not mean: *to put to death by the sword* (Luther), but: *to devastate, to destroy*. Ezek. xix. 7; Judges xvi. 24. Instead of **the nations and their lands,** Isaiah xxxvii. 18 reads: "all the lands and their (own) land." [E. V. (as an escape from the difficulty) "all the nations and their lands."] The reading of Isaiah is not to be preferred "on account of its greater difficulty" (Keil, Drechsler). On the contrary, the text of Kings seems to be more correct, as the majority of the commentators admit. Thenius goes so far as to say that the text of Isaiah must be "totally rejected." The explanation that the Assyrians had, in consequence of their numerless wars, devastated their own country, is altogether too forced. It does not fit the context, for, if it were adopted, then "their gods" in ver. 18 might refer to the gods of the Assyrians. Neither does וְנָתֹן, in Isaiah, deserve to be preferred, as the more difficult reading, to the וְנָתְנוּ of the text before us. Knobel gives an incorrect interpretation of the words: **And have cast their gods into the fire.** Hezekiah does not mean "to put their godliness in its proper light," and to say: "They acted wickedly even from their own stand-point, since they held these idols to be gods, and nevertheless destroyed them." Drechsler's remark is more correct: "Standing themselves in the midst of the heathen modes of thought, and moving with the mythologic tendency which was in the process of development, they recognized the deep connection between the religion of a people, its national cultus, and its identity as a particular individual in the family of nations. It was a result of this fundamental conception that the idols of conquered peoples were often carried into captivity." [That is, the whole *nationality* was taken captive, reduced to submission, and carried away by the victor, root and branch.—Hezekiah's mention of the destruction of the heathen gods (idols), in his prayer, therefore, belongs to his description of the completeness of the Assyrian victory, and the utter extirpation of the nationalities which they had conquered.—W. G. S.] Thenius refers, in his comment on this passage, to Botta, *Monum. pl.* 140, "where an idol is being hewn in pieces while the booty from a conquered city is being carried out and weighed."—**Therefore they have destroyed them.** They were easily able to do so, he means to say, because these were gods made by men's hands out of wood and stone. "It will, however, and it must, be entirely different, if he now proceeds to assail Jehovah" (Drechsler). [The connection of thought may be thus developed: His boast is true. He has indeed uprooted the nations, devastated their countries, and destroyed their idols, in whom they trusted for protection. The inference he desires us to draw is, that Jehovah, our God, in whom we trust, will not be able to save us, any more than these gods to save their worshippers. But what is the assumption on which this inference entirely depends? It is that Jehovah is only another god like those. But they are only pieces of wood and stone, while Jehovah is the sole and almighty God of hosts. Hence the assumption is false, the inference falls to the ground with it, and the boast, although it is true, is idle.—W. G. S.]

Ver. 20. **Then Isaiah . . . sent to Hezekiah,** &c. He did not probably send the following answer by a "younger prophet," or "prophet-disciple" (chap. ix. 1) (Knobel), but by the same embassy which Hezekiah, who in the mean time had gone into the temple, had sent to him. The reply was not written (Starke), it was delivered orally, but it is certain that it was recorded by Isaiah.—**She despises thee,** &c., ver. 21. The entire passage vers. 21–34 may be divided into three parts. In the first, vers. 21–28, the haughty Assyrian himself is addressed. It consists of words especially adapted to scorn his pretensions. In the second, vers. 29–31, the prophet addresses himself directly to Hezekiah. In the third, vers. 32–34, the catastrophe of the Assyrian enterprise is solemnly foretold. The commencement of the oracle constitutes, in form and contents, the strongest and most confident contrast to the Assyrian haughtiness. [This division is correct for the *sense* of the passage. According to its poetic construction, however, it is rather composed of four strophes, two of four and two of three verses. The oracle is highly finished both in its poetic construction, and in the flow of thought. It commences with an indignant and scornful outburst of utter con-

tempt for the Assyrian pretensions (first str.); it then proceeds to refute them by calmer reasoning (sec. str.); then it turns to Hezekiah and Judah, the other parties to the dispute, with encouragement (third str.); and finally it gives, with quiet confidence, a declaration as to the solution of the crisis (fourth str.).—W. G. S.]—**The virgin daughter, Zion:** not *of* Zion. Even the *stat. const.*, בְּתוּלַת, only expresses the relation of apposition. "Daughter" is the ordinary figure under which lands and cities are designated (Isai. xxiii. 12; xlvii. 1; Jerem. xlvi. 11; Lament. i. 15). "Virgin" is used of a city which is as yet unconquered (see Gesenius on Isai. xxiii. 12). Here it is prefixed by way of emphasis, and expresses "in contradiction to the confidence of the Assyrian, the consciousness of impregnability" (Drechsler). **At thee,** lit. *after thee* or *behind thee.* "This is a picturesque feature in the description, and is, therefore, mentioned first (Hebrew text). *Behind thee*, as thou departest in shame and disgrace" (Drechsler). **She wags her head,** not moving it from side to side as a sign of refusal or disapproval, but up and down, as a sign of ridicule, Ps. xxii. 7; cix. 25; Job xvi. 4; Jerem. xviii. 16. She shows "by this gesture that it must have turned out so and not otherwise" (Delitsch). This scorn and ridicule is well deserved, because Sennacherib had blasphemed the Most High, therefore, ver. 22: **Whom hast thou insulted and blasphemed?** He that sitteth upon the heavens shall laugh.—**Lifted voice,** not in the sense of shouting aloud (Drechsler, Keil) (for Rab-shakeh was the only one who had lifted up his voice in this sense, not Sennacherib), but in the more general sense of uttering words against anybody [a poetic expression for speaking]. מָרוֹם is not the "height of thine eyes" (Umbreit), but on high, upwards towards heaven; *cf.* Isai. lvii. 15, "I dwell in the high and holy place." It does not, therefore, simply mean, as in Isai. xl. 26, to look up towards heaven, but, as is seen by the following words: "Against the Holy One of Israel," it has an accessory reference to that pride and arrogance, which places itself on a level with Him who dwells in heaven. **The Holy One of Israel** is, it is true, the name which is peculiar to Isaiah, but here it is used because "Jehovah is especially designated by the title which distinctly implies that His majesty cannot be outraged by anybody with impunity, Isai. v. 16" (Drechsler). The Sept. and Vulg. [and E. V.] translate, in violation of the masoretic accents: "Against whom hast thou lifted up thy voice, and lifted up thine eyes on high? Against the Holy One of Israel!"

Ver. 23. **By thy messengers thou hast insulted the Lord.** The "messengers" are those mentioned in ver. 9. In Isai. xxxvii. 24 we find instead: "thy servants," evidently referring to those mentioned in chap. xviii. 17. The speech which the prophet here puts in the mouth of Sennacherib, and in which he gives the key to all the feelings and disposition of the latter, is divided into two parts by the emphasized אֲנִי in vers. 23 and 24. Then each principal clause is subdivided. The Sept., Vulg., Luther, and others take all the verbs in both verses as perfect tenses, but it is incorrect because the perfect עָלִיתִי, ver. 23, is followed by the two futures אֶכְרֹת and אָבוֹאָה, and likewise the perfect קַרְתִּי, ver. 24, by אַחְרִב. It is still less admissible to refer ver. 23 to past time and ver. 24 to future time, and to translate the perfect עָלִיתִי as a perfect, but the perfect קַרְתִּי as an imperfect, as is often done. The rule which here applies is the one given by Gesenius (*Hebr. Gramm.* § 126, 4): "The perfect may even refer to the future, especially in strong affirmations and assurances, in which the speaker regards the matter, in his own will, as already done, or as good as accomplished. In German [and English] the present is used in such cases instead of the future" (*cf.* Ewald, *Lehrb.* § 135, c.). This use is common in prophecies, Isai. ix. 1; v. 13. *Cf.* Ps. xxxi. 6; Gen. xv. 18; xvii. 20. We therefore translate, with De Wette, Hitzig, Knobel, Umbreit, Ewald, and others, both perfects by the present, especially as it could not, in any sense, be said of Sennacherib that he had already dried up all the rivers of Egypt. Sennacherib boasts not so much of what he has done as of what he can do; he represents himself as almighty. Yet it is true that "in each of the two verses, the second clause gives the consequence of the first, that is to say, the second clause tells, in each case, what the Assyrian proposes to do after he has accomplished what is mentioned in the first clause" (Keil). Drechsler's objection that this makes the Assyrian appear as an "empty boaster," who, "in ridiculous hyperboles piles up a catalogue of things which he boastfully intends to do," has no weight, for it is not the prophet's intention to mention all the great things which the Assyrian has already done, but to show what he imagines that he can do. He does not mean to make him enumerate the great deeds which he has accomplished, but he means to describe his disposition, the thoughts of his heart.—This answers the question whether the words which are here put into the mouth of Sennacherib are to be taken literally (historically) or figuratively. Many of the old commentators thought that they were literal and historical. Drechsler adopts this view. He says: "The greater the deeds were which he boasted of, the more necessary it was, if he did not wish to produce an entirely contrary effect from the one which the words seem to indicate, that there should be earnest facts behind his words, and that they should rest upon incidents which could not be denied, but were notorious." Keil justly objects that there is not the slightest reason to believe that Sennacherib, or any of his predecessors, ever crossed Mt. Lebanon, with all his chariots and military force, and conquered Egypt, or dried up its rivers. Umbreit also says: "We do not see what the cutting down of the cedars and cypresses signifies, under this interpretation." "Nevertheless, the speech, although it is here given in a rhetorical and poetical form, is not mere poetry. The figures used rest upon actual circumstances, and the speech is not exhausted if we simply interpret it to mean: There exists no effectual hindrance to my power, neither heights nor depths, neither mountains with impenetrable forests, nor plains which are barren and waterless, or cut up by rivers. On the contrary, ver. 23 refers directly to Palestine, and ver.

24 to Egypt. Lebanon is the mountain which forms the northern boundary of Palestine. It shuts it in and forms the gateway to it (*cf.* Zach. xi. 1, Coccoius: *Libanon munimentum terræ Canaan versus septentrionem est*). When an enemy has passed over it and occupied it, the whole land lies open before him; it is in his power. Just as the word "gate" is made to cover that to which the gate leads, so Lebanon here stands for the whole country to which it is the key (Isai. xxxiii. 9; xxxv. 2). [There is no instance of this use of language. Lebanon is often spoken of as one of the *glories* of the country; never as standing for, covering, or representing the country. The two instances quoted belong to the former usage. In Isai. xxxiii. 9, Lebanon is mentioned with Sharon and Bashan, the other especial sources of pride to the country, as lying waste. In xxxv. 2, among the details of the future glory which was to be enjoyed, Lebanon is mentioned to say that it shall recover its former grandeur. In neither case does it, in any sense, *stand for* the land of Canaan.—W. G. S.] As in the north Canaan was shut in by Lebanon, so it was enclosed and protected on the south by the waterless desert of Beersheba (Gen. xxi. 14), which is contiguous to the desert *El Tih* (Herodotus iii. 5, Robinson, *Palestine* I., 300). Beyond are the rivers, the arms of the Nile which protect Egypt. These two great hindrances, the mountain on the north, and the desert and then the rivers on the south, the haughty king declares to be insignificant. He can pass over Lebanon even with his chariots, and can dry up the rivers of Egypt with the soles of his feet. But all this even does not exhaust the meaning of this speech. If, namely, ver. 23 only meant to say: The highest mountain in the country is no hindrance for me, then we could not see what was the significance of the following words: **And I will hew down its loftiest cedars and its choicest cypresses.** It cannot refer to any actual cutting down of these trees, since Sennacherib had no reason for devastating Lebanon, or for wanting cedar or cypress wood. Moreover the cedars and cypresses were no particular hindrance to him. We have here another instance of the figure which occurs in Jerem. xxii. 6, 7, 23; Ezek. xvii. 3, only somewhat further elaborated. Lebanon is the kingdom of Judah, its summit is Jerusalem, the city of David and Mount Zion. Its cedars and cypresses are its princes and mighty men, whom Sennacherib thinks that he can "hew down." Its "resting-place" and "forest-grove" are the king's palace on Mount Zion; there he intends to make his encampment (Isai. x. 29. See Delitzsch on Isai. xxxvii. 24). יַעַר כַּרְמִלּוֹ is not a designation for the "places on Mount Lebanon which were thickly grown with herbs" (Fürst), but for the forest on its summit, which consisted of beautiful trees forming an orchard-like grove, see Isai. xxix. 17. "The predicate 'garden' is applied to this forest because it consists of choice trees" (Drechsler). [It rather resembles a carefully kept grove or orchard than an untrained forest.—W. G. S.] Both expressions are decisive in favor of the figurative acceptation of the passage, for we cannot suppose that there was a real "inn," or "resting-place," on the summit of Lebanon (Clericus, Vitringa, Rosenmüller); in the first place, because there is no mention of any such thing, and again, because, if there had been, it would not have been of any importance to Sennacherib. Moreover, "Resting-place" [literally "inn"] and "forest-grove" are in apposition, but a forest is not an inn, and can only be called a "resting-place" in so far as it is a shady place fit to rest in, that is, in a figurative sense. There is, however, in both expressions a reference to the "House of the Forest of Lebanon" (1 Kings vii. 2; Isai. xxii. 8), which represented the defensive military force (see 1 Kings vii., *Exeg.* on ver. 2, and *Hist.* § 2), and which resembled a forest on account of its cedar columns. The full sense of ver. 23, therefore, which, because it affected Hezekiah, is more detailed than ver. 24, which refers to Egypt, is this: I am putting an end to the kingdom of Judah with its capital, its citadel, its kings, and its princes, and all its glory.

[The figurative interpretation is adopted by all the commentators of note, but the above special application of the details of the verse to "Mount Zion," the "King's palace," the "House of the Forest of Lebanon," the "Princes and Chief men," &c., &c., suffers from the weakness which is inherent in every symbolical interpretation *which is not directly suggested in the context.* It is evident that the symbolical explanations are forced and far-fetched, and, in the mouth of an Assyrian, inexplicable. Moreover, a careful examination of the other cases where Lebanon is used in a metaphor (Isai. xxxiii. 9; xxxv. 2; xxii. 6, 7, 23; Ezek. xvii. 3; Hab. ii. 17) shows that they differ essentially from this one. The simile is always formally introduced as such, and there is no evidence of any usage of language by which Lebanon was made to stand for the whole country as, for instance, "Jerusalem" or "Mount Zion" were used for the whole nation. The details given in verse 23 form an exact description of the march of an army over Lebanon. Let us suppose for a moment that Sennacherib had actually entered Palestine from the north by passing over the mountain. He then boasts that by or with the whole host of his chariots, usually supposed to be fit only for travelling over a plain, he has even gone up to the top of the mountain; that he there cut down the largest and strongest trees (cypresses and cedars being the principal trees on Lebanon), in order to make a way for his army—these mighty trees, the pride of the mountain, making it difficult for an army to march through and preserve its order, had not availed to hinder him. He had hewn them down and cast them away. He had found a resting-place and encamped his army on the very summit of the mountain, in its choicest and most beautiful forest, which had proved for him a shelter and resting-place, not a hindrance. If we thus suppose that, as a fact, he had accomplished this difficult military feat, it is seen that the details of this boast, which is put into his mouth, fit well into the actual details of such an undertaking. We will not infer that he had accomplished this feat, since no hint of it occurs anywhere, but the accuracy of the details is very remarkable. Ver. 24, on the other hand, is brief, and purely poetical. What are we to understand by parching up rivers with the soles of one's feet? This rather corresponds to the nature of a bold enterprise, as yet unaccomplished, than to the actual details of a feat already performed. The attempt to specify in detail the things referred to by the separate objects in a bold poetic image or reference of this kind is always a failure. It only sketches in bold outline the thoughts, ambitions, and inten

tions of Sennacherib, being based possibly on actual deeds which he had accomplished, and in this form it must be left. It is not a *parable*, but a poetic and boastful statement, in huge outline, of what was in his mind. Whether, as an actual fact, he had led his army over Lebanon or not, he makes use of such a feat as a general specimen of the kind of things he was capable of accomplishing. If he had not done something of that kind, Drechsler's objection would have great force, that his boast would be ridiculous. That "Lebanon" figures in this speech may be merely owing to the fact that a Jewish prophet puts it into the mouth of the Assyrian, and Sennacherib may somewhere else have passed with his army over a mountain which was supposed to be impassable. In short, then, it is a boast, founded probably on some feat which the Assyrians had accomplished, calling up in vivid figures their power to overcome hindrances supposed to be insurmountable, and setting forth the arrogance which these successes had inspired in them, which led them to think that *no* obstacles could stay them. Having passed mountains, they were ready to believe that they could parch up rivers. Then follows the rebuke that they had had all these successes only because they were foreordained instruments of God's Providence, but that, when they had reached the limit of what he intended them to do, they could go no farther, and moreover that their arrogance in ascribing their success to their own power would call for punishment from Him.—W. G. S.]

In regard to the detailed exegesis we have yet to notice בְּרֶכֶב רִכְבִּי , literally: "With chariot of my chariots," *i. e.*, with my numberless chariots (*cf.* Nahum iii. 17, גּוֹב גּוֹבָי). According to Keil this is "more original;" according to Knobel it is "more choice, more difficult, and therefore preferable" to בְּרֹב רִכְבִּי, "with the multitude of my chariots," which we find in Isai. xxxvii. 24, and which the keri, many codices, and all the ancient versions have in this place. We agree with Thenius in preferring the latter reading as the more natural one. The sense is the same in either case. Ewald translates: "By the simple march of my chariots," but the point of importance here is not the uninterrupted onward march, but that chariots, which generally are only fit for level ground, are said to have passed over the highest mountains. **Its summit,** (יַרְכְּתֵי, *cf.* Jer. vi. 22, where the Sept. has ἀπ' ἐσχάτου), literally, its outmost limit or boundary, Vulg. *summitas.* מָלוֹן is decidedly to be preferred to מָרוֹם, *height* (Isai. xxxvii. 24), for it is far more significant, and the idea of "height" is already expressed in ירכתי.—**I dig and drink,** ver. 24. Ver. 23 refers to the subjugation of Palestine; ver. 24 to that of Egypt. The digging does not refer to "the redigging of the wells and cisterns which had been filled up by the fleeing enemy" (Thenius), but to the work which is necessary to find water for a great army in a district where it is wanting. "Strange water" is "water which is not sprung from the soil of this nation" (Drechsler), not, water which belongs to others (Clericus: *in alieno solo, quasi in meo, fodiam puteos*). זָר is used as in Isai. xvii. 10. The word is wanting in the text of the parallel passage of Isaiah, but it is very forcible. [This interpretation is not clear. It must mean either that Sennacherib's army carried with it water from Assyria, which is not conceivable unless possibly for the king alone, or else, taking the verb as a distinct preterite, that he had drunk the waters of other nations than Judah, viz., of Assyria, and hence his strength. This latter hypothesis would not chime well with the next clause and is not acceptable. Clericus' interpretation is better. The Assyrian boasts that he comes into foreign nations and digs for and drinks the water of their soil—makes use of their resources.—W. G. S.] On the other hand, where there is a superabundance of water, as in Egypt, where the rivers assure the inhabitants an abundant supply, and, at the same time, form barriers to an invader (Nile and its arms, see Winer, *R.-W.-B.*, I. *s.* 25), there he parches it up. **With the sole of my foot,** a strong hyperbole. It does not mean "under the footsteps of my countless army" (Knobel). [It seems to be a purely imaginative and poetic idea, with which no literal, corresponding, fact can be associated. It could only be applied to a deity, and then only by a poetic image, if the river should disappear by some extraordinary interposition. The king, in his self-assumption, asserts that he will, by some similar god-like power, which is not probably defined as to its mode of operation, even in his own mind, dispose of this hindrance when he meets it.—W. G. S.] מָצוֹר is the poetic name for Egypt. [מָצוֹר, "the 'land of distress' (*Angstland*), is a poetic metamorphosis of the Hebrew name of Egypt," מִצְרַיִם, "*cf.* chap. xix. 6; Micah vii. 12" (Ewald).] יְאֹרִים are the arms and canals of the Nile; Isai. xix. 6 compared with vii. 18; Ezek. xxix. 3; xxx. 12; Micah vii. 12. In like manner Claudian (*De Bello Goth.*, V. 526) represents Alarich as boasting: *Cum cesserit omnis Obsequiis natura meis? subsidere nostris. Sub pedibus montes, arescere vidimus amnes.* Drechsler thinks that "the historical acceptation of ver. 24 cannot be refuted," but the notion of drying up the Nile with the soles of the feet is certainly figurative. [Ver. 24 certainly cannot be understood literally or historically, see above.] The Nile and its branches are to Egypt what the Lebanon and its cedars were to Palestine, viz., the fortification and protection of the country. Sennacherib exalts himself above both as if he were almighty: Where there is no water, there I know how to bring it out of the earth, and where a mass of water lies in my way, I can dry it up.

Ver. 25. **Hast thou not heard?** Jehovah now answers Sennacherib's insolent and arrogant boast (ver. 23 and 24) by a question, the form of which assumes that he must give an affirmative reply, as the most lively and sharpest form of rebuke (see the questions in Job xxxviii.): Thou speakest as if the greatness of thy might were *thy* work, and all which thou hast done an achievement of *thy* power. Know that *I* planned and ordained it thus of old, and that thou hast only executed *my* decrees, and been an instrument in *my* hand, *cf.* Isai. vii. 20; x. 5; vi. 12 *sq.* The old commentators took "hear" in a literal sense as referring to the wonderful deeds of God in delivering His people out of Egypt and bringing them to

Canaan, which, they think, were well known to Sennacherib; but the following אֹתָהּ, *this*, shows that that only is meant which had been accomplished by the Assyrians. Hence others have imagined that there was a reference to prophetic oracles like Isai. vii. 20 *sq.* which had come to the ears of Sennacherib (*cf.* Jerem. xl. 1–15), but we may be sure that the prophet did not, in his oracle against the enemy, refer back to that declaration, which was pronounced against Israel. Still less can we agree with Thenius that it refers to an inner hearing of the soul or conscience, or indeed to "Assyrian oracles which were consulted before undertaking the expedition." The question has rather this simple sense: If thou hast never heard it, then hear it now, and know that I planned and determined (literally, fashioned) it so (Isai. xxii. 11). Vitringa: *Eventum hunc in omni sua περιστάσει præformasse in consilio meæ providentiæ.* מֵרָחוֹק is used here of *time*, as in Isai. xxii. 11; מִימֵי קֶדֶם as in Isai. xxiii. 7; Micah vii. 20, "from ancient days." וּתְהִי is generally translated: "That thou mayest be for the destruction." Keil and Drechsler: "That there may be fortified cities for destruction," as in the formula הָיָה לְבָעֵר (Isai. v. 5; vi. 13; xliv. 15), *i. e.*, that strong cities may be to be destroyed. [Bähr, in his translation of the text, follows the latter. The former is strictly grammatical and less constrained: Thou art to destroy, *i. e.*, this is thy destiny, thou art an instrument for this work.—W. G. S.]—Ver. 26 is closely connected with ver. 25. That the inhabitants fell down so powerless (literally: were short of hand, *i. e.*, powerless, Numb. xi. 23; Isai. l. 2), and made no resistance, was not the work of the Assyrians, but was foreordained by God. The same images are used for sudden decay of power in Ps. xxxvii. 2; Isai. xl. 6. This series of metaphors forms a climax. The **grass upon the roof** is that which fades more quickly than that of the field, because it lacks soil (Ps. cxxix. 6). The **corn blasted in the germ** is the corn which is blighted and withers away before the blade springs, so that at the very outset it has the germ of decay in itself. שְׁדֵפָה is much to be preferred to the less definite and more general שְׁדֵמָה, *ground* (Isai. xxxvii. 27).—**Resting in peace, going out, and coming in** (ver. 27) cover all the activity of a man (Ps. cxxi. 8; Deut. xxviii. 6; Ps. cxxxix. 2). [See note 12 under *Grammatical.*]—**Violent hate,** Vitringa: *Commotio furibunda, quæ ex ira nascitur superbiæ mixta* (Isai. xxviii. 21). **Arrogance,** which comes from the feeling of security, Amos vi. 1; Ps. cxxiii. 4. The first figure in ver. 28 is taken from the taming of wild animals, the second from the controlling of restive horses (Ezek. xix. 4; xxix. 4; Isai. xxx. 28; Ps. xxxii. 9). There are two sculptures at Khorsabad which represent "a victorious king leading captives, who stand before him, by a rope and a ring fastened in their lips" (Thenius). *Dignum superbo supplicium, ut qui se supra hominem esse putat, ad morem bruti abjiciatur* (Sanctius). **By the way by which thou camest,** *i. e.*, with this purpose unaccomplished, without having reached thine object.

Ver. 29. **And this be the sign to thee.** With these words now, the prophet turns to Hezekiah. *Tibi autem, Ezechia, hoc erit signum* (Vulg.). אוֹת means in general, as Delitsch accurately observes (note on Isai. vii. 11), "a thing, an event, or an action, which is intended to serve as a pledge or proof of the devine certainty of another. Sometimes it is a miracle, openly performed, striking the senses (Gen. iv. 8 *sq.*), sometimes it is a permanent symbol of what is to come (Isai. viii. 18; xx. 3), sometimes it consists in a prophecy of future events, which, whether they are natural or miraculous, are not to be foreseen by human wisdom, and therefore, when they occur, either reflect backwards in proof of their own divine origin (Exod. iii. 12), or furnish evidence of the divine certainty of others yet to come (Isai. xxxvii. 30; Jerem. xliv. 29 *sq.*)." In the case before us the sign is no miracle (מוֹפֵת, 1 Kings xiii. 3), but a natural event which serves to give assurance of the truth of a prophecy (Keil). This sign is taken from agriculture, "since this was, at that time, the most important interest of the people, and their attention might be expected for a sign which took this form" (Knobel). In the following declaration אָכוֹל stands first with emphasis, an infinitive absolute, which "can stand concisely and emphatically for any tense or person of the verb which the context demands" (Gesenius, *Gramm.* § 131, 4 b.). It is often understood here as an imperfect: One shall eat, *i. e.*, people shall eat, or, ye shall eat (Drechsler, Keil, and others); or, as a present; One eats, *i. e.* Ye are eating (Umbreit, Delitsch, and others), and הַשָּׁנָה is then translated, "this current year." But we have here three years mentioned, of which the third is the first, which shall be a complete harvest-year, viz., on account of the withdrawal of the Assyrians, who shall leave the land which they have occupied once more free. Ver. 35 shows distinctly that the Assyrian army perished before the third year after the prophet's declaration, and Sennacherib's retreat therefore followed before the third year. Observe especially, in ver. 35, the words: "*that night.*" (See notes below on these words.) Sennacherib, when he heard of Tirhaka's advance, had withdrawn from Lachish to Libnah. From there he once more threateningly demanded the surrender of Jerusalem (vers. 8–10). How can we now understand that, from this point on, he remained in Palestine yet three years, without really laying siege to the city which he had so earnestly threatened? We are, therefore, compelled to take this inf. abs. in the sense of a perfect: *edistis* (Maurer, Gesenius, Thenius. *Cf.* Ewald, *Lehrb.* § 240, a.; 302, c.). [Sixth Ed. In the seventh Ed. the subject is otherwise treated, and the inf. abs. is not represented as *standing for* any finite form, but as a pure and indefinite expression of the verbal notion, without giving it limitations of time or person. This is unquestionably correct. See § 328, b.—W. G. S.] הַשָּׁנָה, in contrast with "the second" and "the third" year, cannot, of course, refer to anything else than the year which precedes them, that is, the first one. In this first year the Assyrians had invaded the country, and had prevented the people from raising crops. In the second year they were still there, and the crops failed because they had devastated the country. In the third

year they retired, and therefore the land could be cultivated. In the first year they lived upon סָפִיחַ, *i. e.*, upon that which grew up from the leavings of the former crop, Levit. xxv. 5, 11. Vitringa: *Ex etymo valet accessorium, quod sponte nascitur post sementem;* a sort of after-growth from fruit of the previous crop which was accidentally dropped in gathering in the harvest. In the second year they lived upon סָחִישׁ, *i. e.*, "offshoots of the roots, which spring up in the second year after the planting" (Fürst); αὐτοφυή (Aquila, Theodoret). "In the fertile parts of Palestine, especially in the plain of Jezreel, on the highlands of Galilee, and elsewhere, the grains and cereals propagate themselves in abundance by the ripe ears whose super-abundance no one uses (*cf.* Schubert, *Reise*, III. *s.* 115, 166. Ritter, *Erdkunde* XVI. *s.* 283, 482, 693). Strabo (11. p. 502) makes a similar statement in regard to Albania, that the field which has been once sown bears, in many places, a double harvest, sometimes even three, the first one fiftyfold" (Keil on Levit. xxv. 6). **And the third year sow, and reap, and plant vineyards, and eat their fruits.** "The long series of imperatives makes a strong impression, especially in contrast with the indifference of the infin. absol. in the first hemistich" (Drechsler). This interpretation of the oracle is the only one which gives just force to אוֹת. The sign is not something which does not yet exist but is to come; it is something visible, physical, and present, which announces and gives a pledge of something invisible and future. The sense, therefore, is not: Ye shall from this time on, in the present year, eat the chance product of the uncultivated fields, and in the next, the fruit of the offshoots from the roots of the plants, and then, in the third, sow and reap—for that would not be a "sign";—but the sense is: So certainly as ye have lived one year on the chance produce, and one year on after-growth, just so certainly shall ye sow and reap in the third year; that is to say: the land will be delivered from the Assyrians, and free for you to cultivate (*cf.* Hos. vi. 2). [Clearly this, when it should come to pass, would not be any "sign" that something, viz., the retreat of the Assyrians, should *yet* come to pass. In the nature of things the Assyrians must depart *before* the Jews would venture into the fields. We might as well say: The clouds shall be dispelled, and the sign of it shall be that the sun shall shine. The interpretation of the passage given above is correct, but the "sign" cannot be understood to mean that, when this thing should come to pass according to the prophecy, it should be a pledge that another thing, which the prophet had also foretold, should yet come to pass. It can only mean that when the Jews should once more find themselves at work in the fields, where they had not been for two years, this should be a sign, proof, and reminder to them that they had been delivered, by divine interposition, from a great national calamity. It is a sign which is of the nature of a *symptom*, or *index*.—W. G. S.] The interpretation which is given by many of the old expositors admits, on account of ver. 35, that the retreat of Sennacherib took place in the year in which the prophet delivered this oracle, but it takes the infinitive אָכוֹל as an imperative on account of the following imperatives, and then assumes that the "first" year, the one in which Sennacherib retreated, was a Sabbath-year, in which, under any circumstances, according to the Mosaic law, the people neither sowed nor reaped, but lived on the second, spontaneous growth (Levit. xxv. 5), and that a Jubilee-year followed next after this, in which likewise there was no sowing or reaping (Levit. xxv. 11), so that two harvests in succession were passed over. But the simple fact that אָכוֹל is an infinitive forbids us to take it as an imperative, and, even if we assume that the Sabbath-years and Jubilee-years were, at that time, regularly observed, yet there is no hint in Levit. xxv. that the Jubilee-year followed immediately after a Sabbath-year. But still farther, who can prove, since every hint of it is wanting in the text, that just at that time a Sabbath-year and a Jubilee-year followed successively? Others have, therefore, given up the Jubilee-year and have supposed that only the spontaneous product of the fields was eaten in the first year, because the country had been devastated by the Assyrians, but that the second year was a Sabbath-year. Yet even this cannot be accepted, for the intent of the "sign" is not that they, trusting in Jehovah, should for still another year have food to eat, although they did not sow or reap, but that Sennacherib should retreat, the land should be delivered from him, and that too at once, not after three years. We cannot, therefore, agree with Ewald (*Proph. des Alt. Bundes*, I. *s.* 299 *sq.*), whom Umbreit follows, when he says: "As, after the year in which, according to the Law, the ground lay fallow, yet another year was to be spent without raising crops, in order to restore the land to its original condition, a figure which evidently (?) floated before the mind of the prophet here, so he apprehended (?) that, in this far more important case, still a second year must pass without field-labor, in which they must eat the spontaneous product of the ground, until, after the extirpation of all that was unsound and corrupt in the State, a small company of purified men should commence, in the third year, a new and prosperous existence, and the messianic time should begin, taking its rise in Zion." There is no reference to the Sabbath, or Jubilee, year in the entire passage, and no such reference can ever be established from the mere fact that סָפִיחַ occurs also in Levit. xxv. 5 and 11. Neither can we agree that Drechsler's explanation (*s.* 184) is "very simple." According to him there was left in Judah at that time only a greatly diminished population, which could not at once undertake the cultivation of the fields, so that it was not until after three years that the regular cultivation of the soil was reëstablished. If there was only "a small remnant" of the population remaining, then they did not require much. They could cultivate enough soil to produce what they needed, and did not need to live on סָפִיחַ, much less on סָחִישׁ. These interpretations are all more or less forced, and they all fall to the ground as soon as we no longer insist upon taking the infin. absol. אָכוֹל as an imperfect or an imperative.

Ver. 30. **And the remnant of the house of Judah that is left.** Starting now from the refer-

ence to the growth of the crops, the prophet goes on to matters of higher importance, and takes up that which is the chief theme of his prophecies in all their diverse phases (Schmieder), viz., that God, although he inflicts fierce judgments upon His people for their apostasy, nevertheless will not allow them to perish utterly, but will preserve a remnant which has escaped or been delivered, "a holy seed," and that from the midst of this the Messiah shall at last arise (Isai. vii. 3; x. 20; iv. 2; vi. 13; *cf.* 1 Kings xix. 18). The repeated expressions פְּלֵיטָה, נִשְׁאָרָה, and שְׁאֵרִית, in vers. 30 and 31, refer to this idea. The Assyrian invasion, like that of Ephraim and Syria (Isai. vii; 2 Kings xvi. 5), was a divine judgment upon Judah, but the prophet says that the nation shall not perish under it. A remnant (שְׁאֵרִית, ver. 31, refers back to הַשְּׁאֵרִית in Hezekiah's prayer, ver. 4) shall still remain, and *it shall add roots* (יָסְפָה), that is, it shall go on to develop new roots, and shall win firmer hold (Thenius); *cf.* Isai. xi. 11; xxvii. 6.—**For, from Jerusalem,** &c., ver. 31, *i. e.*, it is the determination of God, adopted of old, that from Jerusalem, which now is so much distressed and apparently lost, salvation and redemption shall go forth (Isai. ii. 3). Jerusalem and Mt. Zion form the centre of the theocracy, or kingdom of God. "The Assyrian chastisement will, therefore, be a purification of the nation. It will not result in its destruction. That judgment was, therefore, a prototype of all the others which befell the kingdom of God in later times, out of which the election of grace is developed (Rom. xi. 5) in more and more glorious form (Von Gerlach). The only ground for what is said in vers. 29 to 31 is the **zeal of Jehovah,** *i. e.*, His zealous and faithful love to His people (Zach. i. 14). The same concluding words follow the oracle, Isai. ix. 1–6, and they show that the passage before us is also, at least indirectly, messianic.—**Therefore, thus saith the Eternal.** לָכֵן gathers up the substance of all which precedes. The first of the four members of the verse, **He shall not come,** contains the principal idea. The three others "are nothing but a development of this one, intended to surround it here, at the close, with all possible emphasis" (Drechsler). At the same time they form a climax: So far from coming into the city, he shall not even discharge his missiles against it, or form an assault against it, or even build up a wall to besiege it. קִדֵּם in the piel means *to advance.* "The reference is to an assault with shields held out in front" (Thenius). *Cf.* Ps. xviii. 5, 18; lix. 10. Instead of יָבֹא בָהּ, in ver. 33, we find in Isai. xxxvii. 34: בָּא בָהּ, which is unquestionably the correct reading. All the old translations here present the perfect. The other reading seems to have arisen from the second יָבֹא. That which has been already said in vers. 28 and 32 is here repeated in order to emphasize the promise.—**For mine own sake,** "as Hezekiah had prayed, ver. 20, and **for the sake of David, my servant,** *i. e.*, for the sake of the promise given to David, 2 Sam. vii." (Drechsler), *cf.* 1 Kings xi. 13; xv. 4.

Ver. 35. **And it came to pass that night.** According to Thenius, vers. 35–37 are "evidently borrowed from a different source from that of xviii. 13–xix. 34, and xx. 1–19." In the original document of vers. 35–37 he thinks that the words: "It came to pass in that night," referred to something which had been narrated immediately before and which is not mentioned here. Delitsch also believes that there is a gap between vers. 34 and 35, for, according to ver. 29, there was to be yet a full year of distress between the prophecy and the fulfilment, during which agriculture would be neglected." This consideration loses its force under our interpretation of ver. 29. The narrator undoubtedly means to say in vers. 35–37 that the prophecy which reaches its climax in vers. 32–34, was fulfilled at once, and not after the lapse of years. This point was of especial importance to him, and we have no reason to interpret ver. 35–37 according to ver. 29; rather, on the contrary, ver. 29 according to vers. 35–37. Further, when we consider that both narratives [the one here and that in Isaiah] were constructed independently of one another from the same source (see the *Prelim. Remarks*), and that in both, vers. 35–37 follow immediately upon ver. 34, we must infer that the same was the case also in their common source. There is, therefore, no room to assume the existence of another source in which that was supplied which is here supposed to be left out.—The words: וַיְהִי בַּלַּיְלָה הַהוּא are generally understood in the sense of *ea ipsa nocte*, *i. e.*, in the night following the day on which Isaiah foretold the retreat of the Assyrians. On the contrary Delitsch thinks that "it can only mean (if, indeed, it is not a mere careless interpolation), *illa nocte*, referring to ver. 32 *sq.*, (*i. e.*, the night in which the Assyrians sat down to besiege Jerusalem)." The Rabbis (*Guemara Sanhedr.* iii. 26), and Josephus (κατὰ τὴν πρώτην τῆς πολιορκίας νύκτα) thus understood it. But the text does not anywhere say or imply that Sennacherib had advanced with his whole army from Libnah to Jerusalem, and that he stood before it ready to besiege it. [This is true, but does not meet Delitsch's hypothesis, which is that a year is to elapse before the Assyrian would commence the formal siege of Jerusalem, and that "that night" refers to the first night of this siege. Such an hypothesis removes the difficulty, but does not seem to be a natural interpretation of the words.—W. G. S.] The Vulg. translates: *Factum est igitur, in nocte illa venit angelus.* Menochius takes this to be emphatic for: *in celebri illa nocte*, viz., in the one in which the destruction of the Assyrian army took place. It is very noticeable that the words in question are wanting in the narrative in Isaiah, although that account is in other respects here identical with the one in Kings, and that ver. 36 there begins with וַיֵּצֵא. Also the Sept. version of the verse before us omits הַהוּא and reads simply: καὶ ἐγένετο νυκτός. Now, although the statement is no thoughtless interpolation, and still less, as Knobel thinks, "manufactured" out of Isai. xvii. 14, yet it would never have been passed over in Isaiah's narrative, if it had been essential, or if the chief emphasis lay upon it. The interpretation *ea ipsa nocte* does not, therefore, seem to be absolutely necessary. The main point is, what is common to both narratives, that there was no delay in the fulfilment of the prophecy. It was

not years—for instance, three years—before it was fulfilled.—**The angel of the Lord** "is the same one who, as הַמַּשְׁחִית, smote the first-born in Egypt (Ex. xii. 29 compared with vers. 12 and 13), and who inflicted the pestilence after the census under David (2 Sam. xxiv. 15 *sq.*). The latter passage suggests that the slaughter of the Assyrians was accomplished by a pestilence" (Keil). Josephus (*Antiq.* x. 1, 5,) declares outright: *τοῦ θεοῦ λοιμικὴν ἐνσκήψαντος αὐτοῦ τῷ στρατῷ νόσον.* The interpretations which assume that there was a battle with Tirhaka, or an earthquake with lightning, or a poisonous simoom, are all untenable. The greatly abbreviated account in Chronicles states, instead of giving the definite number of the slain (185,000), that the angel "cut off all the mighty men of valor and the leaders and captains in the camp of the king of Assyria" (2 Chron. xxxii. 21). This does not mean that "only" those persons were killed (Thenius), but that even these, the real supporters and the flower of the Assyrian power, fell. **In the camp.** We are not told where this was at that time. It is most natural to suppose that it was where Rab-shakeh found it on his return, viz., before Libnah (ver. 8), whither Sennacherib had retreated from Lachish. It was not, therefore, as has been said, before Jerusalem; neither was it in "the pestilential country of Egypt" (Thenius), for Sennacherib sent the letter to Hezekiah, not from there, but from Libnah (vers. 8–10).—**And when they arose early in the morning, &c.** The word בַּבֹּקֶר, which occurs also in Isai. xxxvii. 36, presupposes the previous reference to "that night," which is not there mentioned. Those who were spared, whose number cannot have been large, arose as usual early in the morning and found corpses everywhere. "If מֵתִים is regarded as an attribute it is very flat and superfluous, but as an apposition it gives emphasis" (Drechsler). It was a cause of great trouble to the old expositors that Sennacherib was not among the slain. It is not necessary to suppose that he chanced just then to be outside the camp. Death of a still harder kind was destined to befall him (see verse 7), but the arrogant man was first to suffer the humiliation that his entire force in which he trusted was to be destroyed, and he was to march home in shame and disgrace (ver. 21). "The heaping up of the verbs: **he departed, and went, and returned,** expresses the hastiness of his retreat" (Keil). This retreat cannot, therefore, have been delayed until the third year after Isaiah's prophecy, any more than the pestilence which occasioned it. Sennacherib **dwelt in Nineveh.** "The object of these words is to emphasize the fact that he did not, from this time forward, undertake any assault upon Judah" (Drechsler). On Nineveh, the capital and residence of the kings of Assyria, see Winer, *R.-W.-B.* II. *s*, 158 *sq.* *Nisroch* is probably the name of the chief Assyrian divinity, which is represented on the Assyrian monuments in human form with double wings and an eagle's head. See Keil on the place and Müller in Herzog's *Realencyc.* X. *s.* 383. [The rank of Nisroch in the pantheon is not yet determined. He was also called Shalman. He was "king of fluids." He "presided over the course of human destiny." Hence marriages were placed under his care (Lenormant).] *Adrammelech* is the name of a divinity. [See the bracketed note on chap. xvii. 31.] It was a very wide-spread custom that princes bore the names of divinities (Gesenius on Isai. vii. 6). *Sharezer* is probably also the name of a divinity. It is said to mean "Prince of Fire." [His full name was Asshur-sarossor = "Asshur protects the king."] The murder of Sennacherib by his sons is mentioned in Tobias i. 21, and also by Berosus, who, however, only mentions one son (Euseb. *Chron. Armen.* i. p. 43). The land of Ararat is, according to Jerome on Isai. xxxvii.: *Regio in Armenia campestris per quam Araxes fluit.* It forms, according to Moses of Chorene, the middle portion of the Armenian high land. *Esar-haddon,* Ezra iv. 2, called by Josephus Ἀσσαραχόδδας, is mentioned by Berosus also as the successor of Sennacherib. The questions whether he ruled during his father's life-time as viceroy of Babylon, and whether Nergilus reigned before him, do not here demand our attention. See Niebuhr, *Geschichte Assyr. s.* 361. It is not by any means free from doubt that Sennacherib lived nine years after his retreat before his assassination, as the Assyrian inscriptions are asserted to show. "Accordingly, when Hitzig declares that the mention of Sennacherib's assassination bears witness against Isaiah's authorship of this historical passage, he has at least no ground in the chronology for this assertion, for it is more than possible, it is very probable, that Isaiah lived into the reign of Manasseh" (Delitsch). [See the *Supplem. Note* at the end of this section.]

APPENDIX.—It remains still to consider the oft-debated question, *whether and when the expedition of Sennacherib against Egypt took place.* It is certain according to ver. 24 that Sennacherib had the intention of marching against Egypt. It is not, however, asserted, in the biblical documents at least, that he ever carried out this intention. On the contrary, Herodotus gives (II. 141) the account which he received from the Egyptian priests, that Sennacherib advanced against Egypt as far as Pelusium, in the days of the Tanitic king Sethon, a priest of Vulcan. (Pelusium is the סִין of Ezek. xxx. 15. "It lay at the mouth of the eastern branch of the Nile, twenty stadia from the Mediterranean, in the midst of marshes and morasses. Partly on account of this position and partly on account of its strong walls, it was the key to Egypt, of which every invading army which came from the East must seek to get possession. All the conquerors who invaded Egypt from this side stopped at Pelusium and besieged it." Winer, *R.-W.-B.* II. *s.* 469.) They added that, at the prayer of this priest to the God for deliverance out of danger, field-mice (*μῦς ἀρουραίους*) came by night and gnawed the quivers, the bows, and the straps of the shields, so that the army whose weapons had thus been made useless, was obliged to flee, and many fell; and that, on this account, there was, in the temple of Vulcan, a stone image of this priest-king, having in the hand a mouse, and bearing the inscription: *ἐς ἐμέ τις ὁρέων εὐσεβὴς ἔστω.* Josephus (Antiq. x. 1, 1–5), referring expressly to Herodotus, narrates that Sennacherib undertook an expedition against Egypt and Ethiopia, but that *διαμαρτὼν τῆς ἐπὶ τοὺς Αἰγυπτίους ἐπιβουλῆς*, he returned leaving his object unaccomplished, because the siege of Pelusium had cost him a great deal of time, and because he had heard that the king of Ethiopia was ad-

vancing with a very strong army to the relief of the Egyptians. Furthermore, Josephus adds that the Chaldean historian Berosus also states that Sennacherib πάσῃ ἐπεστρατεύσατο τῇ Ἀσίᾳ καὶ τῇ Αἰγύπτῳ. It can hardly be doubted, therefore, that though the Assyrian army did not dry up the rivers of Egypt (ver. 24), yet it advanced to the frontier. But now we come to the far more difficult question, at what point of time did this take place? The least probable reply is that it fell between vers. 34 and 35 (Sanctius, Knobel), and that the historian gives no account of it after ver. 34, because it did not affect Judah, but simply mentions the destruction of the army in vers. 35 and 36 without mentioning whether it took place in Judah or in Egypt. But it is incredible that Sennacherib, for whom it was of the utmost importance (chap. xviii. 17 *sq.*; xix. 9, *sq.*) to get possession of Jerusalem, should have given up the effort to capture it without putting any of his threats into execution, and should have marched on against Egypt, leaving in his rear this city which was favorably disposed towards his enemies (chap. xviii. 21). His backward movement from Lachish to Libnah (ver. 8) shows that he was no longer pursuing his advance against Egypt. Ewald (*Gesch. Isr.* III. *s.* 630 *sq.*) proposes another hypothesis. He sets the expedition against Egypt *before* all which is narrated from xviii. 13 on. He suggests that Sennacherib marched into Egypt, by the ordinary way, by Pelusium; that he was there arrested and turned back by some extraordinary calamity to which Herodotus' story refers; that he then fell upon Judah with a greatly superior power, and that at this point in the course of events xviii. 13–xix. 37 comes in. But this hypothesis also is untenable, for, according to it, עלה in chap. xviii. 13 must refer to a march of Sennacherib "from South to North," from Egypt towards Judah; but it cannot have any different meaning in ver. 13 from what it has in ver. 9, and there it is used of a march from Assyria to Judah, that is, from North to South. It is used in the same way in chap. xvi. 7 in regard to Tiglath Pileser's expedition, and in chap. xvii. 3 and 5 in regard to Shalmaneser's. Moreover, it would be very astonishing, if the biblical narrative did not mention the march against Egypt with a single word, but only mentioned the retreat from there; for Sennacherib must have gone through Judah in order to reach Egypt, and Judah was hostile to him and friendly to Egypt. If, however, ver. 13 is to be understood as referring to the advance of the army, then vers. 14–16 must refer to the same and not to the retreat. Finally, Josephus proposes a third hypothesis. According to him, Sennacherib devastated Judah, but on the receipt of gifts from Hezekiah, withdrew, and advanced with his whole army against Egypt. Contrary to his agreement, under which the tribute was paid, he left Rab-shakeh and Tartan behind (κατέλιβε) that they might destroy Jerusalem. When, however, he found, after a long siege, that he could not take Pelusium, and when he heard of Tirhakah's advance, he suddenly decided to return to Assyria; ὑποστρέψας δ' ὁ Σεναχήριβος ἀπὸ τοῦ τῶν Αἰγυπτίων πολέμου εἰς τὰ Ἱεροσόλυμα κατέλαβεν ἐκεῖ τὴν ὑπὸ τῷ στρατηγῷ Ῥαψάκῃ δύναμιν· τοῦ Θεοῦ λοιμικὴν ἐνσκήψαντος αὐτοῦ τῷ στρατῷ νόσον, κατὰ τὴν πρώτην τῆς πολιορκίας νύκτα, διαφθείρονται μυριάδες ὀκτωκαίδεκα καὶ πεντακισχίλιοι . . . . δείσας περὶ τῷ στρατῷ παντὶ φεύγει μετὰ τῆς λοιπῆς δυνάμεως εἰς τὴν αὐτοῦ βασιλείαν εἰς τὴν Νίνου. There is but slight objection to this hypothesis. On the whole it is the most probable of all. Hezekiah became king in the year 727 B.C. In his fourteenth year (chap. xviii. 13) Sennacherib made this expedition, and sought to get possession of all the fortified towns in Judah. This was in the year 714. In 713 he marched against Egypt, leaving Rab-shakeh in Judah. In 712 he was once more before Lachish and Libnah, and, after his overthrow by the pestilence, he retreated to Assyria. This accords with chap. xix. 29, according to our interpretation of it. On the contrary, according to chap. xix. 7–9, Sennacherib appears to have heard of Tirhakah's advance, not when he was before Pelusium, but when he was once more before Libnah. That he boasted as he does in vers. 23 and 24, even after his retreat from Egypt, is not astonishing in the case of such a haughty king. Possibly he had drained off or dried up a few swamps in the neighborhood of Pelusium. There can be no more truth in Herodotus' story which he obtained from the priests than possibly this, that Sennacherib besieged Pelusium, but returned without having taken it. The rest, of course, is purely mythical. A mouse was the hieroglyph for devastation and destruction (Horapoll. *Hierogl.* i. 50); the inhabitants of Troas worshipped mice, ὅτι τὰς νευρὰς τῶν πολεμίων διέτραγον τόξων; also, the symbol of Mars was a mouse (Bähr, *Herodot. Mus.* i. *p.* 641). It may well be that Sennacherib was impelled by some natural occurrence to desist from the siege of Pelusium and to turn back, and this may have occasioned the story about the mice. If there had not been some event of the kind, he certainly would have advanced further than the frontier. The army cannot, however, have been rendered destitute of weapons (γυμνοὶ ὅπλων) at Pelusium, or it could not have carried on war in Judah on its return. According to all this it can hardly be doubted that it is one and the same expedition of Sennacherib which is mentioned by Herodotus and by the Scriptures, nevertheless the further supposition which is commonly adopted, that the event mentioned in ver. 35 is the same one which Herodotus narrates, though under a mythical form (Bähr, *l. c. p.* 881), does not seem to us to be correct. That event took place in Judah, this one before Pelusium, and it is very improbable that the Egyptian priests should have made a myth out of an event which took place in another country, and did not immediately affect them, and should have commemorated it by a statue. We cannot determine definitely what the event was which occurred before Pelusium, but we must assume that it was a very striking and important one which influenced the haughty king to give up his plan and return to Assyria. In like manner, when he stood in Judah once more with his army of 185,000 men, and there assumed such a haughty bearing, some weighty incident must have occurred which determined him to hasten his flight.

[There is no reasonable ground for finding two distinct events in these two accounts, and without reasonable ground we cannot assume that two distinct calamities befell Sennacherib which were of such a character that they were regarded as divine interpositions. Pelusium was on the frontier, and it is not at all remarkable that an event which happened there, or even at Libnah, immediately after

Sennacherib had retreated from Pelusium, should figure in the history of both Judah and Egypt. Neither is it astonishing that the traditional account of the event should wear a mythical color; on the contrary, such events always take on mythical features. The biblical account is more original and direct, and is older than that of Herodotus, but it certainly refers to the same event.—W. G. S.]

However the fact may be in regard to this point, the story of Herodotus, which, as Delitzsch says, "depends upon a hearsay tradition of lower Egypt," and which therefore appears as "a suspicious imitation of the biblical story," cannot be put on the same footing with the scriptural account, much less be used to correct it.

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[Supplementary Note *on the references to contemporaneous history* in chaps. xviii. and xix. (See similar notes on the preceding chapters.) In the note on chap. xvii. we gave a summary of the Assyrian history, so far as it bears upon the history of the Northern Kingdom, especially upon the recolonization of Samaria by Sargon, Sennacherib, and Esarhaddon. This led us to notice some of the conquests of those kings, and so to observe the nationalities of the new population. We have now to go over the same reigns so far as they bear upon the history of Judah. Here also the Assyrian inscriptions offer us invaluable information for enlarging and correcting our knowledge of the biblical history.

It might at first seem strange that the historical books of the Bible contain no mention of Sargon. We find that he was really king of Assyria when Samaria fell; that he subdued a revolt in Samaria a few years later; that he was the king who introduced a large part of the new population into Samaria; that he conducted two very important campaigns in Philistia, in both of which he came into conflict with Egypt, and in one of which he won the battle of Raphia, one of the great battles of Assyrian history. It is impossible that this all should have come to pass without exciting the attention and interest of the inhabitants of Judah. The author of the Book of Kings seems, however, to have so construed his task, that he did not consider himself called upon to notice campaigns of the Assyrians which never actually touched, or directly threatened, Judah. Isaiah (chap. xx.) mentions Sargon and his attack upon Ashdod rather in the way of a chronological date; but his reference shows that this expedition of the Assyrian king (or of his Tartan, commander-in-chief) formed an important event, and fixed a date for the Jews. Sargon was assassinated (it is not known by whom), in August, 704.

Sennacherib, son of Sargon, succeeded. We now possess very full accounts of his reign. These Assyrian statements and the biblical narrative of the conflict of Hezekiah and Sennacherib are in full accord so far as they go; but in the attempt to harmonize the details we meet with some difficulty, not from their inconsistency, but from their defectiveness. Lenormant and Rawlinson do not agree in their accounts of this section of the history. Rawlinson thinks that Sargon made or sent two separate expeditions into Judah; Lenormant thinks that the whole story belongs to one campaign. The chief argument against the theory of two separate campaigns is that only one is mentioned in the inscription, although, according to the usage of the inscriptions, the campaigns are always catalogued in their consecutive order, so that, if there was one against Judah, then one against Babylon, and then another against Judah, we should expect them to be so catalogued. Rawlinson's account makes a very clear and satisfactory narrative (see "*Five Great Monarchies*" II. 431–443 2d Ed. 161–168), but the usage of the inscriptions is so constant that we seem compelled to follow the theory of one campaign.

On the death of Sargon (704), Hezekiah revolted (xviii. 7) together with the kings of Phœnicia, Philistia, Ammon, Moab, and Edom. They had also sympathy and encouragement from Shabatok (Sabacon II., the Sethos of Herodotus, son of Sabacon I., the So of the Bible), king of Egypt. It was not until Sennacherib's third year that he turned his attention to this revolt. An inscription on a cylinder in the British Museum reads thus:

"In my third campaign I marched towards Syria." He swept down through Phœnicia and Philistia, crushing all opposition. "The rulers . . of Ekron" (Lenormant reads Migron, *cf.* Isaia. x. 28) "had betrayed the king, Padi, who was inspired by friendship and zeal for Assyria, and had given him up bound in chains of iron to Hezekiah of Judah." The Egyptians came against Sennacherib and a battle ensued near Eltekon (Jos. xv. 59), in which the Assyrians won a great victory which ranked with that of Raphia in their annals. Sennacherib then took Ekron. He executed vengeance on the anti-Assyrian party. "I brought Padi, their king, out of Jerusalem, and restored him to the throne of his royalty." (This is the point at which the biblical narrative begins. The statement "in the fourteenth year of Hezekiah" (xviii. 13) has thus far proved irreconcilable with the inscriptions. It was the year 700. Rawlinson proposes to read "twenty-seventh" for "fourteenth.") "But Hezekiah, king of Judah, did not submit. There were forty-four walled towns and an infinite number of villages that I fought against, humbling their pride and braving their anger. By means of battles, fire, massacre, and siege operations, I took them. I occupied them. I brought out 200,150 persons, great and small, men and women, horses, asses, mules, camels, oxen, and sheep without number, and carried them off as booty. As for himself I shut him up in Jerusalem, the city of his power, like a bird in its cage. I invested and blockaded the fortresses round about it. Those who came out of the great gate of the city were seized and made prisoners. I separated the cities I had plundered from his country, and gave them to Mitenti, king of Ashdod, to Padi, king of Ekron, to Ishmabaal, king of Gaza.

"Then the fear of my majesty terrified this Hezekiah king of Judah. He sent away the watchmen and guards whom he had assembled for the defence of Jerusalem. He sent messengers to me at Nineveh, the seat of my sovereignty, with 30 talents of gold and 400 (300?) talents of silver, metals, rubies, pearls, great carbuncles, seats covered with skins, thrones ornamented with leather, amber, seal skins, sandal wood, and ebony, the contents of his treasury, as well as his daughters, the women of his palace, his male and female slaves. He sent an ambassador to present this tribute and to make his submission" (Lenormant).

Thus the inscription omits all mention of the disaster which befell the Assyrians in this cam-

paign, and which the Jewish and Egyptian traditions concur in affirming. There is no mention of the siege of Lachish, although that siege is represented on a bas-relief in the British Museum (Lenormant). This want of candor is not very astonishing, but it serves to show us that the account in the inscription lays stress upon the flattering circumstances and slurs over the disasters of the campaign.

Now let us interweave this with the biblical story. Chap. xviii. 13 is a parallel description of Sennacherib's devastations in the open country. The idea of the character of the campaign which we get from this verse is exactly that which the inscription offers in detail. Hezekiah was shut up in Jerusalem, and the enemy ravaged the country and destroyed the small towns at will. Hezekiah sent to sue for peace. He met with certain demands and he sent certain offerings. Yet in ver. 17 we find, when we expect to hear of peace, that an army was sent against him. The only explanation which suggests itself is that the offerings which he sent did not satisfy the Assyrian demand. Probably Sennacherib did not desire to make peace with Judah, but to get possession of Jerusalem, which he dared not leave behind him when he advanced into Egypt. Hezekiah desired to create the impression, by tearing off the decorations of the temple, that his resources were exhausted, though we find that he was able to make a boastful display of his treasures to the Babylonians, a year afterwards. Perhaps he did not send the full amount demanded by the Assyrian, pleading inability, and sending these decorations stripped from the temple as a proof that he had no further treasures. This gave Sennacherib an excuse for persisting in hostility. Rawlinson is led by this difficulty to suppose that Hezekiah paid the full amount demanded, and secured a respite. Three years later (698) Sennacherib came again, besieged Lachish, and sent the three great officers. Then there would be a gap of three years between vers. 16 and 17. With our present information it is impossible to decide definitely between these theories. During the siege of Lachish, whether it was in the campaign referred to in vers. 13–16 or in a later one, Sennacherib sent a detachment of his army to besiege Jerusalem, or rather, if possible, to secure its surrender, for it was of the highest importance for him to finish the reduction of the few strongholds which still held out in Judah and Philistia, so that he might push on against Egypt, before that nation recovered from the blow which he had already inflicted. Hence the parley of the three chief-men on each side. Encouraged by Isaiah, Hezekiah sent a refusal. On the return of the three Assyrians they found that Sennacherib was besieging Libnah, having taken Lachish. (Bähr, in the text of the *Comm.* above, assumes that Sennacherib had suffered a check at Lachish. The only ground for this is the belief that Libnah was north of Lachish, so that going from the latter to the former was a "retreat." The situation of Libnah, however, is so very uncertain, that this assumption rests on a slender support. There is no hint of any disaster to Sennacherib in this campaign until the great one recorded in vers. 35 *sq.* This seems to have interrupted him in the full tide of success.) The success which he had won, and the news that Tirhakah was coming with a new force of Egyptians, made Sennacherib more impatient than ever to finish the conquest of Jerusalem and Libnah. Tirhakah is called king of Ethiopia. The dynasty to which he belonged (the XXVth) was a dynasty of Ethiopians. He was the son of Sabacon II. mentioned above, and grandson of Sabacon I., called in the Bible, So. He seems to have been, at this time, crown-prince (Lenormant). He raised a new army to try to retrieve the disaster of Eltekon. Under these circumstances Sennacherib sent messengers once more to Hezekiah to demand a surrender, warning him to make terms while he could, and not to incur the total destruction which had befallen those who stubbornly resisted the Assyrian power. This was again refused, and soon after the great calamity fell upon the Assyrians which forced them to retreat without coming to blows with Tirhakah. Hence the story of this disaster was preserved both in Jewish and Egyptian annals, each nation ascribing it, as a great national deliverance, to its own God.

It will be seen that this gives a simple and clear explanation of many points which, in the above section of the *Commentary*, remain obscure. The question in regard to Sennacherib's invasion of Egypt is entirely solved, and it is not necessary to show in detail how much of the author's discussion of this question in the above *Appendix*, which was founded upon less perfect information than we now possess, is wide of the mark.

Sennacherib was assassinated in 680 by his sons Adrammelech and Asshursarossor. Another son, Esarhaddon (Asshurakhidin [Asshur has given brothers]), had for a few years been viceroy in Babylon. He returned with hostile intentions against the assassins, who fled into Armenia. Esarhaddon was recognized throughout the Empire. —W. G. S.]

HISTORICAL AND ETHICAL.

1. *King Hezekiah* stands in the front rank of Israelitish kings. The general characterization which precedes the history of his reign gives him a testimonial such as no other king had received up to that time, especially in reference to that which was the main point for the history of redemption, namely, his bearing towards Jehovah and His Law. In the panegyric of the holy fathers, Sir. 44–49, he is placed in the same rank with David and Josiah (Sir. xlix. 5: "All the kings except David, Hezekiah, and Josiah, were guilty"). Not one down to this time had reproduced the model theocratic king, David, as he did. He was, as Ewald justly says (*Gesch. Isr.* III. *s.* 621), "one of the noblest princes who ever adorned David's throne. His reign of 29 years offers an almost unmarred picture of persevering warfare against the most intricate and most difficult circumstances, and of glorious victory. He was very noble, not unwarlike or wanting in courage (2 Kings xx. 20), yet by choice more devoted to the arts of peace" (2 Chron. xxxii. 27–29; Prov. xxv. 1). Von Gerlach, on the contrary, characterizes him often and in general as a "weak and dependent man," but this is in contradiction with his very significant name (see notes on xviii. 1), and still more with the testimony in xviii. 3–8, and cannot, moreover, as will be seen, be brought into accord with the story of the separate acts of his life. "How wonderful it was that the most godless king of Judah had the most excellent son. An Hezekiah follow

ed an Ahaz" (Schlier). The Scriptures give no explanation of this. It is a mere guess when it is hinted that Hezekiah's mother may have influenced him, for we learn nothing more of her than just her name and that of her father. It is also a mere guess that she was "the granddaughter of Zachariah, who, under Uzziah, had such a good influence" (2 Chron. xxvi. 5) (Schlier). It is equally unsatisfactory when Köster says (*die Propheten des A. T. s.* 106): "Hezekiah was the opposite of his unbelieving father Ahaz; the difference is explicable from the fact that they had lived through the destruction of Ephraim, and that that event had had a mighty influence on both the king and the people of Judah." It is certain that Hezekiah did not wait until after the destruction of the kingdom of Israel before he began his reformation of the worship, but that he commenced it immediately after his accession to the throne. The notion of the rabbis, that he had Isaiah for his tutor and guide, as the high-priest Jehoiada was the tutor of Joash, seems more probable, but, not to mention the complete silence of the text in regard to this, it does not follow from Sir. xlviii. 25, and it is very improbable in itself, that Ahaz, who never himself listened to Isaiah, should nevertheless have entrusted him with the education of his son and successor. All these and similar grounds do not suffice to account for such a sudden and complete change of policy on the throne; rather we must recognize here, if anywhere, a dispensation of Divine Providence. Just now, when Ahaz had brought the kingdom to the verge of ruin, when the kingdom of Israel was near its fall, and little Judah alone still represented the Hebrew nationality, this Judah was, according to the decree of God, to take a new start, and to receive a king on the model of David, who should be a true and genuine theocratic king, and bring the true character and destiny of the nation home to the consciences of the people. Hezekiah was for Judah a gift of the Lord. In a true sense he was king by the grace of God of whom the saying held good: "The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord, as the rivers of water; he turneth it whithersoever he will" (Prov. xxi. 1). Therefore his whole life is somewhat typical. It shows more than that of almost any other king that God's ways are pure goodness and truth to those who keep his covenant and his testimony (Ps. xxv. 10).

2. The first thing that Hezekiah did after his accession to the throne was *to abolish the idolatry which Ahaz had introduced*, and to restore *the legal worship of Jehovah*. The history expressly states how far he went in this effort. He not only destroyed the heathen idols, but also put an end to the Jehovah-worship on the high places, which even Solomon, Asa, Jehoshaphat, Joash, Amaziah, and Uzziah had permitted to continue, and had not ventured to assail (1 Kings iii. 2; xv. 12, 14; xxii. 44; 2 Kings xii. 4; xiv. 4; xv. 4, 35). He returned to the original ordinances of the Mosaic Law, which prescribed not only one central sanctuary, but also one central worship (Levit. xvii. 8, 9; Deut. xii. 13 *sq.*). Hezekiah was, therefore, the restorer of that central worship which was so important and indispensable for the unity of the people and kingdom (see 1 Kings xii. 1–24, *Hist.* § 1). His reign, for this reason, forms an epoch in the history of Israel. It is moreover specifically stated that he destroyed even the brazen serpent, which was of purely Israelitish origin, and to which there clung such important memories and associations for the people. This he did not do from puritanical zeal such as the later Judaism displayed (see 1 Kings vii. *Hist.* § 3), but because this σύμβολον σωτηρίας, as it is called, Wisd. xvi. 6, had been perverted by the people into an εἴδωλον, whereas once every one who turned to it, οὐ διὰ τὸ θεωρούμενον ἐσώζετο, ἀλλὰ διὰ σὲ τὸν πάντων σωτῆρα. To offer incense to this image was not only contrary to the Law (Ex. xxv. 5; Deut. v. 8, 9), but also it was senseless, because thereby the very thing through which Jehovah, by His own might and power, intended to grant salvation, was regarded as holy, and adored as divine. If there was anything which was contrary and hostile to the worship of the Holy One in Israel, then it was the worship of this image; therefore Hezekiah destroyed it as ruthlessly as he did all the other images. If we add to this all that is said in Chronicles about the restoration of the levitical worship by Hezekiah, then it is clear that no king of Israel since David had been filled, as he was, with zeal for the divinely-given fundamental Law. If we consider further that he ascended the throne in a time of deep decay, at a time when the temple of Jehovah was closed (2 Chron. xxix. 3, 7), and Judah was filled with all the abominations of heathenism, when disgraceful apostasy was widely spread among the great and mighty of the kingdom, then this king cannot certainly be called "a weak and dependent man." To carry out such a reformation under the most unfavorable circumstances, is not the work of a weak man; on the contrary, it presupposes courageous faith, and extraordinary energy.

3. *The oppression of Judah by the Assyrians, and its deliverance from the same*, is one of the greatest and most important events of the Old Testament history of redemption, as we may infer from the fact that it is narrated with such careful detail, and that we have no less than three accounts of it. How deep an impression the event made upon the mind of the people, and what great significance was ascribed to it, is shown by its express mention in the late apocryphal books, in Jesus Sirach xlviii. 18–21, in the books of Maccabees I. vii. 41; II. viii. 19; III. vi. 5, and in the book of Tobias i. 21 (of the Latin; i. 18, of the Greek, text). It is also generally admitted that the noble Psalm xlvi. refers to this event, if not also Ps. lxxv. and lxxvi. (Sept. ᾠδὴ πρὸς τὸν Ἀσσύριον). Assyria stood at the summit of its power under Sennacherib; it had become a world-monarchy. Besides the nations of Eastern [Central] Asia, it had subjugated Phœnicia and Syria, and overthrown the kingdom of the Ten Tribes. It was just ready to extend still farther and to subjugate Egypt. Having invaded Judah, which was already tributary, the conqueror had already devastated the country and captured the strongholds. Only Jerusalem yet remained. Now he threatened this last stronghold of the once prosperous kingdom. With arrogant and threatening words, scoffing at the God of Israel, he demanded a surrender of the city which was already hard pressed on every side, and spoke of carrying off its inhabitants into captivity. The greatest power on earth stood in hostility to the little kingdom of Judah, which was reduced to two small tribes, and rendered powerless by misgovernment. Its destruction seemed to be inevitable.

But just at this point the power which had hitherto been resistless was broken, and it remained broken. This world-monarchy now commenced to decline. [This is a mistake. The next half century (700–650) includes the height of the Assyrian power.—W. G. S.] A change took place in the affairs of Judah which secured it yet a century and a half of existence. This change in its affairs it owed, not to its own strength or courage, not to a great army which came to its help, not to *any* human power, but only to its Lord and God, who said to the roaring sea: "So far and no farther, and here shall thy proud waves be stayed!" The great and invincible army perished without a battle or a stroke of the sword, as the Lord had foretold by His prophet (Isai. xxxi. 8). In a single night Judah was delivered out of the hand of its mighty enemy. With the downfall of the kingdom of the Ten Tribes a new epoch had begun for Judah. It was, from this time on, to represent alone the ancient covenant people. The great act of divine deliverance which is here recorded stands at the commencement of this new era, as a new covenant-sign, and pledge of the election of Israel, but at the same time also as a loud call to faithfulness. This was the significance of an event which had had no parallel since the deliverance from Egypt. It is, therefore, put parallel with that great event which was the type of all national deliverances (see notes on xvii. 7, and *Exeg.* on 1 Kings xii. 28). In subsequent times of peril it was mentioned together with the deliverance from Egypt, as a ground of prayer for divine aid (see the places quoted from the books of Maccabees). As there was there, so there is here, an arrogant enemy, who obstinately resists the God of Israel, who oppresses Jehovah's people so that they cry to him. "As Moses there promised protection and deliverance, and said: 'These Egyptians whom ye see to-day shall ye see no more forever,' so Isaiah here promises help: 'Fear not! for the Lord will guard this city. He shall not come into it, but shall return by the way by which he came;' as there, 'Moses stretched out his hand over the sea and the sea returned at the dawning of the morning' (Ex. xiv. 27), so here, 'When they arose early in the morning, behold they were all dead, corpses': Isai. xxxvii. 36" (Von Gerlach on Ps. xlvi. 6); as there the angel of the Lord smote at midnight all the first-born in Egypt, and rose up against the oppressor, so that he sank in the sea with his chariots, his horses, and his horsemen (Ex. xii. 29; xiv. 19, 28), so he here smote the Assyrian army by night so that Sennacherib "arose, departed, and went" (*excessit, evasit, erupit.* Cic. 2 *Cat.* at the beginning). Ewald justly says: "One of those rare days had come again when the truth which no hands could grasp, forced itself home to the conscience and conviction of the people. . . . Nay, indeed, in the preceding long and weary distress and trial, as well as in the sudden deliverance, and in the convergence of all these things to enforce faith in the only true help, this time has a certain resemblance to the time of the foundation of the nation, just as, throughout all these centuries, few souls attained so nearly to the height of Moses as did Isaiah." What a deep impression the event made upon the neighboring peoples is shown by the words of Chronicles, where the history of it closes with the words: "And many brought gifts unto the Lord to Jerusalem, and presents to Hezekiah king of Judah, so that he was magnified in the sight of all nations from thenceforth" (2 Chron. xxxii. 23). So that came to pass which Hezekiah had prayed for in his prayer for God's help, chap. xix. 19.

4. *The prophet Isaiah* stands first and foremost among those who appear either speaking or acting in the foregoing history. He is the central figure of the story, so that it appears also in the book of his prophecies. All that constitutes the peculiarity of the Jewish institution of prophets, and its high significance in the history of redemption, by virtue of which it stands independent of, and even above, the priestly office and the throne, presents itself to us here in one person as it does not in any other case either earlier or later. Not only as a "human counsellor in difficult political transactions" (Köster, *Die Propheten, s.* 106), as the king's privy-councillor, but as the servant and minister of Jehovah, the God of Israel, Who, through him, makes known His will and His decrees, and guides the fortunes of His people, and as the messenger and intermediary of the divine dispensations, Isaiah stands before us. He fulfils his mission most completely. Jerusalem and the kingdom of Judah were in peril such as had never before befallen them since they had existed. No one was prepared with advice or counsel. Anxiety, terror, and despair controlled all. In the midst of all this Isaiah stood firm and unshaken as a rock in the sea. With calmness and even joy, such as only a servant of Jehovah, who is conscious that he stands before his Lord, can feel (1 Kings xvii. 1; xviii. 15), he proclaims, in the name of his Master, deliverance to the covenant people, and destruction to the blasphemous foe, and as he says so it comes to pass. Where in the history of the ancient world is there anything at all resembling this? The oracle, vers. 21–34, belongs to the grandest which have been preserved, and is in the front rank even of those of Isaiah. All the things which we find to admire in the discourses of this prophet are here united. The language is clear and unambiguous, it is concise and rich, powerful and stirring, sharp in censure as well as consoling and encouraging. At the same time it is, in form and expression, poetical and rhetorical. The religious feeling on which it rests is the distinctively Israelitish, in all its depth and purity. The God, in whose name the prophet speaks, is the Holy One of Israel (see Isai. vi. 3), a character in which He has revealed Himself to this people alone, and in which no other people knows Him. At the same time He is a Being who is elevated absolutely above all creature limitations, and He governs all the nations of the earth according to His will. He has chosen Israel to be His own peculiar people, while it keeps His covenant. He is merciful and gracious, but He will not be scorned or blasphemed. The godless are an instrument in His hand, which He breaks and throws away when it has served His purpose. This discourse was indeed occasioned by the peculiar circumstances of the time, and it refers in the first place to them, nevertheless it does not lack that which is the deepest and inmost soul of all prophecy, the forecast of the distant future, the Messianic שְׁאָר יָשׁוּב [the idea that out of all calamities a purified remnant shall still survive to carry on the office of

the chosen people] (vers. 30, 31; *cf.* Isai. vii. 3; vi. 13; x. 21). This deliverance is the type and pledge of the one which shall go forth from Zion (Isai. ii. 2, 3).

5. *The prophet's prediction of the destruction of Sennacherib is a prophecy* in the common use of the word [something foretold], and every attempt to rob it of this character is shown to be vain, first by the great definiteness of the prediction, and secondly, by its undeniable fulfilment. Modern criticism, starting from the assumption that a specific prophecy is impossible, has declared ver. 7, as well as the concluding verses of the oracle, vers. 32–34, on account of their "suspicious definiteness," to be additions by the late redactor. This is indeed the easiest way to set aside any apparent prophecy. It is to be noticed, however, that the whole passage, from ver. 21 on, comes naturally and necessarily to this termination, and the tone and language are exactly the same as in the previous verses. [The artificial construction of the strophe and antistrophe make it impossible to regard vers. 32–34 as anything but an integral part of the original composition. See the arrangement in the translation.—W. G. S.] To take these verses away from the oracle is to rob it of all its point. It is both arbitrary and violent.

The so-called *naturalistic* explanation, which Knobel maintains, is not much better. According to this, the pestilence had then already commenced, and it threatened to weaken the Assyrian army very materially. News had also come that Tirhakah was advancing (ver. 9). These two things caused the prophet to "hope" that Sennacherib would not persevere, and, inspired by this hope, he "sustains his courage and exhorts the king and nation to confidence." But the assumption that the pestilence had at this time already broken out in the Assyrian camp is unfounded, it is entirely arbitrary, and it even contradicts the statements of the text in vers. 35 and 36. With this assumption the factitious "hope" of the prophet falls to the ground. Moreover it is perfectly clear that the prophet is not giving expression to a mere hope. As Knobel himself admits, "the tone is that of the utmost confidence," and "the passage (vers. 32–34) is perfectly definite."

Ewald's conception of it is much finer and more delicate. (*Gesch. Isr.* III. *s.* 634 [Ed. third *s.* 682]). He thus states his conception of the circumstances: In the first place, when Rab-shakeh uttered his threats, the prophet exhorted the king in general to courage and fearlessness (ver. 6). Afterwards, when Sennacherib's letter arrived and Hezekiah was in great anxiety, "Isaiah forthwith announced to him, if possible (!) yet more distinctly than before, the heaven-sent consolation. The bolder and more insolent the language of Sennacherib was, the more firm was the divine confidence against all his human vanity which Isaiah expressed in his mighty oracles. Thereby he powerfully influenced both the king and the people. He was the most unwavering support in this calamity, and the unswerving strength of his soul grew with the raging of the storm." However much this conception may contain which is grand and true, yet it does not rise above the idea that the prophet had a merely natural and human hope and foreboding. The prophet himself, however, means to have his words taken as something more than this. He could not possibly, with good conscience, say of something which he merely hoped for and foreboded: "Thus saith the Lord!"

[The question in dispute is: What did the prophets mean when they said: Thus saith the Lord! No one will assert that they meant that they had heard words with physical ears, or read words with physical eyes, which came to them from God. Their apprehension of the things which they thus announced must have been subjective, in so far that it was spiritual and conscientious. Then we come to a psychological analysis of the degrees of hope, expectation, faith, and foresight. If the process by which prophets apprehended divine oracles is utterly beyond the analogy of our experience, then, of course, it defies our analysis. But, in that case, it is a pure dogma which we cannot explain or state in words, and therefore cannot teach or transmit. We can repeat a formula, but we cannot form an idea. If, however, we have an analogy in our experience of faith and trust in God, —in our knowledge and conception of His laws—and in our belief in His Providence, for the *kind* of activity which produced the prophecies, then we may indeed believe that the prophets acted upon a much greater *measure* of the same convictions. Certainly the prophets did not utter guesses, and pronounce them with a "Thus saith the Lord!" Any attentive reader of the prophecies will perceive that this formula has, in the mouths of the prophets, a truly awful meaning. They had intense convictions as to God's will and Providence, and a profound faith in His truth and justice. When they spoke it was without faltering, and with complete faith that they were pronouncing the oracles of God. The "definiteness" of this prophecy, which is made a ground for believing it *post eventum*, may be questioned. It is grand, broad, and poetic. It is not *specific* in announcing the *form* of the deliverance, but has the features of O. T. predictions. The more detailed treatment of prophecy belongs to the exposition of the prophetical books.—W. G. S.]

There was nothing in the circumstances to justify the expectation that the hitherto invincible conqueror, who was already in the neighborhood of Jerusalem with 185,000 men, would withdraw immediately. On the contrary nothing seemed more certain than that he would carry out his threats. Nevertheless Isaiah declared to the king and the people in regard to him, "in the tone of an ambassador of God" (Köster), with the greatest definiteness and confidence: "He shall not come into this city, &c." If this was mere surmise and supposition, then it was, under these circumstances, pure insanity to exhort Jerusalem to scorn and defy the conqueror at the very moment when it was in the greatest jeopardy; nay, even the comparison of Sennacherib with a wild beast with a ring through its nose and a bridle in its mouth, would be a piece of bombast no way inferior to that of Rab-shakeh. What would have become of Isaiah? What would have become of the prophetic institution, if he had then been mistaken in his mere individual and subjective supposition and hope? It is useless to turn and twist the matter. We must either strike out the entire oracle, or we must recognize in it a genuine prediction and admit that "the prophecy came not in old times by the will of man, but holy men of God spake as they were inspired by the Holy Ghost" (2 Peter i. 21). The fact that this event

which was beyond the range of all human foresight and calculation, was definitely foretold by the prophet, gives it the character of an event determined beforehand of God for the deliverance of His people, that is, of an incident in the history of redemption, and takes away from it all appearance of an accidental, natural, occurrence.

[The question is: Were the prophets infallible? The author's argument seems to assume that they were. The assumption ought to be fairly stated and understood, and the issue involved ought to be fairly met. If the prophets, who were "men," "subject to like passions as we are" (Jas. v. 17), were infallible, why may not the Pope be so? If a distinction can be made, and if it be said that the prophets were infallible *in their oracles*, why may not the Pope be infallible when he speaks *ex cathedra*, though not otherwise? A fair criticism of this oracle will show it to be a prediction. The event which followed was a dispensation of Providence and an incident in the history of redemption (see bracketed addition to § 9, below). It rested on very much more than a hope or suspicion. It was a confident expectation which was based on trust in God and faith in His Providence. This amounted to a certain conviction in the prophet's mind, so that he did not hesitate to pronounce it in solemn form as God's will that Sennacherib's plan against Judah should be frustrated. He was obliged to stake his prophetical authority on this prediction. His religious faith rose above all the appearances of improbability (humanly speaking), that Sennacherib's course could be arrested. He did not fear, relying on his faith in God, to threaten Sennacherib with the most shameful overthrow. Sennacherib lived and prospered for twenty years afterwards (see *Supplem. Note* after the *Exeg.* section). If we insist on the literal accuracy, or even specific reference, of ver. 28 we shall make a grievous error, but, as a poetic expression for a prediction of shame and disaster to Sennacherib, it was completely fulfilled. Thus the event justified Isaiah's faith, and ratified his authority as a man of God; *i. e*, a man endowed with power to see and understand the ways of God. The notion that the prophets had communications from heaven, which gave them infallible information as to what was to be, is a superstition. The idea that they were men whose faith and love towards God gave them communion with Him, knowledge of His ways, insight into His Providence, and, therefore, foresight of His dealings with men, is a sublime religious truth,—one which deserves the study, as it will cultivate the religious powers, of every Christian man.—W. G. S.]

6. *Hezekiah's behavior during the peril from the Assyrians* appears to be inconsistent with the general characterization which stands at the head of the narrative (xviii. 5–7), inasmuch as he, who had the courage to declare his independence of the Assyrian supremacy, and who, according to 2 Chron. xxxii. 5–8, at Sennacherib's approach, not only took all possible measures for a determined resistance, but also encouraged the people to trust in Jehovah, its God, and not to fear, nevertheless instructed his ambassadors to ask for mercy, and declared himself ready to submit to any sacrifice which might be demanded of him (ver. 14). This one fact, however, does not justify us in regarding him as a "weak and dependent man" (see above § 1). We do not even know whether he took the step on his own motion, or, as is very possible, was forced to it by those who were about him. It was not until the Assyrian army had advanced even beyond Jerusalem, had taken one city after another and devastated the country, so that it seemed to him that Jerusalem could not much longer be defended, that he determined to make this humiliating offer. He had a good intention, which was to save Jerusalem and the kingdom of Judah from a fate like that of Samaria. Yet he did not send to the Assyrian such a message as his wretched father, Ahaz, had once sent: "I am thy servant and thy son" (chap. xvi. 7), but only went so far as necessity compelled him. Certainly he was not a hero in faith like Isaiah. "When he had taken the first step (the revolt), trusting in his God, then he ought to have taken the second, also trusting in Him" (Schlier), but that he did not do so does not prove that he had no faith. There are times in the life of every truly pious and believing man when the ground trembles under his feet, and he is wanting in firm and invincible faith. It was in such a moment that John the Baptist sent to ask the Saviour: "Art thou He that should come?" and yet the Saviour said of him that he was no reed shaken by the wind. Peter denied his master, and yet the master called him the rock on which the Church should be built. The time of peril from the Assyrians was, for Hezekiah, a time of trial and discipline. Soon after he had acted in faint-heartedness and despair he learned that help is not to be bought in distress by gold or silver. The treacherous foe only pressed him the harder, and then at last Hezekiah showed himself a true theocratic king. Recognizing a divine chastisement and discipline in this danger, he turns first to the prophet as the servant of Jehovah and the organ of the divine spirit, and sends an embassy of the chief royal officers and of the chief priests to him to beg his intercession. The solemn embassy was a physical recognition by the king of the prerogative of the prophet. It shows that where both were such as they ought to be there could be no question of "independent powers" over against each other (see 1 Kings xxi. *Hist.* § 4, and Pt. II. p. 104), but that both worked together, and had co-ordinate and complementary functions in carrying on the plan of redemption. The position which Hezekiah took up in his dealings with the prophetical institution, even when it was exercising its functions of warning and rebuke, may be seen from the incidental allusion in Jerem. xxvi. 18 *sq.* (See Caspari *über Micha, den Morasthiten, s.* 56.) In the case before us he did not rest content with the solemn embassy to the prophet, but went before the Lord, and poured out his heart to Him in prayer. Von Gerlach justly says: "It is most clearly apparent that, in this prayer, the inmost faith of a genuine Israelite is expressed." In true humility and fervor he calls upon the only living God, who has made heaven and earth, and who is the king of all kings of earth; who had chosen Israel to be His people, and dwells and reigns amongst them as a sign and pledge of His covenant. To Him, the Almighty One, who alone can help and save, he cries for help and salvation. He is not so much alarmed for his throne and his own glory as he is that the name of this God shall not be blasphemed, but rather be revered by all the world. We have no such prayer from any other king since Solomon. Because the

Lord is near to all who call upon Him, and does what the god-fearing ask of Him, and hears their cry (Ps. cxlv. 18 *sq.*), therefore this prayer was heard. The Lord helped wondrously and beyond all Hezekiah's prayer or hope.

7. *The Assyrian king, Sennacherib, and his chief cup-bearer* form the sharpest contrast to Hezekiah and the prophet. The pride and arrogance which, as a rule, animate all great conquerors, is expressed by them. Such men, insolently relying on their own human power and might, recognize nothing superior to themselves, shrink from no means of gratifying their ambition for territorial aggrandizement, and insult and scoff at Almighty God, until He finally sends His judgments upon them and brings them to shame. The language which this ancient conqueror used is that of a heathen, but the spirit which animated it has not perished from the earth; it appeared again in the words of the greatest conqueror of modern times. When Napoleon, during his expedition to Egypt, said to a Mufti: "I can cause a fiery chariot to descend from heaven and to turn its course to earth;"—when, in his proclamation to the inhabitants of Cairo, he declared, denying the true God and putting fate in His place: "Can there be any one who is blind enough not to see that fate itself guides all my undertakings? . . . Inform the people that it is written from the foundation of the world that, after the destruction of all the enemies of Islam and the overthrow of the cross, I should come from the far west to fulfil the task which is set for me. . . . Those who raise prayers against us to heaven pray for their own damnation. I could demand from each one of you an account of the secret thoughts of his heart, for I know all, even that which ye have told to no one. A day will come when all will see that I have been guided by commands from above, and that all the efforts of men can accomplish nothing against me" (Leo, *Universalgesch.* V. *s.* 317. Baur, *Geschichts- und Lebensbilder*, I. *s.* 385, *sq.*)—is that not the same thing as Sennacherib boasts chap. xviii. 25, 35 and xix. 1 *sq.* in regard to himself, though with different words? It is an entire misconception, on the part of Ewald, when he thus states Sennacherib's policy and intentions (*l. c. s.* 596): "The wars between the numerous small kingdoms this side the Euphrates had, during the last centuries, assumed continually more and more the character of mere plundering expeditions. It was enough to merely rob and plunder a weaker neighbor. . . . There was no conception of a fatherland, a great kingdom which was a power to restrain wrong by justice and unity. But the 'warlike' [Ewald's interpretation of יָרֵב] king, as the Assyrian king was now called before all others (Hos. v. 13; x. 6) desired a great, united, and powerful kingdom, in which petty national jealousies should disappear." The Scriptures do not contain any hint of any such noble and beneficent intentions on the part of the Assyrian king. On the contrary, Sennacherib himself boasts that he has devoted all the conquered lands to destruction, and has caused the nations to perish (chap. xix. 11, 12). The Scriptures call Sennacherib especially a destroyer, plunderer, or robber (Isai. xxxiii. 1), whose heart is set to destroy and uproot nations, and who does not know that he is only a hired razor, the rod of God's wrath, and the staff of His anger (Isai. x. 5–7). That this man, the greatest and mightiest of the kings of Assyria, before whom all nations trembled, should come to shame in his contest with the small and weak kingdom of Judah, this proclaimed to all the world the great and eternal truth: He can humiliate even the proud!

8. *The speech of the ambassador, Rab-shakeh*, is a remarkable specimen of ancient oriental rhetoric. It has, in form and expression, none of the smoothness and fineness of modern diplomacy, but it is, in the method which it pursues, by no means out of date, but as fresh as if it had been spoken but yesterday. In the first part, which is addressed to king Hezekiah and his high officers, the speaker utters undeniable truths. It was true that Egypt was like a broken reed on which a man could not rest or rely. It was true that Hezekiah had abolished the worship on the high places and centralized the cultus in Jerusalem. It was true that if he had ever so many horses he lacked riders for them, while the Assyrian army was richly provided with both. It was true, finally, that this army had not advanced to Jerusalem and beyond without the permission of God; but all these truths stand here in the service of arrogance, hypocrisy, and falsehood. The ancient diplomat understood the falsely celebrated art of convincing by sophistical arguments, and yet of cheating and deceiving. When the royal councillors did not at once yield to him, he became rude and insolent towards them, and began to harangue the common people. In the first place, he puts before them the distress and misery which await them if the city is not given up at once; then he makes promises, tempts them and sets prosperity, and good fortune, and wealth before them; then he makes them suspicious of their king, and calls them to disobedience to him; finally, he undermines their religious faith, represents to them their trust in God as foolish and vain, and appeals to the fall of Samaria which (he declares) this God was as little able to prevent as the gods of the other nations were to prevent their overthrow. Here again we must exclaim with Menken, as above in the case of Naaman: "How true and faithful is the ancient picture! How fresh and new it is, as if men of to-day had sat for it!"

9. *The destruction of the Assyrian army*, which impelled Sennacherib to retreat, is unquestioned as an historical fact; it has not been assailed even by modern critical science. Its character as an incident in the history of the redemptive plan (see § 3) has, however, been taken from it by the assertion that it was due to one of the pestilences which were common in the Orient, and especially in Egypt; that the number of those who died is "exaggerated," and that the destruction in a single night is a mythical detail. Appeal is made in proof to the "frightful devastation which the pestilence accomplishes in a short time." Instances are cited such as that "at Constantinople, in 1714, nearly 300,000 human beings perished, and at the same place, in 1778, 2,000 died daily" (Winer, *R.-W.-B.*, II. *s.*232), and that "the pestilence in Milan, in 1629, according to Tadino, carried off 160,000 persons; at Vienna, in 1679, 122,849; and in Moscow, at the end of the last century, according to Martens, 670,000" (Delitsch on Isai. xxxvii. 36). As for the number 185,000, the fact that it is not "an exactly round number bears witness to its historical accuracy" (Thenius). Both accounts have it

Moreover it occurs 1 Macc. vii. 41, and 2 Macc. xv. 22, and Jos. *Antiq.* x. 1, 5. It is arbitrary to throw aside a number which is supported by such testimony and has nothing against it. It would not be allowed in the case of a number supported by so many profane authors. As for the assumed mythical detail that they all perished in one night, that is not the statement of the text; but that "the angel went out on that night and he smote," &c., that is, on that night the pestilence broke out in the Assyrian camp, so that in the morning very many already lay dead, and it raged until the whole army, 185,000 strong, was carried off. With that night the destruction of the entire army began. [That is hardly a fair reading of ver. 35. The angel went out that night and smote 185,000 men, and in the morning they were corpses. The naïveté of the remark, that they rose up and lo! they were all dead, belongs to the simplicity of the style of composition. Its meaning is clear that the 185,000 men did not comprise the whole Assyrian army. The intention of the history to declare that 185,000 men were smitten and perished in one night is undeniable.—W. G. S.] "In view of the conciseness of the record we may assume, with Hensler and others, that the pestilence raged in the Assyrian camp for some time, and that it carried off thousands by night (Ps. xci. 6) up to the number of 185,000" (Delitzsch). If the words בַּלַּיְלָה הַהוּא were what made of the incident a miraculous interposition of God, they could not be wanting from the narrative in Isaiah; also the Chronicler, who does not in other cases show any distrust of what is miraculous, and the three places in the book of Maccabees, and that in Sirach, all of which mention the event, would not be silent as to that which would form the distinctive feature of it. When Knobel remarks that "the historian ascribes the event which brought about the deliverance of Judah to the God of Judah," we must ask, to whom else should he ascribe it? to Nature? to the climate? to accident? The God of Judah is the living God, who, as Hezekiah says (xix. 15, 19), made heaven and earth. He alone is God. If not a sparrow falls to the ground without Him (Matt. x. 29), then 185,000 men were not carried off without His will. As in the case of Isaiah's prophecy (§ 5), so here, all turning and twisting is useless. The incident was "a dispensation of God which evades until this day all attempts to solve its causes." We may admit that it was produced by the pestilence; "but, in the way of an attempt at a natural explanation, this amounts to nothing. No disease has ever, in its natural course, accomplished anything of the kind. All the extraordinary cases which are cited from history are only calculated to render the more prominent the fact that the incident here recorded is totally dissimilar from them all" (Drechsler).

[The *miraculousness* of the incident consists neither in the number of the slain, nor in the short space of time in which they perished. It consists in the fact that this extraordinary calamity befell the Assyrian army, by a dispensation of Providence, at a great crisis in the history of Judah. The ravages of pestilence in various historical instances are, therefore, no parallels. They are entirely aside from the point. The destruction of the Spanish armada by a storm is a far closer parallel than any one of these. We may hesitate to interpret these dispensations of Providence in modern times. The prophetic author of the Jewish history had no such scruples. He saw and plainly declared the hand of God in this event. "It is not without reason that in the churches of Moscow the exultation over the fall of Sennacherib is still read on the anniversary of the retreat of the French from Russia; or that Arnold, in his Lectures on Modern History, in the impressive passage (p. 177) in which he dwells on that great catastrophe, declared that for 'the memorable night of frost in which 20,000 horses perished, and the strength of the French army was utterly broken,' he 'knew of no language so well fitted to describe it as the words in which Isaiah described the advance and destruction of the hosts of Sennacherib.'" (Stanley, II. 534.) Our best means of arriving at a strictly historical conception of such providential interpositions as the one here recorded, is that of comparing them with other similar events nearer and more familiar to ourselves.—W. G. S.]

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

Vers. 1–8. The noble Testimony which the Holy Scriptures bear to King Hezekiah. (*a*) He abolished the false worship in his kingdom and reestablished that which was in accordance with the word of God (vers. 3 and 4). (*b*) He trusted the Lord, clung to him, and departed not from Him (vers. 5 and 6). (*c*) What he did prospered, for the Lord was with him (vers. 7 and 8).—Vers. 3–6. LANGE: It is sad when godly parents have godless children and must see that all their pains are spent upon them in vain. On the contrary, where godless parents, especially a godless father, have pious children, we must look upon it as a direct fruit of the grace of God. The testimony to Hezekiah is, therefore, the more excellent the more depraved his father was. CRAMER: Virtue and godliness are not inherited from one's parents.—Ver. 4. Hezekiah succeeded in uprooting ancient abuses, because he was moved not merely by political or other human considerations, but only by love to the Lord, and zeal for His honor. He was anxious not only to root up, destroy, and deny, but also to set up in the place of what was evil that which was right and good.—The brazen serpent. The purpose for which Moses made it (John iii. 14 *sq.*); why Hezekiah destroyed it (worship of images and destruction of images. Use and abuse of images).—CRAMER: If the cross on which Christ hung were preserved by the papists it would certainly be a relic of remarkable antiquarian interest, but to keep a feast in its honor, make pilgrimages to it, and grant indulgences by virtue of it, would be pure idolatry.—Vers. 5 and 6. True piety consists of (*a*) a faith which is at once trust and confidence, Heb. xi. 1; (*b*) clinging to the Lord in adversity and in prosperity, without departing from Him, Ps. lxxiii. 25 *sq.*; (*c*) keeping the commandments of God, James ii. 17; 1 John v. 3.—Vers. 7 and 8. OSIANDER: God rewards godliness even in this life, Matt. vi. 33; 1 Tim. iv. 8.—STARKE: Only the faithful and pious can console themselves with God's favor, and boast that God is with them, Ps. cxviii. 6, 7; Ps. i. 3.—To throw off a disgraceful foreign yoke, and to take back what one has been robbed of, is not a breach of fidelity, but it is the right and duty of every ruler who wears a crown lawfully.—Vers. 9–12. See notes on chap. xvii. Hoshea and Heze-

kiah. The former came to the throne by conspiracy and murder, and he did not do what was pleasing to the Lord, therefore he perished with his people. The latter trusted in the Lord and clung to Him, and therefore he came out with his people victoriously from the peril.

Vers. 13–16. Hezekiah enjoyed peace and rest for fourteen years. His reign was a prosperous one; then, however, came the time of trial and danger, which does not fail to come even to those who have faith and trust.—BERLEB. BIBEL: No one can belong to God unless he passes through trial and discipline. The harder the trial is, the more must we increase our faith and dependence, for God chastises us only that He may make more clear His mercy and care for those who trust in Him.—The gold of faith can only be made to appear through the fires of adversity, Sir. ii. 5. If thy faith is not a mere notion, or opinion, or feeling, or sensation, then it will not diminish in the time of trial, but grow and become stronger and purer. "Whence should we have had David's psalms, if he had not been tried?" Therefore St. Paul says, Rom. v. 3 *sq.*—Ver. 14. There is nothing harder for any one who holds a high position than to humble himself, yet there is nothing more beneficial. The king finds himself compelled, in order to save his kingdom, to beg forgiveness of the monarch from whom he had revolted. That was the first consequence of his chastisement.—CRAMER: An oppressive peace is better than the most just war, and it is better to purchase peace than to risk kingdom and people, life and liberty.—When we see that we have done wrong we ought to confess it not only before God but also before men.—Do thou say to God what Hezekiah sent his ambassadors to say to Sennacherib. Thou wilt find Him not faithless, but always good and faithful, and He will lay upon thee no burden which thou canst not carry.—Ver. 17. We can never rely upon the fidelity of a man who is simply bought with money.—Want of courage in one's self invites an enemy to arrogance. The more humbly one approaches an enemy the more insolent he becomes.—Peace and quiet which are bought with money have no duration. [This ought to be taken to modify the doctrine quoted above (on ver. 14) from Cramer, that it is better to buy peace than to risk war.]

Vers. 17–35. Rab-shakeh's speech (*a*) to Hezekiah's messengers, vers. 19–27; (*b*) to the people, vers. 28–35. See *Histor.* § 8. That is always the way of the devil; he mixes up truth and falsehood, that he may inoculate us with the falsehood.—Rab-shakeh, the wolf in sheep's clothing. (*a*) He appears to warn against Egypt as a power which neither can nor will help, just as Isaiah himself does, while he himself comes to destroy and devour (Matt. vii. 15; 1 John iv. 1). (*b*) He represents what had been ordained by Hezekiah according to the Law of the Lord and for His honor as a sin and a breach of religion, while he himself cared nothing whatever for the Law of the Lord or the true and right worship. Beware of those who represent as weakness and folly that which is divine wisdom and strength (1 Cor. i. 18 *sq.*). (*c*) He claims that the Lord is with him and has commanded him to do what he is doing (ver. 25), whereas, in fact, he is only the rod of God's wrath, the staff of His anger, a "hired razor," and ambition, lust for gold and land, desire for glory and plunder are his only motives (Matt. vii. 22 *sq.*). Be not deceived by the prosperity and the victory of the godless. They are like chaff which the wind scatters and their way disappears (Ps. i. 3, 6).—Ver. 20. In what dost thou trust? Ask thyself this every day. Dost thou trust in other men who have rank, wealth, and influence (Ps. lx. 12; cxlvi. 3, 4; Jerem. xvii. 5); upon thyself, thine own power, wisdom, and judgment (Prov. iii. 5, 7; 1 Cor. i. 19, 20); or on the Lord alone (Ps. cxviii. 8, 9; cxlvi. 5; Jerem. xvii. 7, 8)?—Ver. 21. J. LANGE: How often it happens that when a man abandons God and seeks another reliance, he finds but a broken reed!—UMBREIT: So weak and faithless men often prepare for those who are not satisfied with God's grace, but seek help from them, the deepest misfortunes. He who trusts only in God stands high and free even above the ruins of his earthly happiness; he who takes refuge in men becomes the slave of men.—Ver. 22. KYBURZ: It is the most deadly temptation of the adversary that he throws suspicion upon all which one has done for God, or upon all the spiritual good which one has wrought. This is the way of the devil and of the blinded world. They praise that for which one deserves punishment and make a threat of that by virtue of which one might hope for the favor of God. He who does not mean to fall under this trial must strive for the testing spirit that it may teach him to distinguish false and true, light and darkness, according to the divine standards (John xii. 4 *sq.*).—STARKE: When the world wishes to give pain to the pious it calls their trust in God obstinacy, and their constancy, arrogance.—WÜRT. SUMM.: Perverse and depraved men often consider true religion the origin of all misfortune.—Vers. 23 and 24. The boastful cannot stand before the eyes of the Lord (Ps. v. 6, 7). He says to them: "Speak not with a stiff neck," &c. (Ps. lxxv. 5–8. *cf.* Jerem. ix. 23, 24). "There is no king saved by the multitude of an host," &c. (Ps. xxxiii. 16, 17).—Ver. 25. STARKE: The godless do not want to have the appearance of making their undertakings under and with God; they boast that they do not do so, yet wrongly.—MENKEN: God uses the bad for purposes for which he cannot use the good. The prosperity of the wicked destroys them (Prov. i. 32).—How often a man puts his own wishes or thoughts in the place of the will of God and says or thinks: The Lord commanded me! It is crime, however, for a man to ascribe to the will of God that which sprang from his own evil lusts (James i. 13 *sq.*).

Vers. 26 to 28. The just Request of the King's Councillors to Rab-shakeh and his insolent Reply.—CRAMER: A Christian ought to be careful in all things and to try to avert harm wherever he can (Eph. v. 15).—Simple and uneducated people lend an ear far too easily to boasters, to those who distort truth, and allow themselves to be cajoled, because they lack insight to distinguish between appearance and reality, error and truth. Therefore not all subjects should be discussed before the multitude, in whose minds one distorted expression will often do more harm than the most reasonable discourse can cure. A faithful government ought to protect its subjects from hypocritical and lying teachers as much as from thieves and robbers. Ver. 27. He who cannot endure any contradiction, however moderate and just it may be, without becoming violent and angry, shows thereby that he

is not aiming at truth and right, but that he has a selfish and insincere purpose.—Rab-shakeh was an official of the court and a man in high station, who did not lack wisdom and information; nevertheless his words show rudeness and vulgarity. High rank and position, even when united with wisdom and information, do not insure against rudeness and vulgarity. These only disappear where the life has its springs in God, and there is a purified heart and a sanctified disposition (Luke vi. 45).—Ver. 28–35. The ways and means of demagogues and those who stir up sedition. (*a*) Vers. 29 and 30. They cast suspicion upon the lawful authority, however righteous its intentions may be. They scatter abroad distrust of its power and of its good disposition, and strive to make the people discontented with all its ordinances. (*b*) Vers. 31 and 32. They promise to the people peace and prosperity and good fortune, deliverance from tyranny and slavery, in order that they may then lay upon it their yoke, which is far heavier and more disgraceful (Ps. cxl. 5). (*c*) Ver. 33 *sq.* They undermine the faith of the people under the pretence of enlightening it, while they themselves walk in darkness and are enemies of the cross of Christ. Therefore: "Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong" (1 Cor. xvi. 13).—Ver. 28. STARKE: When Satan wants attentive listeners he talks God's language; therefore believe not every spirit (1 John iv. 1).—Ver. 30. The Lord will save us! (*a*) A noble saying in the mouth of a king speaking to his people. He thereby admits that his own power is insufficient and vain. He leads his people in that faith which is a confidence in what is hoped for, and which admits no doubt of what is not seen. How well it would be for all princes and peoples if they had such faith. (*b*) In this saying all the hope of the Christian life is expressed: With God we overcome the world, for the Lord will at length save and deliver us from all evil, and bring us to his heavenly kingdom. The blasphemer and boaster wanted to remove these words of the king from the heart of the people, because he knew that he should then have won. Nowadays also these words are laughed at and scorned. Let them not be torn from your heart! Happy is he whose trust is in the Lord his God (Ps. cxlvi. 5).—Ver. 31 *sq.* CRAMER: When Satan cannot accomplish anything by resistance and force, he strikes the softer strings and promises luxury, riches, splendor (Matt. iv. 9).—Ver. 33 *sq.* Pride and arrogance go so far that man, who is but dust and ashes, exalts himself in his folly above Almighty God.—PFAFF. BIBEL: The Lord punishes with especial severity the crime of scoffing at the Living God and doubting of his might and majesty (2 Macc. ix. 28; Isai. xiv. 13–15).

Ver. 36 *sq.* The Impression which Rab-shakeh's Speech made. (*a*) The people kept silence and did not answer. (Silence is an answer—often a more emphatic one than speech. Happy is the people which is deaf to the words of seducers and those who stir up insurrection.) (*b*) The ambassadors of the king tear their clothes as a sign of grief and of horror at the blasphemous words which they had been forced to hear. Rab-shakeh was obliged to depart with his mission unaccomplished (1 Peter v. 8, 9).—Ver. 36. We ought not to enter into any dispute with those who do not care to arrive at the truth, but only to accomplish their own selfish ends, and who are versed in the art of mixing truth and falsehood, but we should punish them by silence.—Ver. 37. STARKE: We ought not to laugh at blasphemous speeches, but to be heartily saddened by them.—WÜRT. SUMM.: We ought not to get angry at a blasphemer, lest we also do some wrong, but we ought to wait patiently for the Lord (Isai. xxx. 15).—CRAMER: Cast not your pearls before swine, nor give what is holy unto the dogs (Matt. vii. 6). It is not always wise to answer a fool. There is a time for silence (Eccl. iii. 7).

Chap. xix. vers. 1–7. Hezekiah in great Distress. (*a*) He rends his clothes (as a sign of horror at Rab-shakeh's blasphemous speech). He puts on sack-cloth (as a sign of repentance), and goes to the house of the Lord (to humble himself before God, for he recognizes in his need and distress a consequence of sin and apostasy, and a call to repentance). (*b*) He sends the chiefs and representatives of the people to the prophet, from whom he hopes to hear the best counsel. He orders them to make known his request, and he is encouraged by him to stand fast in faith.—Ver. 1. The words in Ps. i. 1 apply to Hezekiah. A man who truly fears God cannot endure that unbelief should open its insolent mouth; his heart is torn when he hears the living God scoffed at. Woe to the people and country in which the speeches of the godless are listened to in silence and with indifference, without pain or grief, and where jests at God and divine things are regarded as enlightenment and wisdom (Luke xix. 40).—Vers. 2 and 3. In anxiety and perplexity our only consolation is to call upon God (Ps. xxxiv. 19; xlvi. 1).—HALL: The more we hear the name of God despised and abused the more we ought to love and honor it.—STARKE: It is of great importance that, in time of need, one should have a faithful friend, to whom one can confide all, and find counsel and help.—Ver. 4. CRAMER: We should not doubt in prayer, nor prescribe methods of action to God, but wait in patience and humility for the help of the Lord (James v. 10).—We should apply to others in our need that they may intercede for us. When a man like the Apostle Paul exhorts the believers to pray for him (Rom. xv. 30; Eph. vi. 18, 19), how much more does it become us to beg this service of love of others, and to console ourselves with the strength of the intercession of those who have intercourse of prayer with the Lord. He, however, who desires that others should pray for him ought not to have given up the habit of prayer himself. Hezekiah went first himself into the house of the Lord to pray, and then he sent to the prophet.—Ver. 5. What happiness and what a blessing it is in times of distress and perplexity to have a faithful servant of God at hand, who stands firm in the storm.—Vers. 6, 7. Isaiah's Answer (*a*) as a word of encouragement (ver. 6), (*b*) as a word of promising and threatening (ver. 7). The prophet calls the emissaries of the Assyrian king: "servants" [see *Exeg.* on the verse], a contemptuous name, because they had blasphemed the God of Israel. It is not manly to assume airs of superiority and to pretend to scorn the word of God, but it is boyish. However high in rank a man may be, if he speaks and acts as these men did he is a low fellow (Ps. xxxvii. 12, 13).—Ver. 7. God punishes those who have no fear of Him by making them fear men, and flee at the mere rumor of a danger which is

not yet at hand. Pray God, therefore, that He may give thee the right spirit, not a spirit of fear, but of power and love and self-control (2 Tim. i. 7).—We think that danger threatens the Kingdom of God and Christianity when people write and declaim against it, but fear not: all these adversaries have perished like Herod who sought the young child's life (Matt. ii. 20), and only forfeited their own salvation, for "Whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken" (Matt. xxi. 44).—OSIANDER: God has many means whereby he can bring the rage of His adversaries to naught.—HALL: Proud and self-confident men of the world think little of the future consequences, and even while they are spinning their plots they come to shame.

Vers. 8–19. The two Contrasted Kings, Sennacherib and Hezekiah—the Godless and the Just. (*a*) Sennacherib, who sees himself in peril and obliged to retreat by the approach of Tirhakah, does not on that account become more modest or more humble, but only more obstinate and arrogant. That is the way with godless and depraved men. In distress and peril, instead of bending their will and yielding to the will of God, they only become more stubborn, insolent, and assuming. (OSIANDER: The less ground the impious have to hope for victory over the righteous, the more cruel do they attempt to be.) Hezekiah, on the contrary, who was in unprecedented trouble and peril, was thereby drawn into more earnest prayer. He humbled himself under the hand of God, and sought refuge in the Lord alone. He went into the house of God and poured out his soul in prayer, Ps. v. 5–7. (CALW. BIBEL: Learn from this to pray earnestly and faithfully, when thou art in distress; also learn from this what is the best weapon in war, and when the fatherland is in the dangers of battle.) (*b*) Sennacherib rejects faith in the God of Israel as folly, and boasts that all the gods of the heathen were powerless before him. He lives without God in the world and knows no God but himself. But it is *the fool* who hath said in his heart: "There is no God" (Ps. xiv. 1). He asks: "Where is?" &c., but where is now Sennacherib who talked so proudly? (*Berl. Bib.*) He is gone like chaff before the wind, for the way of the godless shall perish (Ps. i. 4, 6; xxxv. 5; Zeph. ii. 2). But Hezekiah will not let himself be drawn away from his God. His faith becomes only so much warmer and deeper. He prays and seeks not his own honor, but that of the Lord in whom he puts his confidence (Ps. i. 3). The greater the cross the greater the faith. The palm grows under weight. Sweetness flows from the grape when it is well trodden (Ps. i. 1, 2).—Vers. 14–19. Hezekiah's Prayer. (*a*) The appeal for hearing (vers. 15, 16); (*b*) the Confession (vers. 17, 18); (*c*) the request (ver. 19) (see *Histor.* § 6).—Distress and misfortune are the school in which a man learns to pray aright. How many a one repeats prayers every day and yet never prays aright. Every one knows from his own experience that he has never talked so directly with God as in the time of need.—STARKE: Earthly kings ought not to be ashamed to pray, but rather go before others with a good example.—ARNDT: Who is a true man? He who can pray, and who trusts in God.—Ver. 15. Under the old covenant God dwelt above the cherubim of the ark; under the new one, He dwells in Christ amongst us, therefore He demands to be addressed by us as the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.—Ver. 16. "He that planted the ear," &c. (Ps. xciv. 9). Though men do not hear or see, He hears and sees all, even that which is said and done in secret (Ps. cxxxix. 1 *sq.*). It often seems as if He did not see or hear, but he will some time bring to light what was done in darkness, and will make known the secret counsel of the heart. We must give an account of every vain word which we have spoken.—Vers. 17, 18. Gods which are the work of man's hands, or the invention of man's brain, can be thrown into the fire and destroyed. They are good for nothing more, but the Holy, Living God cannot be thus done away with or destroyed. He is himself a consuming fire which shall consume all the adversaries (Heb. x. 27; xii. 29).—Ver. 19. When we pray to God for relief from distress, or for anything else which we earnestly desire, we must not have our own honor, or fortune, or prosperity altogether or principally at heart, but we must try to bring it about that, by the fulfilment of our prayer, God's name may be glorified and hallowed. Therefore this petition stands first in the Lord's Prayer.

Vers. 21–34. Isaiah's Prophecy (*a*) against Sennacherib, vers. 21–28; (*b*) on behalf of Jerusalem, vers. 29–34.—Ver. 21. There is no more fitting punishment for a proud and arrogant man, than to be laughed at and derided without being able to take revenge. The derision of the daughter, Zion, at the blasphemous boaster, Sennacherib, is not due to sinful malice; it is rather a joyful recognition and a praise of the power and faithfulness of God, who reigns in heaven and laughs at those who scoff at him (Ps. ii. 4; xxxvii. 12, 13).—Ver. 22. When sinful man, who is dust and ashes, ascribes to himself that which he can only do by God's help, or which God alone can do, that is a denial and an insult of God.—Ver. 23. Here we see the mode of thought and of speech of all the proud. All this have I done by my wisdom and courage and skill. The Apostle, who had labored more than any other, responds to them all: "What hast thou that thou didst not receive? Now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?" (1 Cor. iv. 7, *cf.* xv. 10).—CRAMER: When we remember that the affair is not ours but God's, then we see that the enemies are not ours but God's. When we see the pride and arrogance of our enemies, then we may look for their fall very soon (Prov. xvi. 18).—Ver. 25. If no hair of our heads can fall without the will of God, how much less can a land or a city perish unless He has so ordained it? Therefore, humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God that He may exalt you in His good time (1 Peter v. 6).—Ver. 26. "Let all the earth fear the Lord; let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of Him" (Ps. xxxiii. 8), for they are like the grass of the field before Him; He causes the wind to blow upon them and they are gone.—Vers. 27, 28. Be not deceived by the victory and good fortune of the enemies of the kingdom of God, to think that God is with them. He knows their going out and their coming in, their rage and their arrogance. They are in His hand and He uses them without their knowledge for His own purposes. They cannot take a step beyond the limits which He has set for them. When they have done what He intended them to do, He puts His bridle in their mouths and leads them back by the way by which they came. (As Sennacherib came to Jerusalem, so

came Napoleon to Moscow. Then the Lord called to him: "So far and no farther!" and led him back by the way by which he came.) Isai. xiv. 5, 6; x. 12-15.—Ver. 29. All sowing and reaping should be to us a sign of what God does for us and what we ought to do for Him (Gal. vi. 7-9; 2 Cor. ix. 6; Jer. iv. 3; Hos. viii. 7; James iii. 18; Sir. vii. 3; Eccles. xi. 4, 6). God does not always give full harvests in order that we may learn to be satisfied with little, and may not forget that His blessing is not tied to our labor, but that He gives it where and when He will.—Vers. 30 and 31. STARKE: In the midst of all calamities God preserves a faithful remnant for Himself which shall praise and spread abroad His name (Ps. xlvi. 3 to 5; xxii. 30).—THE SAME: The Church of Christ is invincible. However much it may be oppressed at times, yet God preserves a secret seed for Himself (Matt. xvi. 18; 1 Kings xix. 18).—The deliverance goes forth from Zion (Isai. ii. 2, 3): salvation comes from the Jews (John iv. 22).—The saved form the holy seed (Isai. vi. 13), which takes root below and bears fruit above. The ground in which they take root and stand firm is Christ (Eph. iii. 17; Col. ii. 7). The fruit which they bear is love, joy, peace, &c. (Gal. v. 22). They never perish. They continue from generation to generation. However small their number, and however fiercely the world may rage against them, they nevertheless endure, for the Lord is their confidence, His truth is their shield (Ps. xci. 4). Therefore, "Fear not, little flock," &c. (Luke xii. 32).—Vers. 32-34. Jerusalem, the earthly City of God, a Type of the Eternal City, the Church of Christ. If God protected the former so that no arrow could come into it, how much more will He protect the latter, break in pieces the bows of its enemies, and burn their chariots in fire. *Cf.* Ps. xlvi., and Luther's hymn: "*Ein' feste Burg,*" &c.

Vers. 35 to 37. Sennacherib's Fall. (*a*) A miracle of the saving power and faithfulness of God; (*b*) a terrible judgment of the Holy and Just God (see *Histor.* § 9).—*Cf.* Pss. xlvi., lxxv., and lxxvi. VON GERLACH: When such times recur, similar psalms and hymns are given to the Church, as in 1530 the hymn: "*Ein' feste Burg ist unser Gott,*" which is founded on Ps. xlvi., was composed. (Compare the noble hymn of Joh. Heermann: "*Herr, unser Gott, lass nicht zu Schanden werden.*") —God's judgments are often delayed for a long time, but then they come all the more suddenly and mightily (Ps. lxxiii. 19). A single night may change the whole face of the matter. Where is now the boaster? Where is the multitude of his chariots? Luke xii. 20.—Sennacherib's calamity and his retreat proclaim to all the world that God resisteth the proud, and they are a testimony to the truth of 1 Sam. ii. 6-10.—He who had smitten whole kingdoms and peoples fell under the blows of his own sons. "With what measure ye mete it shall be measured to you again" (Luke vi. 38).—OSIANDER: When God has sufficiently chastised His Church, He throws the rod of His wrath into the fire, Isai. xxxiii. 1.

B.—*Hezekiah's Illness and Recovery; his Reception of the Babylonian Embassy, and his End.*

CHAP. XX. 1-21. (ISAI. XXXVIII.)

1 IN those days was Hezekiah sick unto death. And the prophet Isaiah the
son of Amoz came to him, and said unto him, Thus saith the Lord, Set thine
2 house in order; for thou shalt die, and not live. Then he turned his face to
3 the wall, and prayed unto the Lord, saying, I beseech thee, O Lord, remember
now how I have walked before thee in truth [fidelity] and with a perfect heart,
and have done *that which is* good in thy sight. And Hezekiah wept sore.
4 And it came to pass, afore Isaiah was gone out into the middle court,[1] that the
5 word of the Lord came to him, saying, Turn again, and tell Hezekiah the
captain [prince] of my people, Thus saith the Lord, the God of David thy
father, I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears: behold, I will heal thee:
6 on the third day thou shalt go unto the house of the Lord. And I will add
unto thy days fifteen years; and I will deliver thee and this city out of the hand
of the king of Assyria; and I will defend [protect] this city for my own sake,
7 and for my servant David's sake. And Isaiah said, Take [Bring] a lump of figs.
8 And they took [brought] and laid *it* on the boil, and he recovered. And Hezekiah
said unto Isaiah, What *shall be* [is] the sign that the Lord will heal me,
9 and that I shall go up into the house of the Lord the third day? And Isaiah
said, This sign shalt thou have of the Lord, that the Lord will do the thing that
he hath spoken: shall the shadow go forward ten degrees, or go back ten degrees?
[the shadow is gone forward ten degrees,—if it go back ten degrees?]
10 And Hezekiah answered, It is a light thing for the shadow to go down ten de-
11 grees: nay, but let the shadow return backward ten degrees. And Isaiah the
prophet cried unto the Lord: and he brought the shadow ten degrees back-
ward, by which it had gone down in [on] the dial [stairs] of Ahaz.
12 At that time Berodach-baladan, the son of Baladan, king of Babylon, sent

letters and a present unto Hezekiah: for he had heard that Hezekiah had been
13 [was] sick. And Hezekiah hearkened unto them [rejoiced because of them],[2]
and shewed them all the house of his precious things [treasury], the silver, and
the gold, and the spices, and the precious ointment, and *all* the house of his
armour [armory], and all that was found in his treasures: there was nothing in
his house, nor in all his dominion, that Hezekiah shewed them not.
14 Then came Isaiah the prophet unto king Hezekiah, and said unto him, What
said these men? and from whence came they unto thee? And Hezekiah said,
15 They are come from a far country, *even* from Babylon. And he said, What
have they seen in thine house? And Hezekiah answered, All *the things* that
are in mine house have they seen: there is nothing among my treasures that I
16 have not shewed them. And Isaiah said unto Hezekiah, Hear the word of the
17 Lord. Behold, the days come, that all that *is* in thine house, and that which
thy fathers have laid up in store unto this day, shall be carried unto Babylon:
18 nothing shall be left, saith the Lord. And [some] of thy sons that shall issue
from thee, which thou shalt beget, shall they take away; and they shall be
19 eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon. Then said Hezekiah unto
Isaiah, Good *is* the word of the Lord which thou hast spoken. And he said, *Is
it* not *good*, if peace and truth be in my days? [And he said: Verily; may
there only be peace and security in my days.]
20 And the rest of the acts of Hezekiah, and all his might, and how he made a
pool, and a conduit, and brought water into the city, *are* they not written in
21 the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Judah? And Hezekiah slept with
his fathers: and Manasseh his son reigned in his stead.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

[1] Ver. 4.—[On the keri see *Exeg.* The E. V. follows it as do Thenius and Ewald. The chetib reads "the middle city." It is adopted by Keil, Bunsen, and Bähr.—W. G. S.]

[2] Ver. 13. That וַיִּשְׁמַע is not the original reading, but וַיִּשְׂמַח, which we find in Isai. xxxix. 2, is evident from עֲלֵיהֶם which follows. The latter reading is also supported by all the ancient versions.—Bähr.

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

Ver. 1. **In those days.** By these words Hezekiah's illness is referred to the time of the last-mentioned events, but only as a general designation of the time of its occurrence (Keil). It fell, like those events, in the middle of his reign. The expositors are not agreed, however, whether it took place before or after Sennacherib's retreat. The majority of the modern scholars adopt the opinion that it was before that event, founding their opinion on ver. 6. There he is promised fifteen years more of life, and Sennacherib's retreat is spoken of as something which has not yet come to pass. Now, as Hezekiah, according to chap. xviii. 2, reigned twenty-nine years, and Sennacherib invaded Judah in his fourteenth year (xviii. 13), this illness must have befallen him, it is argued, in his fourteenth year, either "at the beginning of Sennacherib's invasion" (Keil), or "while the Assyrians were still besieging Jerusalem" (Thenius). It is further alleged in support of this view that Hezekiah showed to the Babylonian embassy, which came to congratulate him, treasures of gold and silver (xx. 13), but that he had given up everything of this kind which he had (xviii. 15) to Sennacherib, so that his illness and recovery must have taken place *before* the retreat of the Assyrians (Delitsch and Hahn). These may appear to be very forcible arguments, but there are opposing considerations of the highest importance. In the first place, both narratives put the story of Hezekiah's illness after the account of the Assyrian invasion, and as Calmet observes: *Neque ego libenter desero seriem et ordinem rerum in libris sacris deductam, nisi valida id argumenta suadeant.* It has indeed been urged that the historian placed the story of Sennacherib's retreat (xix. 35 *sq.*) first, because "he desired to finish up the story of the Assyrian invasion, so as not to be obliged to return to it" (Knobel). But the Chronicler makes this hypothesis, which is in itself improbable, entirely inadmissible, for he says that Hezekiah was highly honored by all nations on account of this deliverance, and that many sent presents to him, and then he proceeds to give the story of his illness (2 Chron. xxxii. 22–31). Josephus also asserts very positively that Hezekiah and all the people offered thank-offerings to God, and showed great religious zeal, but that then (*μετ' οὐ πολύ*) he was afflicted by a severe illness. Secondly, the Babylonian embassy cannot be assigned to the period before the retreat of Sennacherib, nor to any time during the Assyrian invasion, for the king of Babylon, who was a vassal of the king of Assyria, would not have dared to congratulate Hezekiah at that time when he was in revolt against the suzerain of both, and he would have had no grounds for seeking an alliance with Hezekiah when he was in distress and peril Thirdly, Hezekiah's hymn of thanksgiving (Isai. xxxviii. 10) begins with the words: "I said (that is, I thought) in the cutting off (interruption, period of tranquillity) of my days," &c.; *i. e.*, "when a period of rest had come in my life, a pause in the midst of the ceaseless toil and care and danger of

life" (Drechsler); when I believed that I was relieved from all danger by Sennacherib's retreat, and that I could live on in peace and security, then came a new trouble and danger, and it seemed that I must go down to the grave. Against all these important considerations, which are taken from *history*, it cannot be argued that "the former story [of the peril of Jerusalem] is placed first because it is most important" (Von Gerlach), for what would become of the art of writing history, if historians should narrate later events before they did earlier ones, because the former were more important? As for ver. 6, the number "fifteen" cannot be arithmetically accurate, for if it were so, then not only Sennacherib's invasion and Hezekiah's illness, but also the journey of the army of at least 185,000 men through the desert *el Tih* to Egypt, the siege of Pelusium, the return to Judah, the siege and conquest of the "fenced cities," the devastation of the country, and finally, the destruction of Sennacherib's army and his retreat, and even the embassy from Babylon, must all have taken place in one year,—Hezekiah's fourteenth, and this appears impossible, considering that they had no railways. Isaiah's words in vers. 5 and 6 are not an historical allusion, but a prophetic oracle. In the prophetic style numbers have not always their strict, arithmetical value, but are clothed with a significance of another character. The number 15, in this case, is not, indeed, as Knobel thinks, "contributed by the redactor, *ex eventu*, and put in the mouth of the prophet, who could not know how many years longer Hezekiah was to live," but still we ask why should he have just fifteen years longer, and not one more or one less? Fifteen is not what is commonly called a round number. It will not do to answer this by the anticipatory statement (xviii. 2) that Hezekiah reigned twenty-nine years. Not because he was to reign twenty-nine years in all were fifteen years more assigned to him, but because he was spared for fifteen years more his whole reign amounted to twenty-nine years. When he was taken ill he had finished his fourteenth year and begun his fifteenth. He was then thirty-nine years old, in the prime of life. Suddenly he stood on the brink of the grave, and it was all the more painful to him to quit life at this moment, because he had just been delivered from his most powerful enemy, and had hopes of being able to reign now in peace and quiet. It was regarded as a very great misfortune to be called away in the prime of life, hence his earnest prayer (ver. 3), which had no other sense than this: "O my God! take me not away in the midst of my days" (Ps. cii. 24, *cf.* lv. 23). The prophet promises him the fulfilment of this prayer, and that he shall reign as much longer as he had already reigned. The words which follow: **I will deliver thee out of the hand of the king of Assyria,** then refer to the remainder of his reign. In the new lease of life which was to be given him, he should fear nothing from the great and mighty enemy; he should reign in peace. This promise was of the greatest importance, for, although Sennacherib had fled in disgrace, yet he was still very powerful and very dangerous, and his wrath against Judah was fiercer than ever (Tobias i. 18). He might collect his forces and make another expedition against Judah. In fact, he did immediately collect an army and march against Babylon which had revolted. Thus the words are understood by Vitringa, Clericus, Gesenius, Rosenmüller, and Drechsler, and the latter adds the pertinent remark that, if ver. 6 had been spoken before the events narrated in chaps. xviii. and xix. took place, then xix. 34 would be only a repetition of the promise in that verse.

Ver. 1. **Thus saith the Lord: Set thine house in order;** literally: Give commands in regard to thine house, *i. e.*, take the necessary measures for the management of thine affairs (*cf.* 2 Sam. xvii. 23, where אֶל stands for לְ). It does not mean "make known thy (last) will" (Knobel, Gesenius), nor, "give commands in regard to the succession to the throne" (Hess).—**To the wall** (ver. 2), not in dissatisfaction as Ahab did, 1 Kings xxi. 4 (Hitzig), but away from those who were present, in order that he might pray more freely and collectedly.—**O Lord! remember now** (ver. 3). To fall a victim of disease in the midst of his days seemed to the king, in view of proverbs like Prov. x. 27: "The fear of the Lord prolongeth days, but the years of the wicked shall be shortened," to be a proof of having displeased God, that is, to be a punishment. He therefore prays God to remember also the good which he has striven to do, and "takes refuge in the promises which God had given in the Old Testament that good works should be rewarded by length of days" (Starke). For the rest, his words are not to be taken as referring in a general way to moral purity, but, as the expressions "with a perfect heart," and "good in thy sight" show, as referring especially to his zeal for the pure worship of Jehovah, and his earnestness against every form of idolatry. (On שָׁלֵם see notes on 1 Kings xi. 4 and 6.)—**And Hezekiah wept sore.** Josephus declares that, in addition to the disease, there was now great ἀθυμία, because he was to die childless and leave the kingdom without an heir, and that, in this difficulty, he prayed to God with tears, that He would allow him to live a little longer until he had become a father. The Church fathers and many other ancient expositors adopt this conception of the circumstances, and point, in its support, to the fact that the son and successor of Hezekiah, Manasseh, was only twelve years old when his father died (chap. xxi. 1), that is, he was born three years after this illness. Ewald calls this a "fiction" and appeals to Isai. xxxviii. 19 and xxxix. 7. It certainly is hardly credible that Hezekiah was childless at the age of thirty-nine; it is not necessary to assume that Manasseh was the oldest son (see note on 1 Kings i. 5); and it is possible that the older sons had died before Hezekiah did. The only reason for his tears is the one which he gives in his hymn of thanksgiving, Isai. xxxviii. 10 *sq.*

Ver. 4. **Afore Isaiah had gone out into the middle city.** The middle city is "the central part of the city, *i. e.*, of Mt. Zion where the royal castle was situated." The keri חָצֵר ("the middle court" [E. V.], not of the temple but of the castle), is presented by all the ancient versions, but it is only an interpretation of עִיר as referring to the castle after the analogy of x. 25 (Keil). הַתִּיכֹנָה does not mean the "inner" city, in contrast with the houses which lay outside of the wall of Mt. Zion (Knobel), but only, the middle one.—The words in

ver. 5 from "behold" to "house of the Lord" are wanting in Isaiah xxxviii. 5, but are brought in in xxxviii. 22. At this point it is quite evident that the account in Isaiah is very much abbreviated. The words **on the third day** (ver. 5) need not be taken literally, but they certainly do not mean "within a few weeks" (Hitzig). The phrase, **prince of my people**, which is added, indicates the ground for assisting him.—On ver. 6 see notes on ver. 1. The closing words: **For mine own sake, &c.**, are wanting in Isaiah because they already occur in xix. 34 (Isai. xxxvii. 35). They have here the same force as there. They are not, therefore, to be understood as containing any special reference to the circumstance that Hezekiah had no son, but that, nevertheless, the house of David should not become extinct, as the old expositors understood.—דְּבֶלֶת תְּאֵנִים, ver. 7, means properly a pressed mass of figs. דְּבֶלֶת without תְּאֵנִים means a cake of figs (1 Sam. xxv. 18; xxx. 12). This was laid upon הַשְּׁחִין, strictly, *the inflammation*, hence, *the fester*, or *boil* (Job ii. 7; Ex. ix. 9). It is ordinarily understood to refer to a plague-sore, and it is inferred that Hezekiah was afflicted with "the plague which had carried off the Assyrian army" (Knobel), "the contagion of which had been transmitted to the king" (Winer and others); but this is utterly false. For, in the first place, שְׁחִין never occurs in reference to a plague, and then again, only one sore is here spoken of, whereas the plague produced several on different parts of the body. Moreover a plague or pestilence never occurs in isolated cases, but as an epidemic. There is not the slightest hint that any such disease raged in Jerusalem either before, or during, or after the Assyrian invasion. Still further, figs are not applied as a specific remedy for plague-sores. In pestilence "no medicines are administered except at the commencement of the disease, something to produce perspiration" (Winer, *R.-W.-B.* II. *s.* 233). Figs were the usual remedy for boils. Dioscorides says of them: διαφορεῖ σκληρίας; Pliny: *Ulcera aperit;* and Jerome remarks on Isai. xxxviii.: *Juxta artem medicorum omnis sanies siccioribus ficis atque contusis in cutis superficiem provocatur* (*cf.* Celsius, *Hierobot.* II. *p.* 373). We cannot define more nearly what sort of a boil it was. Ewald thinks it was "a fever-boil;" according to Thenius "a single carbuncle formed under the back of the head," but this is a pure guess. [The ground for Thenius' idea, which goes as far as is possible towards defining more nearly the character of the disease, is, that there was a single sore, and that it was about to prove fatal. A carbuncle, particularly in such a place, would answer this description.—W. G. S.]

Ver. 8. **And Hezekiah said unto Isaiah, What is the sign, &c.?** In his deep anxiety the sick man desires an external sign to strengthen his faith in the prophet's words. Such signs usually attended a prophet's promises (Isai. vii. 11, 14; chap. xix. 29). This demand of the king is not at all astonishing in view of the words addressed to Ahaz in Isai. vii. 11: "Ask a sign," &c. There also the prophet allowed the king to choose what the sign should be. Vers. 9, 10, and 11 are condensed in Isaiah into one verse. In ver. 9 Drechsler rejects the ordinary translation [that of the E. V.] which makes of the last part an alternative question. He asserts that that translation is "simply impossible." He translates: "The shadow shall advance ten degrees, or shall it recede ten degrees?" taking הָלַךְ as a command. "The prophet determines, in the first place, that it shall advance, then he interrupts himself, corrects himself, and leaves the king to determine which it shall do." But it is only in disjunctive questions that אִם means *or*, and the prophet does not "correct himself" in such a solemn expression. Keil also, in his new commentary, translates: "The shadow has advanced ten degrees—if it should recede ten degrees?" He takes the second clause hypothetically: "Whether it may indeed," &c., which is not only forced but also unclear. Hezekiah's answer presupposes a disjunctive question. As in Isai. vii. 11, the prophet asks the king whether he will ask a sign in the depth or in the height, so here he asks Hezekiah whether the sign of the shadow shall be that it shall go forward or backward. It cannot be objected that הֲ is wanting with הָלַךְ, for this is often the case, and the question is designated only by the tone of the voice (Gen. xxvii. 24; 2 Sam. xviii. 29. Gesen. *Gramm.* § 153. 1). [The argument for reading ver. 9 as a disjunctive question resolves itself into an inference from Hezekiah's answer. Regarding simply the grammar of ver. 9 there are two obstacles to this rendering; first, the omission of הֲ, which is never omitted in a *disjunctive* question, and secondly, the perfect tense הָלַךְ. Keil's translation is therefore better. "The shadow has advanced ten degrees—if it should recede ten degrees?" would that be a satisfactory sign? It is true that the answer of Hezekiah does not seem to fit well to this question. The only other and more satisfactory solution of the difficulty is that which involves an alteration of the text. Knobel and Hitzig read הָלֹךְ. It seems necessary to supply also הֲ as having fallen out before הָלֹךְ. The reading would then be: What sign shall there be? The shadow's advancing? or shall the shadow recede? Keil's objection (*Comm. s.* 344 note 2), that the inf. abs. would, in that case, be used for the future, would not apply. The inf. abs. must be understood in its most ordinary use to express directly and simply the verbal idea.—See *Gramm.* and also *Exeg.* notes on אָכוֹל, chap. xix. 29.—W. G. S.].—The words צֵל and מַעֲלוֹת refer to the instrument which we call a sundial, and which the ancients called a shadow-measurer (Plin. xxxvi. 15), because the hour of the day was estimated by the length of the shadow. It is evident from this that these instruments were not arranged by them as they are by us (see Martini, *Von den Sonnenuhren der Alten*, Leipzig, 1777, *s.* 35). The מַעֲלוֹת served to indicate the time. It is generally supposed that they were the degrees or lines (Vulg. *lineæ*) of the scale on the indicator of the sun-dial. But מַעֲלָה means a *going up, an ascent*, or *that which ascends*, hence *a step* (1 Kings x. 19; 2 Kings ix. 13), never a grade, a degree, or a line (see Knobel on Isai. xxxviii. 8). The Sept. al-

ways render it by ἀναβαθμοί. The shadow-measurer must, therefore, have had steps like a pair of stairs. As it is called in ver. 10: "the steps of Ahaz;" it has often been supposed that it consisted of the stairs to the royal palace. Stairs, however, as distinguished from steps, were called עוֹלָה (Ezek. xl. 26), and why should the stairs of the royal palace, which had long been in their place, be called the stairs of Ahaz? It is evident that the shadow-measurer was an instrument by itself and not a part of the royal palace. It was "an arrangement contrived especially to measure the length of the shadow as a means of learning the hour" (Thenius). It is not possible now to say how it was contrived. Among the numerous guesses which have been made as to the mode of its construction (Winer, *R.-W.-B.* I. *s.* 498 *sq.*) the simplest and most natural seems to us to be that it was a column with circular steps surrounding it. "This column cast the shadow of its top at noon upon its uppermost, and morning and evening upon the lowest step, and thus designated the hour of the day" (Knobel). The prophet's question gives rise to the supposition that there were twenty of these steps, so that the shadow could go forward or backward ten degrees. "If the sign was given an hour before sunset then the shadow, returning ten degrees of a half-hour each, came back to the point at which it stood at noon" (Delitzsch). It is impossible to draw any inference from this as to the division of hours among the Jews, for it is probable that they did not have any such division before the captivity (Winer, *l. c.* II. *s.* 560). The fact that the sun-dial was named after Ahaz is doubtless due to its having been first set up by him in the court of the palace. According to Herodotus (ii. 109) it was a Babylonian invention, and as the Babylonians were then in continual intercourse with the Assyrians, Ahaz may have become acquainted with it through the latter, just as he borrowed from them the plan of the new altar (xvi. 10). ["To them (the Assyrians) also is to be attributed the institution of the week of seven days, dedicated to the seven planetary bodies worshipped by them as divine beings, and the order assigned by them to the days has not been changed from time immemorial. Having invented the gnomon, they were the first to divide the day into twenty-four hours, the hours into sixty minutes, and the minutes into sixty seconds" (Lenormant I. 449). They had a sexagesimal system of notation (Chevallier, *ibid.*).]

Ver. 10. **And Hezekiah answered: It is a light thing.** Clericus thinks that Hezekiah answered the prophet's question *non satis prudenter*, for that it would be as difficult for the shadow to advance as to recede. But Starke observes correctly: "As the shadow, in the ordinary course of things, always advances and never recedes, the king chooses that which appears to be the more difficult in order that the proof may be the clearer." Full of his ardent wish that the shadow of death (Matt. iv. 16) may not extend any further, but may become shorter, he naturally chooses the latter movement for the shadow on the dial. **And Isaiah the prophet cried unto the Lord,** &c., ver. 11. Thenius arbitrarily asserts that "these words do not belong to history, but express the mode of conception prevalent at the time the history was written" [in other words, that Isaiah did not, as an actual matter of history, at this point in his conversation with the king, "cry to the Lord," but that the historian's idea of what a prophet would do under such circumstances was, that he would at this point cry to God, and that he accordingly inserted here a mention of Isaiah's having done so]. The prophets were accustomed, before giving a sign to confirm their utterances, to call upon God, because they knew, and every one else was to be taught, that the sign did not come from them but from God (1 Kings xvii. 20; xviii. 36; 2 Kings iv. 33; vi. 17; *cf.* John xi. 41). As in ver. 9 so also here in ver. 11, a movement forwards and backwards is ascribed, not to the sun but to the shadow. In this sign, all turned upon the shadow, not upon the sun. Thenius thinks that הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ must be supplied as a subject to יָרְדָה, because it is a feminine form, while צֵל is masculine, but, in view of the variableness of the Hebrew genders, we cannot draw an inference from this feminine form which shall contradict the clear sense of the words (see Drechsler on Isai. xxxviii. 8). The account in Isaiah has instead of this verse: "Behold, I will bring again the shadow of the degrees, which is gone down in the sun-dial of Ahaz, ten degrees backward. So the sun returned ten degrees, by which degrees it was gone down;" but here also צֵל must be understood as the subject of the first יָרְדָה, and, in the case of the second יָרְדָה, we must understand that the reference is not to any movement of the sun, but to a movement of the shadow caused by the sun. Drechsler correctly observes on the words: "And the sun turned backward:" "that is to say, of course, that the sunshine moved backwards on the indicator [better, the steps] on which it fell." (*Cf.* also Delitsch on Isai. xxxviii. 8.) The account in Kings is more detailed and more accurate than that in Isaiah, for the latter omits vers. 10 and 11, and mentions briefly, in vers. 21 and 22, after the thanksgiving of Hezekiah (xxxviii. 9–20), that which is here given in vers. 7 and 8, as if the figs had not been applied until after the מִכְתָּב of Hezekiah.

[The story of the incident is complete without vers. 7–11. Hezekiah's recovery is mentioned in ver. 7, and it is a surprise to read in ver. 8 a request from him to be assured by a sign that he shall be healed. This lack of unity in the story seems to point to the fact that two independent traditions in regard to Hezekiah's illness are here combined. Unfortunately the account in Isaiah is also somewhat disjointed. Isai. xxxviii. 21 and 22 brings in the account of the king's recovery as a sort of supplement, or after thought. He there asks for a sign that he shall *go to the temple on the third day*, not, that he shall recover.—See further the bracketed addition to *Histor.* § 4.—W. G. S.]

Ver. 12. **At that time Berodach-baladan, &c.** This took place "certainly not very soon after what is narrated above, for, at that time, news travelled slowly, and journeys took time" (Thenius), but it certainly was not as late as 703 [See *Supplem. Note* after the *Exeg.* section on chaps. xviii. and xix., and the similar *Note* after the present *Exeg.* section], as Knobel thinks, that is ten years after, for the ostensible object of the em-

bassy was to congratulate the king on his recovery. בְּרֹאדַךְ stands for מְרֹאדַךְ Isai. xxxix. 1. It is not an error, but simply an interchange of the labials, as in בָּרִיא and מָרִיא. Merodach is really the name of the Babylonian Mars (Jerem. l. 2). [See *Exeg.* notes on xvi. 3; xvii. 16; 30 and 31.—*Merodach* belonged to the third rank of gods in the Babylonian Pantheon. This rank consisted of five gods representing the five planets. Merodach was equivalent to Jupiter, and was identified with the planet which we call by that name. He was one of the chief gods at Babylon and had two shrines (one mystic) in the great pyramid there. Nebuchadnezzar speaks of having adorned this pyramid and these shrines. Merodach was a secondary form or emanation of Bel (Baal). "He was called 'the ancient one of the gods, the supreme judge, the master of the horoscope;' he was represented as a man erect and walking, and with a naked sword in his hand." (Lenormant, I. 454 *sq.*)] It was the custom of the Babylonians and Assyrians to give their kings the names of divinities. Baladan is, according to the Aramaic, equivalent to בַּעַל אָדוֹן. On the question whether this king was the *Μαρδοκέμπαδος* in the *Canon Ptol.*, who reigned twelve years, or the Merodach-baladan in the *Chron. Armen.* of Eusebius (Berosus), who only reigned six months, see Niebuhr, *Gesch. Assyr.* s. 40 and 75 *sq.*, and Delitsch on Isai. xxxviii. 1. [See *Supplem. Note* at the end of this section.]—According to 2 Chron. xxxii. 31, the object of the embassy was, not only to congratulate Hezekiah on his recovery, but also to get information about the miracle, that is about the "sign" of the prophet. Evidently this was only the ostensible object; consequently Josephus does not mention it at all (*Ant.* x. 2, 2), but only gives the true one: *σύμμαχόν τε αὐτὸν εἶναι παρεκάλει καὶ φίλον.* The kings of Babylon, who at that time were under the Assyrian supremacy, sought to free themselves from it. The present time, when Sennacherib had suffered a severe calamity, seemed to them to be the best opportunity. "The object of the embassy was to form an alliance with a king who had successfully resisted the Assyrian power" (Von Gerlach). Hence it follows that Hezekiah's illness fell in the time after and not before the Assyrian invasion. His recovery gave the king of Babylon the pretext he desired for sending an embassy. He did not care much to offer an empty congratulation. His object was, to "find out the strength of the kingdom of Judah" (Ewald). The ambassadors succeeded in inducing Hezekiah himself to give them full information in regard to this.—Ver. 13. **And Hezekiah rejoiced on account of them,** certainly not merely on account of their civility in coming to see him, and congratulate him, but also on account of the real object of their visit, which he easily perceived, even if they did not expressly make it known to him. An alliance with the Babylonians, whose power was then on the increase, seemed to him to be very advantageous to his kingdom, and to assure him against further danger from the Assyrians. He therefore showed them his treasury, his armory, &c., in order to show them that his means were not so entirely exhausted as might be expected after the Assyrian invasion. Drechsler justly remarks upon the enumeration of the different objects which follows, that "it lay in the interest of the narrator to enumerate as many as possible of these objects, in order to show that Hezekiah exerted himself to bring out and show everything which could set off his military strength and resources." First the treasury is mentioned, in which silver and gold were stored. נְכֹת is not to be connected with נְכֹאת (Gen. xxxvii. 25; xliii. 11) *i. e.*, *spice*, especially the gum of the tragacanth which grows in Syria (why should the "spice-house" be mentioned first of all, before the silver and gold?). The word comes rather from the unused root כּוּת, equivalent to כּוּם: *conceal, cover, preserve* (see Fürst, *s. v.*), so that it means "treasure-house," or "store-house." The assumption that it was first used for storing spices, but then for storing gold and silver (Gesenius), is at least unnecessary. [The etymology suggested by Fürst and adopted by Bähr is very uncertain and improbable. It does not appear that כּוּם has the sense attributed to it. Gesenius' explanation is the best, and is the one almost universally adopted. נְכֹת—נְכֹאת *spice.* The spice-house is the one used for storing spices—which were always reckoned as precious articles. The name then passed over to a store-house, or treasury, for precious articles of all sorts.—W. G. S.]. בְּשָׂמִים, *perfume,* the general expression for all objects which have a pleasant smell, which were used either for incense or for ointment, and which were highly esteemed. "At courts it was considered highly important to have a good stock of these" (Winer II. s. 495 *sq.*). The rabbis, whom Movers and Keil follow, say that שֶׁמֶן הַטּוֹב is not fine olive-oil, but balsam-oil manufactured from the products of the royal gardens. The armory which here stands in contrast with the treasury is without doubt the house of the forest of Lebanon (see notes on 1 Kings vii. 2). **In all his dominion,** *i. e.*, "throughout the extent of his authority; not only in the royal castle, but throughout his kingdom" (Drechsler). It has been asked whence all these treasures came, since Hezekiah had to give up all his gold and silver to Sennacherib, and even to take off the gold coverings to the doorposts of the temple, which he had himself given in order to satisfy Sennacherib (chap. xviii. 14–16). The answer is not difficult. Sennacherib had only demanded gold and silver, not perfume, nor oil, nor even arms, and with these last Hezekiah had abundantly supplied himself at the approach of the Assyrians (2 Chron. xxxii. 5). The armory was therefore full, and the spices all remained. As for the silver and gold, it is evident from ver. 17 ("and that which thy fathers have laid up in store") that Hezekiah had not given up all, but still retained some of the ancient articles which had been handed down. He preferred to take the temple adornments which he himself had given, rather than to give up these articles which perhaps were hidden away in subterranean places of security. "The Chronicler also relates (II. xxxii. 23), in a credible manner, that, after the retreat of the Assyrians, many kings sent presents to Hezekiah" (Thenius). Finally, a great deal of booty may have been obtained from the camp of the Assyrians after their sudden flight, as Vitringa, Ewald, and Drechsler suggest. [See *Supplem. Note* after *Exeg.* on chaps. xviii. and xix. The tribute given by Hezekiah

is there mentioned in detail, from the inscriptions.]

Ver. 14. **Then came Isaiah the prophet unto king Hezekiah.** Isaiah perceived the real object of the Babylonian embassy. He saw that the object was not merely to congratulate the king on his recovery and to satisfy their curiosity, but that they also desired to draw Hezekiah into an alliance, and he saw that the king was disposed to enter into one. He therefore felt himself impelled to go to the king and to call him to account. This he does by a question which, however, involves a strong affirmation: I know what has been done, but why hast thou done it? He desired a confession from the mouth of the king himself. As he had zealously protested before against any alliance with Egypt and Assyria, so he now warned the king against Babylon, and showed him what was to be apprehended from that quarter. Hezekiah's unembarrassed reply (ver. 15) shows that he supposed that he was doing right. "Hear," the prophet rejoins, "Jehovah's word" (ver. 16); thou hopest for help and deliverance from Babylon, but this very Babylon shall bring to thy kingdom and people ruin and destruction. These, to whom thou hast shown all that thou hast, will take away all this and more besides; they will take away even thy children and make them servants at their court. Ver. 18. **That shall issue out of thee, that thou shalt beget**—not his own sons, strictly speaking, but his descendants, a sense in which בֵּן is so often used. Although סָרִיסִים really means *eunuchs*, and although "the proper sting of the assertion in this verse is not to be unnecessarily blunted" (Drechsler), nevertheless we must not insist upon the literal force of the word, as Gesenius does, but understand by it *footmen*, or *court attendants* (1 Sam. viii. 15), as we see from the example of Daniel (Dan. i. 8), who was not a eunuch. There was humiliation enough in *this* prospect.

Ver. 19. **Then said Hezekiah unto Isaiah.**—He subjects himself in humility, and in submission to the will of God, and to the prophet's words, as Eli did, 1 Sam. iii. 18, *cf.* the same expression 1 Kings ii. 38, 42. טוֹב cannot here mean *kind* (Umbreit), for the words in vers. 17 and 18 were not "kind;" nevertheless they were *good* in the fullest sense of the word, inasmuch as they were the words of God.—"They were such that there was no fault to be found with them" (Lange). Clericus remarks on the word; *Bonum vocatur id, in quo acquiescere par est, quippe ab eo profectum, qui nihil facit, quod non tantum justissimum, sed quod summa bonitate non sit temperatum, etiam cum pœnas sumit.* The second וַיֹּאמֶר shows that after the first part of the answer there was a pause, and that the following words were not addressed directly to Isaiah, although they were spoken before he went away; not, as Knobel thinks, after he was gone. הֲלוֹא is strictly *nonne?* "The interrogative force is often lost, and it does not differ from הֵן or הִנֵּה. See 1 Sam. xx. 37; 2 Sam. xv. 35; Job xxii. 12" (Gesenius). אִם is a particle of wishing (Ps. lxxxi. 8; cxxxix. 18). Calmet renders the sense thus: *Justa sunt omnia, quæcunque Deus sancivit, sed utinam coërceat ultionis suæ cursum, quamdiu vivo.* This seems simpler and more natural than Keil's translation: "Is it not so, *i. e.*, is it not pure goodness if peace and security are to last through my days (as long as I live)?" Instead of הֲלֹא אִם we find in Isai. xxxix. 8, כִּי, which is by no means to be preferred, for the translation: "For there will be peace" does not join on well to what precedes. According to Knobel כִּי simply introduces the direct discourse. It is an error to translate, as is often done: "Very well! so long as there may only be peace and security in my time," and to take the words as an expression of "naive" (Gesenius), or "easy" (Knobel), or "genuine oriental" (Hitzig) egotism, as if, as some of the rabbis indeed understand it (see Jerome on Isai. xxxix.), he did not trouble himself about his people. On the contrary, it is out of love for them that he does not wish to survive or see their destruction. His words are an expression of pain (Josephus: λυπηθείς), and not of easy selfishness. Drechsler and Keil understand אֱמֶת to refer to the "faithfulness of God, who keeps the covenant of grace which He has made with the humble," and Hitzig understands it of the faithfulness of men, "who keep the peace and observe treaties." But, as there is no reference here to peace with God (see vers. 17 and 18), so it cannot refer to His faithfulness, much less to that of the Babylonians, who, as yet, had made no treaty. אֱמֶת is rather a synonym of שָׁלוֹם, and signifies *permanence, security.* It cannot be understood otherwise in Jer. xxxiii. 6, where it stands in the same connection (*cf.* Jerem. xiv. 13). Vitringa: *status rerum stabilis.*

Ver. 20. **And the rest of the acts, &c.** In the notice of the close of Hezekiah's reign, vers. 20 and 21, we find inserted in the ordinary formula especial mention of his גְּבוּרָה (see *Exeg.* on 1 Kings xv. 23), and also of the aqueduct which he built, and which was of permanent utility to the city. The panegyric of Hezekiah in Sir. xlviii. 17, makes especial mention of the same. The reference is, of course, to the aqueduct which Hezekiah caused to be built at the approach of the Assyrians, and not to the one which is mentioned chap. xviii. 17 and Isai. vii. 3. According to 2 Chron. xxxii. 3 *sq.* all the fountains outside of the city walls, also Gihon and its pools, were covered over, in order, in case of siege, to deprive the besiegers of the use of the water. Then the water was all collected and led under-ground into the city, where it flowed into the pool called after Hezekiah, now more generally known as the *Birket el Hamman.* (See Thenius, in the appendix to his *Commentar, s.* 18. Winer, *R.-W.-B.* II. *s.* 563. Keil on 2 Kings xviii. 17.)—According to 2 Chron. xxxii. 33, Hezekiah was buried "on the hill-slope [E. V. is incorrect] of the graves of the sons [descendants] of David," *i. e.*, he was not buried in the royal sepulchres. The additional remark: "And all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem did him honor at his death," shows that he was not buried elsewhere than in the royal sepulchres through lack of respect, but probably through lack of room, or because he himself had chosen this place.

[SUPPLEMENTARY NOTE *incorporating those re-*

sults of Assyrian and Babylonian investigations which bear on the elucidation of chap. xx. As we saw in the *Note* at the end of the *Exeg.* section on chaps. xviii. and xix., Rawlinson thinks that Sennacherib made two expeditions into Judah (or, at least, *sent* a second), in the year 700 or 698. Lenormant supposes that all the events mentioned occurred in one campaign, in 701–699. Hezekiah's sickness was of such a character (ver. 7) as to suggest a plague, the result of the Assyrian occupation. It occurred in 699 or 698. He, however, recovered. There can be no question that Hezekiah was in imminent danger of this kind at one time in his life, soon after the Assyrian invasion. As we shall see, below, the statement that his life was prolonged for fifteen years thereafter presents great difficulty. Rawlinson, although he puts Sennacherib's invasion in 700–698, puts Hezekiah's illness, and the visit of the Babylonians, in 713, on account of the biblical data. We must, however, accept the results of the investigations, and put the visit of the Babylonian ambassadors in 698–7. The sickness of the king was not an event of such a character as to be recorded in the history, if it were not for Isaiah's connection with it. On this account it was included at a later time, and, if it contains chronological statements which conflict with those which we find elsewhere, it is rather they than the others which must be disregarded. It is noticeable that the sickness is said to have occurred just in the middle of the king's reign, and, if the date were not well-known, and an arbitrary date had to be fixed upon by tradition, this is the one of all others which would be most likely to be chosen. Let us therefore disregard this statement rather than others, and put the king's illness in 698–7.

The world is always ready to worship success, without stopping to analyze it, and see on what it rests. Little Judah alone of the nations of Western Asia had escaped the Assyrians. It had not done so by virtue of its own strength, but by virtue of what must have appeared to the neighboring nations to be an accident. Nevertheless we find that an embassy came immediately afterwards, from Babylon, to form an alliance.

There was a king on the throne of Chaldea in 709 who is called *Merodach Baladan*, (Marduk-baliddin) in the inscription called the "Acts of Sargon." Lenormant identifies him with the Kinzirus of Ptolemy's canon; but that king reigned earlier, and the identification with Mardocempalus (721–709), which Rawlinson adopts, seems better. In 709 Sargon totally defeated this king at Dur-Yakin, a town on the Euphrates below Babylon. Babylon became subject to Assyria. (It had been free since 760. *Supp. Note.* on chap. xv). The defeated king either escaped in disguise or was taken prisoner; the inscription says one thing in one place and another in another. When we next meet with the same name, it is, therefore, doubtful whether it is the same person or his son. Merodach Baladan at any rate proved himself a patriotic Babylonian, and a determined foe of the Assyrians. Immediately after Sargon's assassination, in 704, Babylon revolted under Agises, but Merodach Baladan killed him, and himself took command (Lenormant). Sennacherib mentions, in his inscription, that his first campaign was against Merodach Baladan, and the armies of Elam, which were allied with him. He defeated and plundered them, spoiled Chaldea, and put a vassal king over it (703). While Sennacherib was engaged in Syria, Philistia, and Judah (see *Supp. Notes* on chaps. xvi., xvii., xviii. and xix.) Merodach Baladan escaped from prison, raised another revolt, and expelled the vassal king. Sennacherib, after his disaster in Judah, turned once more against Chaldea. It was now that Merodach Baladan sent to Hezekiah to try to form an alliance. Hezekiah was flattered by this and made a show of his treasures. He probably did not want the Babylonians to think that, after all, he was not an ally worth having. The result proved the justice of the prophet's warning. Merodach Baladan was again defeated. He died in exile soon after, and Chaldea was once more subjugated. Sennacherib set his son Asshur-nadin on the throne.

Some years of peace followed, during which Sennacherib was rebuilding Nineveh, which he did with great magnificence. But in 693, on the death of Asshur-nadin, Babylon once more revolted. For the next ten years Sennacherib was occupied in suppressing a series of fierce but unsuccessful revolts in Babylon, and in prosecuting wars in Elam and Susiana to punish the allies of the rebels. In 682 he made his son Esarhaddon viceroy of Babylon, having chastised the city with such severity as to leave it half-ruined. He was assassinated in 680 (Lenormant).

To return to Hezekiah. If he lived fifteen years after his illness, he died in 685, and reigned forty-two (not twenty-nine) years. Lenormant adopts this opinion, and adjusts other data to it thus: Manasseh was born in 797. He was recognized as king from his birth. The twenty-nine years of Hezekiah are reckoned to this time, and the fifty-five of Manasseh from it. Hezekiah died in 685, when Manasseh was twelve years old. Aside from the violence of this theory, it encounters numerous specific objections, and cannot be adopted. It is more reasonable to hold fast the twenty-nine years for Hezekiah's reign, and sacrifice the fifteen years stated as his new lease of life. See the first paragraph above. Hezekiah died in 698–7, and Manasseh was twelve years old at that time.—See *Note* 30 on the *Chronolog. Table* at the end of the volume.—W. G. S.]

HISTORICAL AND ETHICAL.

1. *The story of the illness of Hezekiah* "withdraws our attention from the external history of the kingdom, which is narrated in the foregoing chapters, and reveals to us the soul of the king. It leads us out of the city into the royal palace" (Umbreit). The announcement of his approaching death shocked him deeply; he turned away from those who surrounded him, and "wept sore," as if death were the end of all. What has become of his firm faith? Where is the fearless confidence with which a pious man faces death? Does this not seem like unmanly weakness, and like anything but submission to the will of God? But there are two things to be considered in explanation. Hezekiah had passed his whole life up to this point in anxiety and trouble; he had only just escaped a danger which threatened his kingdom and his life; he was now, for the first time, in a position to look forward with courage and hope to a period of peace, rest, and prosperity, and to the opportunity of doing more for his country than he had hitherto

been able to do. At this time, now, in the very prime of life, he was suddenly called to die and to give up all. He had succeeded to the throne in a time of deep decay, and had sought in every way to restore prosperity and strength, and now, when he was in a position to labor for this end with some success, he must leave all. Nothing could be more natural than that he, a man of warm and earnest feelings, from whom no stoical apathy was to be expected, should be terrified and shocked when he heard the prophet's words: Thou shalt die! He does not murmur or complain, still less does he, like Ahaziah (2 Kings i. 4–9), burst out in anger against the messenger of death. Neither does he simply resign himself; he bows humbly and pours out his grief in prayer to Him in whom he believed. Therefore his prayer finds an answer, which it never would have done if it had been made in womanish weakness or in that love of life which is displeasing to God. The fulfilment of his prayer is a proof that it was offered in a right spirit. The prayer came from a faithful, noble, and pious heart, as we see from his hymn of thanksgiving, Isai. xxxviii. 9–20. He had in mind the words, Ps. cxlv. 18 and 19. In the second place it is to be remembered that Hezekiah belonged to the pious men of the *Old* Testament, who had not that hope and confidence which belongs to those who know Him who has conquered death; that he had never heard the words: "Thanks be to God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Cor. xv. 57). The promises in the Old Testament economy all refer to this life and to the bliss of communion with the living God. Death had not yet lost its sting. Hence the terror with which even the pious men of the Old Testament looked forward to it, while the pious men of the New Covenant look up in full confidence to Him who has robbed death of its power, and in Whom all promises are yea and amen.

2. *Hezekiah's prayer* has been interpreted as "self praise," on account of the appeal which it contains to his righteous life (Thenius), and the ridiculous assertion has been made that "the Church, at least the Protestant Church, must, according to its standards, class him among the self-righteous" (Menzel). It is entirely left out of view, in this judgment, that Hezekiah stood in the economy of the Old Testament, that is, in the economy of legal righteousness; that the entire revelation of the Old Testament is concentrated in the Law of Moses, as that of the New Testament is concentrated in the Gospel; and that to walk according to this Law is not to be virtuous, morally pure, and free from sin, but to serve Jehovah as the only God, to fear Him, to trust Him, and to love Him with all the heart (Deut. vi. 1–5). Hezekiah did not know any more about the modern doctrine that a man should practise virtue simply for the sake of virtue, than he did about the evangelical doctrine that faith alone, without works, ensures salvation. He considered that death, which was announced to him, was a penalty inflicted by God, and he did not know how he had incurred it, since he had always endeavored to serve God to the best of his knowledge and conscience, and never had departed from Him. He comes before the judge of life and death and begs Him not to remember his sins alone, but also to remember that he has feared and worshipped Him. He could say all this without pharisaical "self-praise" (Luke xviii. 9–12), just as well as St. Paul could say, without self-righteousness: "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith" (2 Tim. iv. 7). The whole thanksgiving hymn, Isai. xxxviii., breathes humility before the Almighty and Holy One; there is not a hint of self-praise or of holiness by works in it. "Thou hast in love to my soul delivered it from the pit of corruption; for thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back" (Isai. xxxviii. 17). His greatest cause for grief was that he must go thither where he could no longer praise the Lord. Would that all who consider themselves virtuous and holy would show themselves as humble and penitent in the face of death as Hezekiah did.

[It cannot be denied that there is a great deal of special pleading in this criticism of Hezekiah's words. We have to be on our guard against setting out with a determination to see nothing but good in certain of these characters, and nothing but evil in certain others, and against warping facts to suit this foregone judgment, most of all, if "good" or "evil" are to be measured by modern standards. When Hezekiah says that he has walked before God with a perfect heart, and in fidelity, he refers to the requirements of the Mosaic Law, but when he says: "I have done good in thy sight," he means *moral* good—righteousness. He claims, in perfect honesty and simplicity, that he has done what is right. The answer to those who accuse him of self-praise is not to be found in twisting the words. Two things may be urged in answer, both of which are true as general principles, and are not suggested by the desire of establishing the saintliness of Hezekiah's character. The first is that, if he had really done what was right as far as he knew, and if his theology taught him that this calamity was a punishment which indicated that he had been doing wrong, then he had a full right to appeal to his conduct against this theological inference (*cf.* the argument of Eliphaz, Job iv. 5, particularly chap. iv. 7, and Job's answer, in which he justifies himself. See chap. xiii. 15, 23). Secondly: the naïve expression of Hezekiah, who *thinks* that he has done right and *says* so, is not to be judged by the modern mock-humility which often thinks that it *has* done right, and says that it has *not;* which assents to the doctrine that all have sinned, as a general theological proposition, while the individual who repeats it does not see, in his heart, that *he has sinned* after all. The Jewish theology taught that temporal calamities were judgments of God inflicted in punishment for sin. Hence it was inferred that a man who suffered misfortune *must* have sinned (Isai. liii. 4). Hezekiah had attempted to do right to the best of his ability. His conscience told him that he had been faithful to this effort, and in all truth and simplicity he expressed this conviction. It is evident that it is impertinent to judge any such naïve and truthful expression by our conventional modern standards of how much a man may be allowed to express of the sincere convictions of his heart, when they bear upon his own merits or abilities.—W. G. S.]

3. *The prophet Isaiah* here "meets us once more in all the glory of the prophetical dignity" (Umbreit). His conduct is based upon the premise of his prophetical character, without which it would be obscure and enigmatical. What he does and says, he does and says not in his own power, but as one who "stands before Jehovah" (1 Kings xvii. 1), and who is set "over nations and king-

doms to root out and to pull down and to destroy, to throw down, to build and to plant" (Jerem. i. 10). Mighty in word and deed, without fear of men or anxiety to please them, he threatens, and warns, and exhorts, and helps. He undertakes without hesitation the duty, heavy for him no doubt, of going into the palace to announce to his sovereign the terrible command: "Set thine house in order." Then he retires, leaving the king to the effects of this command, but soon returns and declares to the crushed monarch, who is absorbed in anxious prayer, the fulfilment of that prayer, the promise of complete and speedy recovery, nay even of a reign prolonged for as many years more as it had already lasted, and the protection of God throughout this time. What would become of the prophet if he did all this in obedience to his mere human judgment? According to the ordinary custom of the prophets (see 1 Kings xvii. *Hist.* § 6; Pt. II. pp. 17, 47, 58) he combines with the promise of recovery the use of an external means of healing. The cluster of figs here had just the same function as the means used by our Lord (John ix. 6, 14). It was not the cluster of figs which helped the man at the point of death, but the Almighty Lord of life and death. The ordinary means of healing was here a sign and pledge of the promised cure. As the *Berleburger Bibel* says: "Since this means could not have the power of curing in itself, it was used as a sign of the divine superhuman power." Isaiah did not employ the ordinary, natural means until he was sure of the divine help. It was just because this means of cure was the ordinary natural one, that Hezekiah wanted a "sign" that Jehovah would heal him (ver. 8), and did not have complete confidence in this remedy. It is, therefore, utterly erroneous to ascribe Hezekiah's cure to the cluster of figs, to talk about Isaiah's knowledge of medicine, and to draw the inference that the prophets were accustomed to act as "physicians" (Knobel, *Der Prophet. der Hebr.* I. *s.* 55. Winer, *R.-W.-B* II. *s.* 280). If the prophet had, as a physician, been sure of the efficacy of this remedy, he would have behaved in the most reprehensible manner in not applying it at once, and in beginning by announcing certain death.

4. *The sign*, which was granted to Hezekiah at his request, has intimate analogy with the prophetic declaration which it was intended to confirm. There could hardly be a more significant sign than one presented on the shadow-measurer, that is, the time-measurer, which was "arranged in the court of the palace before the king's windows" (Thenius). Every human life is like a day—it has its morning, its noon, and its evening, (Eccl. xi. 6; xii. 1, 2; Job xi. 17; Matt. 20. 3, *sq.*). The advance of the shadow shows the approach of evening (Jer. vi. 4; Job vii. 1, 2), which will be followed by darkness and night. Hezekiah's life-day was on the decline; the night of death was approaching; then it was promised him this day should stand once more at its noon, that the shadow of death should recede, and that the evening should once more become mid-day. The sign is not therefore "a mere pledge of the fulfilment of the promise in vers. 5 and 6," in which "there is no analogy to be traced with the fact of the prolongation of his life" (Thenius). On the contrary, its significance is so apparent that it is difficult not to see it at once. This is not a mere trick of art or power, in place of which any other one might just as well have been chosen, any more than any of the other prophetic signs.—As for the physical features of the sign, many, starting from the supposition that a "violation of the order of the solar system" (Menzel), a miracle which involved the revolution of the earth on its axis in a direction contrary to its regular one, is here recorded, have been shocked and repelled, and have either sought to explain it naturally, or have characterized it as a myth. The old naturalistic explanations by a second-sun, a vapor cloud, or an earthquake (see Winer, *R.-W.-B.* I. *s.* 499), may all be passed over as antiquated. We need only take notice here of the two most recent attempts. According to Gumpach (*Alttestam. Studien*, I. *s.* 195 *sq.*), Isaiah turned about the foot of the index, which before was towards the East, so that the shadow, instead of running down, as before, would descend [ascend?]. In that case, however, the sign would be nothing but "a very simple trick" (Oehler), and the greatest prophet of the Old Testament would be nothing but a common juggler. This trivial hypothesis falls to the ground with the erroneous, at least unproven assumption, that the shadow-measurer had a gnomon with a foot-piece. According to Thenius, we have to understand that there was "a partial eclipse of the sun, unnoticed by most men." Such an one occurred, according to Prof. Seyffarth's communication to Thenius, on the 26th of Sept., 713, B.C., "which date is in perfect consistency with all the other chronological statements of the Book of Kings." He adds that during such an eclipse "a slight advance and recession of the shadow takes place." "Isaiah made use of his astronomical knowledge to give the king, in his despair, a sign which should rearouse his courage." This explanation, which no one else has yet adopted,—[Stanley (II. 537) says it is the only thing which could "illustrate" the cause of the phenomenon. He adds that he is informed that the variation would be almost imperceptible except to a scientific observer.]—rests upon the very doubtful assumption [?] that there was a partial eclipse of the sun in the year 713, and upon the still more doubtful assumption that Isaiah had great astronomical knowledge, and knew how to make shrewd use of it upon occasion. It is, therefore, a most unfortunate attempt. Let us have done with attempts to explain facts and events, which the historian distinctly declares to be miracles, by naturalistic hypotheses. Modern criticism does not indeed any longer deny that a miracle is here recorded, but disposes of it as a myth, and asserts either that a natural event was at a later time exaggerated and embellished with miraculous details, or that this story grew up through tradition out of the simple promise of the prophet, that, as the sun, after going down, returns and repeats its course, so Hezekiah's life should, though it had reached its limit, take a new start, and go on for a time longer (Knobel, Hitzig). Ewald's notion amounts to the same thing. He says: "It must not be overlooked that this story was not written down, in its present form, until twenty years or more after the event, and after the death of Hezekiah and of Isaiah. Isaiah's good influence in this incident, even on the domestic life of the good prince, stands firm as an historical fact, and his words of trust and consolation no doubt miraculously (!) encouraged the

king." In this way, it is true, we glide most easily over all difficulties. But it is a purely self-willed assumption, which has no foundation save dislike for everything miraculous, that this story was not recorded in its present form until twenty years after the event, and that it is a product of tradition. The two records of it are, in the main points, identical. Both are taken, as was shown above, from an older authority, with which we are not acquainted, and of which we cannot assert that it was first written years after the death of Hezekiah and Isaiah, at a time when tradition had already converted the history of this incident into a myth. The Chronicler also, although his record is very brief, speaks of a מוֹפֵת (2 Chron. xxxii. 24). Critical science first exaggerates the miracle, and makes of it an event which would produce a cataclysm on earth, in order to have so much more ground for declaring it a myth. But there is no hint of any such event in the text. The miracle "was not visible everywhere, but only in Jerusalem," and "since it is a case of a sign which was to serve as a pledge, and did not need to be supernatural, it was accomplished by a phenomenon of refraction in the rays of light" (Keil), "for it is sufficient that the shadow, which in the afternoon was below, by a sudden refraction should be bent upwards" (Delitzsch). There are "certain weak analogies in the natural course of nature, as, for instance, the phenomenon cited by many expositors, which occurred in the year 1703, at Metz, in Lothringia, and which was observed by the prior of the Monastery there, P. Romuald, and many others, that the shadow on a sun-dial receded an hour and a half" (Keil).

[Bosanquet, in an Essay published in the *Jour. of the Royal Asiatic Soc.*, Vol. XV., offers a solution of this phenomenon from the features of an eclipse. This eclipse took place in the year 689, on the 11th of January. He founds upon this an argument that that must have been the year of Hezekiah's sickness, but this argument has not been considered conclusive as against other data. We mention it here only as a proffered explanation of the manner in which such a phenomenon might have been perceived, without involving a reversed motion of the earth. For a few days before and after the winter solstice, the sun's altitude at noon at Jerusalem is about 34°. If the "steps of Ahaz" were a flight of steps in the palace court mounting from north to south, at an angle of about 34°, then the sun would throw a shadow down them at noon which would just tip the top step. The upper limb of the sun would alone rise above the object (a roof, for instance) which threw the shadow. If the upper limb were eclipsed, the moon, in passing over the sun's disk, would cut off the sunlight, and the shadow would once more descend the stairs. As the moon passed away the sunlight would once more pass below it and above the roof, and once more light the whole stair. The same explanation would apply to the dial if it were a small stair-like instrument, used for measuring time. An eclipse, to accomplish what is here supposed, must be nearly total, must be on the upper limb of the sun, must occur within twenty days of the winter solstice, and at noon of the day. Any contribution, in the way of explanation, ought to be carefully considered, but there are grave objections to this one. (*a*) The date of the eclipse, which is found to satisfy the conditions tolerably well, is irreconcilable with other data. (*b*) The phenomenon would be very slight, and only noticeable to careful observation, or under the most marvellous concatenation of circumstances. (*c*) It can hardly be believed, after reading the text, that the king had seen the shadow abnormally recede, and that the "miracle" consisted in its returning to its regular and proper place and motion.—W. G. S.]

5. *The narrative of the embassy of the king of Babylon to Hezekiah* hinges upon the prophecy of Isaiah, in which, for the first time, the downfall of the kingdom of Judah and the Babylonian captivity are foretold. This incident, like the two previous ones, is recorded in the book of Isaiah on account of his prophecies, which form the kernel of each. Hezekiah's behavior, it is true, occasioned the prophecy, but the prophecy is the main thing, and *it* throws the proper light upon his conduct. Drechsler: "Evidently the arrival of these ambassadors flattered Hezekiah's vanity so much that he forgot the rules of ordinary prudence." Umbreit: "Hardly has the king escaped death and won a new lease of life, and found the treasure in heaven, before his heart is once more set upon the treasure of earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt. Instead of making known to the ambassadors the glory of God, he shows them, boastfully, the perishable riches of his palace." Hezekiah, according to the prevailing opinion of the commentators, shows his treasures out of boastfulness and love of display, and hence the "bold moral preacher" (Köster), the prophet, pronounced to him the fitting rebuke, and announced the coming punishment. But this conception is certainly erroneous. There is no sign of love of display or of vanity in anything which is recorded of Hezekiah. Drechsler himself exclaims: "What a contrast to the tone of Isai. xxxviii.!" This very contrast is an argument against the above conception of the disposition in which Hezekiah acted. A proud and vain man would have answered the prophet, when he called him to account, in a very different manner, and would not have expressed himself so openly and unembarrassedly as Hezekiah does in ver. 15. His further reply in ver. 18 bears witness to anything but a haughty and vain character. But even supposing that he had been influenced by vanity on this occasion, this momentaneous weakness would be terribly punished by the threat of the loss of his kingdom. This threatened punishment would be out of all proportion to the fault, and would be tyrannical and oppressive. Thenius justly says: "Hezekiah's conduct towards the ambassadors did not proceed from vanity or love of display (Knobel).... He accepted with joy the offered alliance of the Babylonians in the hope of avenging (?) himself, and he showed them the extent of his resources in order to convince them that he would be no contemptible ally (Clericus)." In this, however, he had, on the one hand, departed from complete trust in God alone; and, on the other hand, he had lost sight of the ordinary dictates of prudence to an extent which must ultimately be ruinous to Judah and Jerusalem. The prophet's rebuke was meant to make him see this, and that must also be the sense of the Chronicler's brief notice (II., xxxii. 25), that Hezekiah "trusted too much to his own power." The occasion of the prophet's rebuke, and the thing which called for

punishment, was not the personal vanity of Hezekiah, but the fact that he, who had experienced such signal instances of Jehovah's power and willingness to save, and who had been so often warned against all complications with heathen nations, should enter with joy into an alliance with Babylon. This was a sin which was not to be expected in him, a sin against the theocratic and soteriological destiny of Israel.

6. *The prophet Isaiah appears here also in all his prophetical majesty*, although seen from a different side from before. There he appeared as a consoler, here as a messenger of the divine judgment. The latter, as well as the former, character belongs to the prophetical calling. The message announces the destruction, in the first place, of Hezekiah and his family, but then, by implication, that of the entire nation. "Not that the exile was inflicted as a punishment for this fault of Hezekiah" (Delitsch), but because the whole nation had incurred, though in a far higher degree, the same guilt as Hezekiah against the theocratic relationship to God, and was about to incur it still further, so that the measure would become full, and then the punishment threatened in the Law (Levit. xxvi. 33; Deut. iv. 27; xxviii. 36, 64) must fall. "The Babylonian Captivity," observes Starke on Isai. xxxix. 6, "would have taken place, even if Hezekiah had never committed this sin, but it would not have been foretold at this time, if this incident of the ambassadors had not occurred. It was meant, at the same time, to be a humiliation of Hezekiah on account of his fault." He received the prophet's announcement as such a humiliation, and hence he was spared the trial of himself experiencing the exile.

On account of the definiteness of the prediction, modern critical scholars have asserted that it is an *oraculum post eventum*, which originated with the historian (Knobel), or, at least, that the actual fulfilment determined "the light in which the prediction is set before us" (Ewald). [What he means is, that this historian, who had lived through, and been an eye-witness of, the capture of Jerusalem by the Babylonians, lends sharpness of outline and accuracy of detail to the picture, when he tells us how Isaiah had once foretold all this.] This, however, takes away the point from the whole story. It is true that "political sagacity might foresee the unfortunate consequences of Hezekiah's thoughtless conduct, but without prophetical inspiration it was impossible to foresee that Babylon, which was just struggling for independence, would supplant Assyria as the great world-monarchy, and that Babylon, and not Assyria, which was then threatening rebellious Judah, would really inflict the extremest woes upon her" (Delitsch). The definite reference to Babel, which is the thing that offends critical science, forms the point of prophecy. It was occasioned by the embassy from Babylon, and it is intended to signify to Hezekiah: This very Babylon, from which thou hopest to obtain help and support, will ruin thy nation and people. Isaiah does not appear here as a sagacious statesman any more than he appeared in the former incident as a skilful physician, or a learned astronomer. His words have not the form of wise advice, but of a divine sentence of condemnation. Their form, therefore, would be inexcusable, if the prophet was only expressing his personal misgivings and his human anticipations. Why shall he be made out to be everything possible, physician, astronomer, statesman, only not that which he claimed to be, and which he was, *viz.*, a prophet, who spake as he was "inspired by the Holy Ghost" (2 Peter i. 21)?

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

Vers. 1–11. Hezekiah's Illness "unto Death" and his Recovery from the same.—WÜRT. SUMM.: God sends illness upon the good, not in punishment for sins past, but as a trial of their faith and patience (Rom. v. 3) . . . or for His own glory (John ix. 3; xi. 4). By observing this we may the better possess our souls in patience (Luke xxi. 19). —CRAMER: Bodily illnesses are the forerunners of death, and God's means for fostering the health of the soul.—STARKE: God lays upon his children first one evil and then another. Hezekiah is first delivered from Sennacherib and the hands of man, and then he falls into the hands of God, who had before delivered him.—Ver. 1. HALL: Teachers and preachers must not conceal disagreeable truths from men, but make them known, whether they will be pleasant or not.—STARKE: We see, from the example of Isaiah, what is the duty of physicians and preachers towards the sick, viz., not to encourage them by false hopes of recovery, but at the right time to point out to them the duty of setting their house in order, and preparing themselves for death.—THE SAME: The rich and great should also be warned to prepare for death.—It is a great mercy of God to allow us to foresee our approaching end (Deut. xxxii. 48 *sq.*).—Every illness, even though it does not seem likely to be fatal, is a warning to prepare for death, a *memento mori*, which can harm no one, whereas it is very harmful if all thoughts of death and eternity are held far away. He who, in his days of health, thinks upon death, and faithfully believes in Him who has overcome death, is not terrified when he is commanded to set his house in order.—KYBURZ: Set thy house in order, O man! If thou hast no house, thou hast at least a soul. Prepare it as best thou mayst for death, for thou knowest not whether to-day or to-morrow thou wilt be called upon to quit this tabernacle. It is vain, however, to attempt to fit a soul for death by a sacrament, if it has not during its time of health and labor sanctified itself by holy deeds and by communion with God. How peacefully one may die, in spite of shrinking nature, if one can only say to God, as Hezekiah did: Thou knowest that I have walked faithfully before Thee.—As it is wise, in time of health and strength, to set one's house in order in a worldly sense, that is, to make one's will and arrange one's affairs, so is it still more wise to set one's house in order in a spiritual sense, and not to put off making one's peace with God until one stands on the brink of the grave.—Vers. 2 and 3. Hezekiah's Behavior at the Announcement of his Approaching Death. (*a*) He turned his face to the wall, that is, he turned away from all things earthly and temporal, to collect his thoughts. (*b*) He prayed to the Lord, that is, he sought refuge in Him alone. That is what we also should do in every illness.—STARKE: It promotes devotion to make one's prayers in secret and alone.—THE SAME: Children of God should not murmur when they are scourged of God, but kiss the rod (Micah

vii. 9; 1 Sam. iii. 18).—Fear of Death, its Cause, and how it may be overcome.—The wish of a dying man to live longer is not wicked, if it comes from the sentiment: *si diutius vivam, Deo vivam*, and has not its origin in the desire to enjoy the world and life a little longer. Paul desired to depart and be with Christ, but he admits that longer life enables one to bear more fruit (Phil. i. 21 and 22). "Let me live that I may serve thee; let me die that I may possess thee." Hezekiah's prayer in view of death did not come from a proud and self-righteous heart, but from a humble and penitent one. He based his prayer upon the promise which God had given to the faithful under the old covenant: Do this and thou shalt live (Luke x. 28; Levit. xviii. 5; Prov. x. 27). Therefore he was heard by God, Who resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble. So should we also, in the face of death, not console ourselves with our own righteousness and virtue, but build our hopes upon the promises which He has given us in the New Testament, and upon Him through whom our sins are forgiven. He that believeth in Him, though he were dead yet shall he live (Rom. x. 4; John xi. 25 *sq.*).—Vers. 4–6. The prayer of the righteous is very effectual when it is earnest (James v. 16; Ps. cxlv. 18; Sir. xxxv. 21; Isai. lxv. 24; xxx. 19).—The word of consolation to all who cry to the Lord with tears in sorrow and distress: "I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears."—How consoling to think that the length or the shortness of our days is in God's hand (Sir. xi. 14). "From sudden death, good Lord, deliver us."—CRAMER: The Lord always gives more than we pray for; the king prays for life, and He gives him long life (Ps. xxi. 5). Moreover, He promises him protection against Assyria, for He can do far more (Eph. iii. 20).—"Thou shalt go up into the house of the Lord." This was not a command, but a fulfilment of a wish and prayer, and it shows that Hezekiah loved the place where God's honor dwelt (Ps. xxvi 8; xxvii. 4).—The first steps after recovery should be to the house of God, to thank Him for restored health (Ps. lxvi. 12–14).—Ver. 7. The fact that God connected the healing of the king with the use of a certain remedy shows that we should not despise the means of healing, which are His gift, but should join the use of them with our prayers to Him (Sir. xxxviii. 1–4).—The Lord is the true physician, for it is He who either gives or denies efficacy to human remedies. One is relieved by the slightest remedy; for another the best and strongest is of no avail.—Ver. 8. CRAMER: God treats us like a good physician, not only as regards our bodies, but also as regards our souls. As the physician puts a staff in the hands of a yet feeble convalescent, so God grants to Hezekiah a "sign" as a staff for his faith (Isai. xlii. 3). So nowadays God grants the sacraments as means of strengthening our faith.—In the Old Covenant God gave many signs, in the New Covenant only one—Christ, the Sign of all signs. Therefore we should ask no other. When the Pharisees demanded a sign, Our Lord said: "O wicked and adulterous generation," &c. (Matt. xii. 38 *sq.*). The sign for all time is that He was dead and liveth again to all eternity, and holds the keys of death and hell. All signs, as well as all promises, are in Him yea and amen.—Vers. 9–11. God alone controls the index on the dial of life; to turn it forwards or backwards is the prerogative of His might and grace. Therefore, submit to His will, and say: "It is the Lord, let Him do what seemeth Him good" (1 Sam. iii. 18).

Vers. 12–19. The Embassy of the King of Babylon to Isaiah. (*a*) Hezekiah's conduct towards it; (*b*) what Isaiah declared to him on account of his reception of it (see *Histor.* § 6).—STARKE: The most grievous calamities are not as ruinous as the flatteries of the children of the world.—KYBURZ: In the storm Hezekiah was preserved; in the sunshine he was lost.—J. LANGE: It may well come to pass that a man who has bravely withstood a great trial falls under a slight one. Let him that standeth take heed lest he fall. The world nowadays often behaves as the king of Babylon did, for he did not care so much to make known by his embassy and gifts his sincere respect for Hezekiah, as he did to secure his alliance for his own advantage, and so secure his own ends (*cf.* Sir. vi. 6–9).—Ver. 13. PFAFF. BIBEL: We should not be too friendly with the enemies of the Lord, especially when they may misuse our friendship to our disadvantage. Friendship with the world is enmity to God; he who wishes to be a friend to the world becomes an enemy to God (James iv. 4).—The desire of making a display, and of infusing a high opinion of one's self into others, is often found even in those who are true Christians, and who have borne hard tests with success. Thus vanity clings to us and is the first thing and the last which we have to conquer in following Our Lord. Therefore watch and pray. The spirit indeed is willing but the flesh is weak. The Saviour said: "He that will follow me," &c. (Luke xiv. 33).—KYBURZ: We still show our spiritual treasures to the friends from Babylon, especially when we admire our own gifts, and like to have others admire them. As soon as strangers arrive we hasten to show our gifts, and powers, and accomplishments, in order to win respect. This is just the way to lose all those things. If one collects treasures let him store them up in heaven, where no spies will come to see them.—Ver. 14. It is a proof that He who watches over our souls is a good shepherd that he sees when we are about to depart from Him, or to transgress, and sends one of His faithful servants, or some faithful friend, to warn us, and to say: "Hear the word of the Lord!" Is such a friend always welcome to thee?—Ver. 15. He who denies his fault will never succeed in concealing it; he who confesses it will find pity (Prov. xxviii. 13; *cf.* 1 Chron. xxx. 17).—Vers. 17–19. ROOS: Worldly people, with whom a child of God thoughtlessly mingles, do him great harm. Happy is he who is set right again after every transgression by a word from God, as Hezekiah was! It is the just sentence of God that the staff in which we trusted becomes a rod for our punishment.—Ver. 19. From the example of Hezekiah we learn, when the word of God rebukes our vanity and love of display, our vacillation and our want of faith, to bow in submission and to say: "Good is the word of the Lord which thou hast spoken;" when we have shown true penitence, then we may also pray: *Da pacem, Domine, in diebus nostris!*

SECOND SECTION.

THE MONARCHY UNDER MANASSEH, AMON, AND JOSIAH.

(Chaps. XXI.-XXIII. 30.)

A.—*The Reigns of Manasseh and Amon.*

Chap. XXI. 1–26. (2 Chron. XXXIII.)

1 Manasseh *was* twelve years old when he began to reign, and reigned fifty
2 and five years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name *was* Hephzi-bah. And he
did *that which was* evil in the sight of the Lord, after the abominations of the
3 heathen, whom the Lord cast out before the children of Israel. For he built up
again the high places which Hezekiah his father had destroyed; and he reared
up altars for Baal, and made a grove [an Astarte-image], as did Ahab king of
4 Israel; and worshipped all the host of heaven, and served them. And he built
altars in the house of the Lord, of which[1] the Lord said, In Jerusalem will I
5 put my name. And he built altars for all the host of heaven in the two courts
6 of the house of the Lord. And [*omit* And] he [He also] made his son pass
through the fire, and observed times [practised sooth-saying], and used enchantments, and dealt with familiar spirits and wizards [patronized necromancers
and wizards][2]: he wrought much wickedness in the sight of the Lord, to pro-
7 voke *him* to anger.[3] And he set a graven image [copy] of the grove [Astarte-
image] that he had made in the house, of which the Lord said to David, and to
Solomon his son, In this house, and in Jerusalem, which I have chosen out of
8 all the tribes of Israel, will I put my name forever: Neither will I make the
feet of Israel move [wander] any more out of the land which I gave their fathers; [,] only [*omit* only] if they will [only][4] observe [take care] to do according to all that I have commanded them, and according to all the law that my
9 servant Moses commanded them.[5] But they hearkened not: and Manasseh
seduced them to do more evil than did the nations whom the Lord destroyed
before the children of Israel.
10, 11 And the Lord spake by his servants the prophets, saying, Because Manasseh king of Judah hath done these abominations, *and* hath done wickedly
above all that the Amorites did, which *were* before him, and hath made Judah
12 also to sin with his idols: Therefore thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Behold,
I *am* bringing *such* evil upon Jerusalem and Judah, that whosoever heareth of
13 it,[6] both his ears shall tingle. And I will stretch over Jerusalem the line of
Samaria, and the plummet of the house of Ahab; and I will wipe [out] Jerusalem as a *man* wipeth a dish, wiping *it*, and turning *it* upside down [—he
14 wipeth it and turneth it upside down].[7] And I will forsake [throw away] the
remnant of mine inheritance, and deliver them into the hand of their enemies;
15 and they shall become a prey and a spoil to all their enemies; Because they
have done *that which was* evil in my sight, and have provoked me to anger,
since the day their fathers came forth out of Egypt, even unto this day.
16 Moreover Manasseh shed innocent blood very much, till he had filled
Jerusalem from one end to another; besides his sin wherewith he made Judah
to sin, in doing *that which was* evil in the sight of the Lord.
17 Now the rest of the acts of Manasseh, and all that he did, and his sin
that he sinned, *are* they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings

18 of Judah? And Manasseh slept with his fathers, and was buried in the garden
of his own house, in the garden of Uzza: and Amon his son reigned in his
stead.
19 Amon *was* twenty and two years old when he began to reign, and he reigned
two years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name *was* Meshullemeth, the daugh-
20 ter of Haruz of Jotbah. And he did *that which was* evil in the sight of the
21 Lord, as his father Manasseh did. And he walked in all the way that his father
walked in, and served the idols that his father served, and worshipped them:
22 And he forsook the Lord God of his fathers, and walked not in the way of the
23 Lord. And the servants of Amon conspired against him, and slew the king in
24 his own house. And the people of the land slew all them that had conspired
against king Amon; and the people of the land made Josiah his son king in
25 his stead. Now the rest of the acts of Amon which he did, *are* they not writ-
26 ten in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Judah? And he was buried
[they buried him] in his sepulchre in the garden of Uzza: and Josiah his son
reigned in his stead.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

[1] Ver. 4. [אשׁר accus. after a verb of speaking, denoting that in respect to which. *Cf.* ver. 7 and Gen. xxii. 14 (Ew. § 282, a. 2).

[2] Ver. 6. [That is, he trained men by special education for this work and then gave them official position.

[3] Ver. 6. [The flow of the narrative is arrested in this verse in order to enumerate Manasseh's faults. Hence the use of the perf. consec. Ew. § 342, 6, 1.

[4] Ver. 8. [רַק אִם, *if only*, *cf.* Deut. xv. 5; 1 Kings viii. 25.

[5] Ver. 8. [וּלְכָל וגו׳.—"That which I commanded" and "the law which Moses commanded" are not two different things. וּלְכָל serves to gather up and recapitulate, so that it is equivalent to "namely" or "I mean," *cf.* Gen. ix. 10; xxiii. 10; 1 Chron. xiii. 1; xxviii. 1: 2 Chron. vii. 21 (לְ is wanting in 1 Kings ix. 8); Ezra i. 5; Jerem. xix. 18 (Ew. 310, a).

[6] Ver. 12. [The chetib presents an irregularity of gender, the masc. suff. referring to רעה. The keri corrects this.

[7] Ver. 13. ["The perf. מָחָה is very noticeable, especially in view of the accents. We should expect מָחֹה and that it would be connected with what follows" (Ew. *s.* 333, *nt.* 2).—W. G. S.]

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

Ver. 1. **Manasseh was twelve years old.** It is uncertain whether he was the eldest son of Hezekiah, and whether he had brothers; perhaps his elder brothers had died. "Perhaps a Gebirah (queen-mother) (1 Kings xv. 13) assumed authority until he attained to years of discretion" (Thenius). At any rate there is no hint of a regency. The name חֶפְצִי־בָהּ, My-delight-is-in-her, is applied symbolically to Mount Zion in Isai. lxii. 4.—From ver. 2 we see that the idol-worship which Manasseh introduced was, in the first place, that of Canaan (1 Kings xiv. 24; 2 Kings xvii. 8; xvi. 3).—Luther translates וַיָּשָׁב וַיִּבֶן, in ver. 3, after the *Vulg.* (*conversusque est et ædificavit*), and the Sept. (*καὶ ἐπέστρεψε καὶ ᾠκοδόμησε*): "*und verkehrte sich und bauete*" [went astray and built]. The two words, however, form one notion by an idiomatic use: he built *again* the high places which Hezekiah had removed. For the rest, see 1 Kings xvi. 32 *sq.* Ahab was the one who first introduced the worship of Baal and Astarte into Israel [see bracketed notes under *Exeg.* on xvi. 3 and xvii. 16.] אֲשֵׁרָה here refers no doubt to the Astarte-statue mentioned in ver. 7. In Chronicles we find the plural בְּעָלִים and אֲשֵׁרוֹת. The cause of this may be that each divinity, the male and the female, incorporated several attributes, each of which was separately worshipped. Manasseh introduced also, besides these two chief divinities, the Assyrio-Chaldean star-worship, the adoration of **All the host of heaven** (see chap. xxiii. 5, 11). [See *Exeg.* on xvii. 16. Also chap. xxiii. 12 shows that the astral worship, although extended and cultivated by Manasseh, was first introduced by *Ahaz.*] "This does not imply that the divinities of the Canaanites had no relation to the heavenly bodies, but this relation was subordinate in them" (Movers). From the star-worship arose sooth-saying and magic. Men saw in the stars the originators of all growth and all decay, and adored in them the controllers and directors of all sublunary affairs.—Vers. 4–7 contain a climax. The idolatrous (vers. 2 and 3) Manasseh built idol-altars even in the house of the Lord (ver. 4), and altars also for all the host of heaven, as well in the inner as in the outer court (ver. 5, וַיִּבֶן resumes בָּנָה in ver. 4), nay, he even went so far that he set up the image of Astarte (ver. 7) inside of the temple, perhaps in the holy place. On the formula: "I will put my name" (ver. 7) see *Exeg.* on 1 Kings xiv. 21. On הֶעֱבִיר בָּאֵשׁ see notes on chap. xvi. 3. Sooth-saying and magic are here united with this idolatrous ceremony as they are in chap. xvii. 17 (*cf.* Levit. xix. 26). So also in Deut. xviii. 10, 11, where the necromancers and augurs are also mentioned. Manasseh gave to these persons official position (עָשָׂה is used as in 1 Kings xii. 31). On כַּעַס see 1 Kings xiv. 1–20, *Hist.* § 3. On ver. 7 see 1 Kings viii. 16; ix. 3. The house of Jehovah could not be so utterly desecrated in any other

way as by setting up an idol in the very sanctuary, the "dwelling," הֵיכַל קָדְשֶׁךָ (Ps. v. 8; lxxix. 1). The selection of Israel to be God's peculiar people was thereby rejected.—The words in ver. 8 are explained by 2 Sam. vii. 10, and are added in order to make more apparent the greatness of the sin. Jehovah had, at first, only a dwelling in a tent in the midst of His people; afterwards He caused a house to be built for His dwelling, as a physical sign of His covenant with Israel (see the *Introd.* § 3, and 1 Kings 6, *Hist.* § 3, b.); and now in *this* house Manasseh set up an idol.—**More evil than did the nations,** &c. (ver. ix.). Not because the Canaanitish nations did not keep the law of Moses, but because they only worshipped their own national deities, while the Israelites adopted, not only the gods of the Canaanites, but also those of the Assyrians and Babylonians, and forsook their own God.

Ver. 10. **And the Lord spake by His servants,** &c. It is impossible to tell which prophets are meant, for no one of those whose writings we possess can be assigned with certainty to the reign of Manasseh. It is not certain that even Isaiah lived during any part of Manasseh's reign; still less is it certain that Habakkuk did so (though Keil supposes that Habak. i. 5 refers to this reign), for it is probable that he first appeared under Josiah (Winer, Delitzsch), or under Jehoiakim (Knobel). The **Amorites** (ver. 11) stand for Canaanites in general; see notes on 1 Kings xxi. 26; *cf.* Ezek. xvi. 3; Amos ii. 9. The expression: **both his ears shall tingle,** ver. 12, also occurs in 1 Sam. iii. 11 and Jerem. xix. 3. As a sharp, discordant note pains one's ears, so the news of this harsh punishment shall give pain to all who hear of it.—Ver. 13. **And I will stretch over Jerusalem the line of Samaria.** According to Grotius this means: *eadem mensura eam metiar, qua Samariam mensus sum.* So also Thenius: "Measuring line and plummet are here only symbols for testing by a standard," for, he says, a building is built with measuring line and plummet, but not torn down with them. However in Isai. xxxiv. 11 we read: He shall stretch out upon it the line of confusion (devastation) and the stones of emptiness ["plummet of desolation," Bähr], *cf.* also Lament. ii. 8. Now in the text before us, also, the reference is to devastation. The two implements of construction are employed where there is an empty space of ground, whether it be that no building has ever stood upon it, or that one which stood there has been torn down. We have to understand here a state of things symbolized by the latter of these cases. The metaphor therefore means: I will make Jerusalem even with the ground, like Samaria, so that a measuring line can be drawn over it, and its houses (families) shall perish like the family of Ahab. [Why is a measuring line or a plummet applied to a bare space of ground? Only as a preliminary to building, or re-building, upon it. There is no great applicability, therefore, in the metaphor as Bähr interprets it.—It means that God will come and apply severe standards of judgment to Jerusalem as He had to Samaria; that He will insist that it shall satisfy these standards; and that He will punish inexorably all shortcomings. Samaria had been thus tested, found wanting, and swept from the face of the earth,—so also should it be with Jerusalem.—W. G. S.] The following figure of the *dish* is parallel and similar, but stronger if anything. צַלַּחַת means really *something hollowed out*, hence, *a dish* (2 Chron. xxxv. 13; Prov. xix. 24), not a *wax-tablet* (Calmet). Thenius thinks that "the lower city, by its configuration, might well suggest the figure of a dish." However the fact may be in regard to that, we have not to understand that it was what suggested this figure. Neither is the metaphor that of "a hungry man who empties a dish and turns it wrong side up" (Ewald), but that of a person who, when he no longer wants to use a dish, wipes it out, and turns it over, that not a drop may remain in it. Kimchi expressly states that this was the usage of the Jews with dishes. The figure therefore "implies the complete overthrow and destruction of Jerusalem with all its inhabitants" (Keil). The comparison with a dish also involves some contempt. פָּנֶיהָ is the "upper side, as it were the face, in distinction from the back" (Thenius).—Ver. 14. **The remnant of my possession** is the two tribes which composed the kingdom of Judah, ten having been led into captivity. נָטַשׁ, *i. e.*, *to abandon*, but with the accessory notion of *throwing away* (1 Kings viii. 57; Judges vi. 13; Ezek. xxix. 5). The nation, when abandoned by Jehovah, necessarily becomes a spoil for its enemies (Isai. xlii. 22).

Ver. 16. **Moreover Manasseh shed innocent blood.** This verse is not a "continuation of the extract from the annals which was broken off at ver. 9" (Thenius). It is closely connected with what is read in vers. 10–15, and forms in a certain sense the crisis of what is narrated of Manasseh. This king not only introduced all sorts of idolatrous worship (vers. 1–9), but also, when Jehovah rebuked and warned him by His prophets (10–15), he not only did not profit by it, but filled the city with their blood and that of all the innocent persons who sided with them, and opposed his godlessness. פֶּה לָפֶה as in chap. x. 21 "from one edge to the other." Josephus (*Antiq.* x. 3, 1) affirms: *πάντας ὠμῶς τοὺς δικαίους τοὺς ἐν τοῖς Ἑβραίοις ἀπέκτεινεν, ἀλλ' οὐδὲ τῶν προφητῶν ἔσχε φειδώ· καὶ τούτων δέ τινας καθ' ἡμέραν ἀπέσφαξεν.* The latter statement does not, of course, apply to the whole duration of his reign; but there may have been a time during which innocent blood was daily shed. According to the Jewish tradition (*Gemara Jebam.* iv. 13; *cf. Sanhedr. f.* 103), which was taken up by the church fathers (Tertul. *De Patientia* 14. August. *De Civit. Dei* xviii. 24), Isaiah was put to death under Manasseh. It is said that he was sawed in two while fastened in a cedar tree in which he had taken refuge, *cf.* Hebr. xi. 37. [For the details of the legend see Stanley, II. p. 544.] But it is doubtful whether he lived under Manasseh. Isai. i. 1 does not say that he lived so long. He must, at any rate, have been very old. It is possible that he may have suffered a martyr's death, though not in the form asserted (*cf.* Winer, *R.-W.-B.* I. s. 554. Umbreit in Herzog's *Encyc.* IV. s. 598 *sq.*).

Ver. 17. *sq.* **Now the rest of the acts of Manasseh,** &c. Some further and very important facts in regard to Manasseh are recorded in 2 Chron. xxxiii. 11–20. The historical truth and

credibility of what is there recorded has indeed been denied (Gramberg, Winer, Hitzig, and others). On the other hand, Ewald, Thenius, Hävernick, Keil, and Bertheau, have, with justice, maintained the historical truth of those statements. The Chronicler appeals to the "annals of the kings of Israel," and to the דִּבְרֵי חוֹזָי as his authorities, and the entire Jewish tradition is built upon the facts which he records. "It is not astonishing that we do not find any reference to those facts in the book of Kings, when we consider the brevity of the narrative there given, a brevity which is to be explained by the fact that the author passes as curtly as possible by all periods of misfortune" (Bertheau). The apparent contradiction between 2 Chron. xxxiii. 15 and 2 Kings xxiii. 12 disappears, if we suppose (what is very possible) that Amon set up again the idols which Manasseh had removed, and that Josiah was the first who entirely did away with them (*cf.* E. Gerlach in the *Studien und Kritiken*, 1861, III.).—Ver. 18. **In the garden of his own house.** "בֵּיתוֹ cannot be the royal palace built by Solomon, because the garden belonging to it is called that of Uzzah, evidently referring to its former owner. בֵּיתוֹ must, therefore, refer to a pleasure-house belonging to Manasseh" (Keil). Thenius thinks that the "garden of Uzzah" (the name occurs several times: 2 Sam. vi. 8; 1 Chron. viii. 7; Ezra ii. 49; Nehem. vii. 51) was situated "in the Tyropœon, at the foot of the spur of Ophel." Robinson finds it on Mt. Zion. See further the notes on chap. xx. 21.

Ver. 19. **Amon was twenty and two years old when he began to reign.** The assertion that this king reigned twelve instead of two years (Ebrard in *Stud. und Kritik.* 1847, III. *s.* 644 *sq.*) rests upon very weak evidence, as Thenius has shown.—The city of Jotbah, from which his mother, Meshullemeth (that is, *Friend, sc. of God,* = *Pia*) came, was situated, according to Jerome, in Judah.—Ver. 23. **The servants of Amon** were unquestionably his court attendants. We have to understand, therefore, that it was a conspiracy in the palace. We cannot determine what causes led to this conspiracy.—By **the people of the land** (ver. 24) Thenius understands, here as in chap. xi. 14, the military forces of the nation, and he infers that Amon had made himself popular with the troops, and that Josiah had inspired some such hopes as Uzziah once did (chap. xiv. 21). There is no more reason to think of the army here than in chap. xi. 14. The murder of the king, who had only ruled for such a short time, by the attendants in the palace, may have embittered the people of Jerusalem so that they took revenge upon the murderers. Religious differences can scarcely have had anything to do with the matter, for the immediate attendants of the idolatrous king certainly did not belong to the persecuted Jehovah-party, and, if the king's idolatry had been displeasing to the people, they would not have put his murderers to death.

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[SUPPLEMENTARY NOTE *on contemporaneous history, with further information as to Manasseh from Assyrian sources.* As we approach the catastrophe of the history of Judah it is necessary to pay attention to those movements among neighboring nations which (humanly speaking) caused it, and determined its form.

We saw in the *Supp. Note* on chap. xx. that Sennacherib, having finally reduced Babylon to submission in 682, put his son Esarhaddon on the throne of that city as viceroy; also that Sennacherib was assassinated by two other of his sons in 681. The assassins were obliged to fly; Esarhaddon hastened to Nineveh and ascended the throne. He reigned from 681 to 667. Extensive records of his reign exist in the British Museum, only part of which have, as yet, been published or read (Lenormant). His first campaign was in Syria and Phœnicia (see *Supp. Note* on chap. xvii.). He conquered and plundered Phœnicia, and deported the inhabitants of Syria. He repopulated the country with Chaldeans and Elamites.

During this campaign he attacked Judah; took Manasseh captive, confined him in Babylon for a time, but then set him at liberty and restored him to the throne as a vassal (2 Chron. xxxiii. 11). Manasseh is mentioned on one of his inscriptions as tributary. Esarhaddon became attached to Babylon from his early residence there, and made it his home. That is probably the reason why he took Manasseh there, and not to Nineveh.

Esarhaddon's reign was spent in extensive and successful wars in Asia Minor, Arabia, Egypt (which he conquered), in suppressing stubborn revolts in Chaldea, and in punishing the Elamites and Susianians who assisted in them. We are not here interested in these wars further than this, that the Assyrian power was, during his reign, at its height, but that Babylon kept up a continual resistance.

Very much the same state of things continued under his successor. Esarhaddon abdicated in 668 in favor of his son, Asshurbanipal, who reigned until 647. He was warlike and able. Babylon was ruled by his brother, Shamulshamugin, as viceroy, but he revolted and headed an insurrection which included nearly all the tributary provinces. Egypt was permanently lost. Psammetichus becoming king. The remainder of the revolt, however, was speedily suppressed, though it took years to follow up and punish all the parties to it.

His successor was his son, Asshuredililani, who reigned from 647 to 625. Under him the Assyrian power declined (Lenormant). See *Supp. Note* on p. 285.

The explanation of the incessant revolts of Babylon is, that that city had a sacred character as the "home of the gods." It was so regarded by the Assyrians themselves, who knew how ancient it was, and revered it as their own place of origin. This veneration for Babylon served to keep the Babylonians continually restive under the supremacy of Assyria, and also to stay the hands of the conquerors whenever they were ready to destroy the city as a punishment for rebellion.

At the point which we have now reached (640), the time of Amon's death and Josiah's accession, the Assyrian power had barely begun to decline. The Median empire had been founded by Phraortes in 657. It had secured independence, and had made important conquests in Central Asia. Just about this time Phraortes thought himself strong enough to attack Assyria, but he was totally defeated in 635 (Lenormant). In Egypt, Psammetichus became independent of Assyria, and put an

end to the "Dodekarchy," about 650. Babylon was, for the time being, crushed, but it was only recovering strength for another revolt.—W. G. S.]

HISTORICAL AND ETHICAL.

1. *King Manasseh's* reign lasted longer than that of any other king in either kingdom, but we have relatively the very briefest account of it. The author restricts himself to a statement of Manasseh's disposition towards Jehovah and the Jehovah-worship. The explanation of this may be that, in general, "the Old Testament historians pass more hastily over periods which it is sad for them to recall" (Ewald). This shows, however, at the same time, that the disposition towards Jehovah is the main point of interest to the author in the history of each reign, and that everything else is subordinate to this, inasmuch as nothing else touches the soteriological development in the history. Manasseh's reign forms an epoch in that development, for, under him, the apostasy reached its height. If David was the model king, then Manasseh was his inverted image. It is true that many of his ancestors had tolerated idolatry, and practised it themselves. His grandfather, Ahaz, had even removed the ancient altar of burnt-offering and set up in its place another one which he had himself caused to be made on a heathen pattern, and had also sacrificed his son to Moloch (chap. xvi.); but Manasseh went so far as even to establish a special place of sacrifice for this god in the valley of Hinnom (chap. xxiii. 10; Jerem. vii. 31; xix. 6). Moreover he set up an idol in the temple itself, and that, too, an image of that goddess whose worship was connected with licentious rites and practices. In fact he made Jerusalem, the city which Jehovah had chosen for His own abode, the place for collecting and practising all forms of idolatry. He was a violent enemy of the Jehovah-worship, which he sought to abolish. He formally introduced all sorts of idolatrous abominations, and he compelled his people to practise them. This had never been done even in the kingdom of the ten tribes, "but now, there arose in Judah, the only remaining support of the true religion, the most open and violent hostility to its most sacred principles, on the part of the king himself! . . . The heart of the ancient religion had never before been so sharply and violently smitten" (Ewald). The "sin of Manasseh," in which apostasy reached its culmination, became typical (ver. 16; chap. xxiii. 26; xxiv. 3; 2 Chron. xxxiii. 9; Jerem. xv. 4), just like the "sin of Jeroboam," who made Israel to sin by introducing the worship of the calves (1 Kings xii. 28 *sq.*; xiv. 16; xv. 26, 30, &c.), and the "way of Ahab," who first introduced the worship of Baal (1 Kings xvi. 30 *sq.*; xxii. 53; 2 Kings viii. 27). "With his reign, therefore, began a new epoch in the history of the kingdom of Judah, during which it moved on steadily towards its fall" (Von Gerlach). Under his rule the kingdom became the very contrary of that which, according to its original plan, it was intended to be (Deut. xvii. 20).

2. A great change seems to have taken place under Manasseh in *the circumstances of the people*, when we compare the status under him with that under Hezekiah. No king since David had labored, as Hezekiah did during his reign of twenty-nine years, for the pure and legitimate Jehovah-worship. The people had approved of and participated in his efforts, and had come together from all sides to the passover festival which he instituted (2 Chron. xxx. 12, 13). The reformation seemed to be thorough and complete; idolatry was forever uprooted. Immediately after his death there was a complete change. The new king made idolatry, with all its abominations, the established religion of the kingdom, and was violent against the national worship and law, and against all who supported them. The people made no opposition to this, but joined in it for a half century. It had indeed come to pass before this time, that the people had fallen into idolatry which was favored by the rulers, as, for instance, under Athaliah and Ahaz, but such a general and complete change, especially after the saving power of Jehovah had just been so clearly and startlingly manifested, has no parallel in history. Yet this remarkable fact is explained, although no explanation of it is offered in the historical books, when we take into consideration the descriptions of the state of things at that time which are offered by the prophets. There had been for a long time, at least since the reign of Ahaz, a party in Judah which sought support for the little kingdom from one of the two great world-monarchies of the time—either from Egypt or Assyria. The persons of rank, and office, and wealth, and influence especially belonged to this party. They had adopted heathen notions, and had fallen into immoral and licentious modes of life. Isaiah says of the people, even before Manasseh's accession: "The whole head is sick and the whole heart faint," &c. (Isai. i. 4–6). King Hezekiah had held this party in restraint, and had therefore been supported by the prophet Isaiah. After the death of the pious king and the great prophet, the opposition made a strenuous effort to control the policy of the nation. It was not difficult to insnare and seduce the king, a boy of twelve years, especially as he appears to have been inclined by nature to sensual enjoyments. When he was once caught he became the seducer of his people, while he himself sank lower and lower. It appears, therefore, that Hezekiah's reformation was one accomplished by external pressure. It did not spring naturally from a religious need which was deeply felt in the popular heart. It had, therefore, no firm ground, and the cultus continued to be only an external ceremony. On the other hand, the luxurious and sensuous idol-worship was far better adapted to please the people than the austere Jehovah-worship. We have still further to take into consideration the inconsistent character of the people (Deut. ix. 12, 13; xxxi. 20; xxxii. 6; Isai. i. 2, 3, &c.), at one moment obstinate, at the next fickle and capricious. If we take all this into consideration, the sudden change under Manasseh is not so astonishing, but is satisfactorily explained by the circumstances. Duncker's conception of the course of the development of the national religion (*Gesch. des Alterthums*, I. s. 502) is entirely false. He asserts that for the first two centuries after the settlement of the Hebrews in Palestine the worship of Jehovah and that of Syrian divinities existed side by side; that the first Hebrew prophets opposed with the most violent zeal and fanaticism the introduction of the Baal-worship; that then the later prophets opposed the deepened and sharpened conception of the national

God to the renewed attempt of idolatry to find a foothold and succeeded in keeping it out; and that now, under Manasseh, these two hostile tendencies once more appeared in open conflict. This conception, which overturns the entire soteriological development, rests upon the assumption that, in Israel, monotheism and polytheism stood originally side by side in equal honor. It cannot be established unless we strike Moses out of history, throw aside the Israelitish law—the constitution of the nation, deny the calling of the nation in human history, and make of the prophets fanatical disturbers of the public peace. Ewald has explained the changed circumstances under Manasseh somewhat differently (*Gesch.* III. 666 [third Ed. 716 *sq.*]). He says: "He [Manasseh] sought to become acquainted with all foreign heathen religions, and to introduce them into Judah. He therefore sent to the most distant lands wherever a celebrated worship was practised, and spared no pains to acquire it. Every new religion brought not only a new form of oracle, or of sensuous indulgence and lust, but also its own form of wisdom, and the desire for 'wisdom' had grown so much since the time of Solomon, that it is not strange if the desire awoke to learn the secrets of all religions, and so to acquire a wealth of wisdom which the simple Jehovah religion did not seem to offer. Then, too, Manasseh sought to make all these religions accessible and agreeable to the people." It would appear then, on this showing, that the abominable and unheard-of apostasy of Manasseh and his people, the cultus of licentiousness and child-sacrifice, the cultivation of augury and sooth-saying, the patronage of necromancers and augurs, and all the rest of his senseless superstition, arose from a desire for wisdom, and a wish to penetrate into all secrets, and become acquainted with all knowledge. No proof is needed to show that this conception contradicts the Scriptures flatly. There is no hint in them that Manasseh sent into foreign lands to import heathen religions. "Isai. lvii. 5–10; Jer. ii. 10–13," from which this is said to be evident, does not contain a word about it. Manasseh did not, for instance, borrow anything from Egypt. He introduced especially the cultus of the "nations whom the Lord destroyed before the children of Israel" (ver. 9), that is of the Canaanites. Neither is there any proof that he tried to make the heathen religions acceptable to the people; on the contrary, he used violence and shed innocent blood, so that Jerusalem was filled with it from one end to the other (ver. 16).

[The Scriptures contain *no* explanation of the facility with which the people followed and acquiesced in the different attitudes of different kings toward the Jehovah religion, whether they were enthusiastically faithful or fanatically hostile. It does not seem worth while, therefore, to wage a polemic against an hypothesis like this of Ewald, which certainly has as much, if not more, in its favor than the one offered by the author. Ewald's theory does not "flatly contradict" Scripture, because Scripture makes no statement in regard to the matter. The passages quoted from Isaiah and Jeremiah bear very strong testimony to such a disposition on the part of the people to follow strange gods, to go to a distance to seek strange forms of worship, and to take up with any foreign novelty or device rather than to adhere to their own religion. The "wisdom" of the ancients was almost always bound up in religion. It was the "mystery" at the heart of a cultus. It was esoteric and select, only imparted to the chosen few. It had the fascination, therefore, of an acquisition in knowledge and of the discovery of a secret closely kept by an elect few. It was at once a sign of the truth of the Jehovah-religion and a reason why the Hebrews were so easily led to despise it in comparison with the religions of the heathen, that it was simple and open. No doubt also it seemed to them hard and cold and austere. The heathen religions were warm, voluptuous, and æsthetic. The latter, therefore, had all the weaknesses of human nature on their side of the balance. Still further, it is very probable that Manasseh did introduce Egyptian novelties. The name of his son Amon is the strongest testimony to a familiarity with and taste for Egyptian religion. Ver. 9 does not say that he introduced Canaanitish gods, but that he made the Jews sin worse than the Canaanites, probably by practising still more foreign and abominable rites. See *Exegetical* notes on that verse. Moreover the idols which are enumerated in xxiii. 13 as having been destroyed by Josiah bear witness to the fact that Manasseh had sought out and introduced *numerous* foreign divinities of various kinds. Finally, the shedding of innocent blood does not prove that he did not try to make heathenism acceptable to his people. Persecution always has the aim to recommend the rival of the persecuted religion, strange and unwise as the attempt may be. There are, therefore, suggestions in this theory of Ewald which are well worth attention from any one who desires to understand the phenomenon in question, and the counter-considerations above adduced have little if any force.—W. G. S.]

3. *The reign of Manasseh* was, to say the least, the saddest period in Jewish history since the time of David. We hear of no important events, of no victory over enemies, of no extension of the frontier, of no new beneficent institutions, during his time. The only event recorded is that an Assyrian army took Manasseh prisoner and carried him away in chains to Babylon (2 Chron. xxxiii. 11). The nation had never before sunk so low, religiously and morally, as at this time. "In the national life the most terrible decay extended continually farther and farther." A "deep and deadly corruption" had affected the nation (Eisenlohr, *Das Volk Isr.* II. *s.* 310). The wildest superstition and the coarsest unbelief went hand in hand. The corruption had pervaded all ranks. "Woe to her that is filthy and polluted, to the oppressing city!" cries the prophet Zephaniah. "She obeyed not the voice; she received not correction; she trusted not in the Lord; she drew not near to her God. Her princes within her are roaring lions; her judges are evening wolves; they gnaw not the bones until the morrow [they spare not for the morrow]. Her prophets are light and treacherous persons; her priests have polluted the sanctuary, they have done violence to the law" (Zeph. iii. 1–4; *cf.* Mic. iii. 11). The origin of many important parts of the Old Testament canon has recently been ascribed to this time of corruption, decay, moral disease, and death. First of all, the book of Deuteronomy is said to have been written at this time (Ewald, Riehm, Bleek), also the book of Job, an entire series of the most noble Psalms, part of

the Proverbs, and detached fragments of the book of Isaiah, especially lii. 13 to liii. 12 (Ewald and Eisenlohr). It is said: "The deeper the corruption became and the farther it spread the more decidedly did the genuine spirit of prophecy rise up, with all the divine force with which it was endowed, in opposition to it." This is not the place to enter into a critical investigation of the time when these books were written. We have to do here only with the time of Manasseh, but in regard to it the test applies: "Do men gather grapes of thorns or figs of thistles?" It is true that faithful servants and prophets of Jehovah were not wanting at this time (ver. 10), but not a single great prophet, not one of those whose writings we still possess, was active during Manasseh's reign. Isaiah's life closed soon after his accession, if not indeed still earlier. Zephaniah's first appearance was in Josiah's reign, and Jeremiah's still later. How could a time of "deep corruption," which ran through all ranks of society, be a time of great literary activity and produce works of the intellect which are only possible in the midst of the richest and most active intellectual life? It has been justly said that this was a time in which "bloody persecution raged." Blood flowed in streams. Of course this persecution fell first of all upon the prophets, and especially upon the most prominent amongst them. The number of the faithful must, therefore, have been small, and we know of not a single prominent person amongst them. It may be that in this small circle hymns of affliction and persecution arose, but it is inconceivable that such persons should have produced the book of Job, that "model of religious reflection, and of the literary art which proceeds in its creations according to the most definite plan," and which marks the "Chokmah-literature" of the Hebrews (Delitsch). Still less can the book of Deuteronomy have been written at this time of oppression and misery, a book which is described as marked by "a tranquil fulness of detail," "an extraordinarily light and flowing style," as well as by "breadth and fluency" (Vaihinger). In its long repetition and development of the Mosaic Law there is not a sign of lamentation, nor a sound of affliction. It might be asserted with far more justice that there was no period in Hebrew history less capable of producing the book of Deuteronomy than the degenerate times of Manasseh.

4. The brief *reign of king Amon* was in every respect a continuation of the wicked and untheocratic reign of his father, Manasseh. It was distinguished by no fact or event. From the words, 2 Chron. xxxiii. 23 [see *Supp. Note* after the *Exeg.* section above]: "And humbled not himself before the Lord, as Manasseh his father had humbled himself, but Amon trespassed more and more," we infer that he was even worse than Manasseh. The description of the moral and religious status which is given by the prophet Zephaniah, who made his appearance under the next following king, Josiah (Zeph. i. 1, 4 *sq.*; 12; iii. 1 to v. 11), shows that no improvement had taken place. This also appears from the description in chap. xxiii. 4 *sq.* of all the steps which Josiah had to take in order to restore the state of things prescribed by the Law. The statement of the Chronicler (*l. c.*) in regard to Manasseh's reformation must, therefore, be understood as referring to his own person, for it had no effect upon the mass of the people, else it would have been impossible to say that Amon had surpassed his father's guilt. [The meaning of that passage is that Manasseh, in spite of all his wickedness, humbled himself and repented, but Amon never did so. He persisted in his wickedness. He went on from trespass to trespass without interruption. Hence he was worse than his father.]

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

Vers. 1–16. The Kingdom of Judah under Manasseh. (*a*) King and People (return to heathenism and the cause thereof, vers. 1–9). (*b*) The Prophets (their courageous opposition and their testimony against the general corruption in spite of persecution, vers. 10–16). Vers. 1–9. Manasseh the seduced and the seducer.—Even God-fearing parents often have perverse children without any fault of their own. So much the greater is the guilt of those who lead infant children astray, after the death of their parents, instead of giving them care and good training. It is especially important that princes should be guided in their youth by good counsellors and governors. God is not confined with His word to any land or people. If His word is not received with love and gratitude, and if it is not feared, then He will come soon and remove the candlestick from its place (Rev. ii. 5), so that men may go astray and become a prey to terrible errors. As Judah, which the Lord had chosen to be His people and to bear His name before the heathen, and before kings, and before the children of Israel, committed more terrible abominations than any of the heathen whom the Lord had cast out, so now also, a people, although it has the word of God and the means of grace, may fall lower than another which has never heard of His word (*e. g.*, the horrors of the French revolution).—To fall is easier than to rise. If the infection comes from above it spreads with greater celerity. Where God punishes a people he gives them bad rulers (Isai. iii. 4; Eccl. x. 16).—When the evil spirit is cast out and then returns, he brings with him seven others worse than himself. It is so with individuals, and it is so with families; they become worse and worse from generation to generation (Ahaz, Hezekiah, Manasseh), Matt. xii. 43 *sq.*—WÜRT. SUMM.: There are nowadays Evangelical Christians who are in many respects worse than Papists, or even than Jews and Turks, for they curse and blaspheme, they drink and commit adultery, and do other things which Turks and Jews avoid. How will such Christians stand before God's judgment-seat when Jews and Turks are placed by their side?—CRAMER: Those who are ungrateful towards God, and blind to the clear light of truth, are given over to the dominion of error, so that they give their faith to falsehoods (2 Thess. ii. 11).—Ver. 6. The Scriptures place sooth-saying and augury by the side of sacrifices to Moloch. They belong properly to the darkest times of heathenism. Nevertheless they are found in the midst of modern Christendom. Those who believe in them and practise them have become heathen.—Ver. 7. CALW. BIBEL: Ahaz had once closed the temple and built altars in the city. Manasseh set up idols in the temple itself. Thus Antichrist shall advance (2 Thess. ii. 3, 4).—Manasseh set up an image of the goddess of licentiousness in the temple of the living God. "If any man defile the temple of

God, him shall God destroy" (1 Cor. iii. 17). Those houses of God are desecrated in which, instead of the living God who revealed Himself to us in Christ, a God of man's invention is preached. —Ver. 8. STARKE: Men are such that they hold fast the covenant of God's rich promises, but will not remember the other covenant of the obedience which He requires.—Ver. 10. Even in the worst times God takes care (since He does not desire that any one should perish, but rather that he should turn from his wickedness and live, Ezek. xviii. 23) that faithful persons shall not be wanting to warn the wicked, to exhort them to repentance, and to make known to them the coming judgment of God.—Vers. 12 and 13. WÜRT. SUMM.: The just God threatens the idolatrous city, Jerusalem, with the line and plummet of Samaria;—like sins deserve like punishment (Luke xxiii. 41).—The Lord is "good" and "ready to forgive" (Ps. lxxxvi. 5), but He does not cease to be a just God, who causes every individual as well as whole cities and peoples to reap that which they have sown, for "righteousness and judgment are the habitation [foundation] of his throne" (Ps. xcvii. 2). This generation wants to hear only of a God who is nothing but love, but it will not hear, in spite of its apostasy, of a God who is also a consuming fire (Heb. xii. 29). Whose ears tingle nowadays when he hears of the judgments of God? (Heb. x. 26 and 27).—BERLEB. BIBEL: A dish is turned over when there is nothing more in it. That is the hardest punishment which God can inflict on a soul which turns away from Him. There is then no longer a drop to be found in it of that which was in it before.—Ver. 16. STARKE: Idolatry and tyranny are closely allied.—OSIANDER: Those whom Satan has in his toils he leads from one sin to another. Enmity to the word of God is not merely a different opinion or contradiction in regard to religious matters, but a devilish power which impels even to the shedding of innocent blood. It is possible to kill the preachers of truth, but not the truth itself. He who was the truth was nailed to the cross, but His words remain, though heaven and earth pass away. The blood of the martyrs only fertilized the soil of the Church, so that it has borne richer and more abundant fruit.—All innocent blood cries to heaven as that of Abel did. He who dwells in heaven answers: "Vengeance is mine; I will repay."

Vers. 19–26. How wretchedly a king appears of whom history has nothing more to record than his godlessness.—WÜRT. SUMM.: When men will not heed either good words or bad, and will not be induced to repent by warning or example, then God comes with His punishment and recompenses wickedness as it deserves. Let men take heed and repent, let them become wise by the sight of others' calamities, that they be not overtaken in their sins by death before they have repented. As is the king so are his officers; as is the governor so are the citizens; a depraved king ruins his country (Sir. x. 2, 3).—WÜRT. SUMM.: Unfaithfulness is punished by unfaithfulness. Amon was not faithful to God; unfaithfulness was his punishment. He was murdered by his own servants, and these in their turn were punished by their own sin—they also were murdered. (See Matt. xxvi. 52; Luke vi. 28.) Therefore be faithful both to God and man and do good, then thou shalt be rewarded with good both in time and eternity. Tumult and murder, perpetrated now by the authorities, now by the people, those are the natural fruits which are produced in a land which has abandoned God, and in which His word is no longer respected.

B.—*The Reign of Josiah; the Discovery of the Book of the Law, and Restoration of the Mosaic Ritual.*

CHAP. XXII.-XXIII. 30 (2 CHRON. XXXIV., XXXV.).

1 JOSIAH *was* eight years old when he began to reign [became king], and he
reigned thirty and one years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name *was* Jedi-
2 dah, the daughter of Adaiah of Boscath. And he did *that which was* right in
the sight of the Lord, and walked in all the way of David his father, and turned
not aside to the right hand or to the left.
3 And it came to pass in the eighteenth year of king Josiah, *that* the king sent
Shaphan the son of Azaliah, the son of Meshullam, the scribe, to the house of the
4 Lord, saying, Go up to Hilkiah the high priest, that he may sum the silver
which is [has been] brought into the house of the Lord, which the keepers of
5 the door have gathered of the people: And let them deliver it [and may deli-
ver it][1] into the hand of the doers of the work [commissioners], that have the
oversight of the house[2] of the Lord: and let them give it to the doers of the
work, which *is* [who are] in the house of the Lord, to repair the breaches of the
6 house, Unto carpenters, and builders, and masons, and to buy timber and hewn
7 stone to repair the house. Howbeit, there was [But let] no reckoning [be] made
with them of the money that was [is] delivered into their hand, because [for]
they dealt [deal] faithfully.
8 And Hilkiah the high priest said unto Shaphan the scribe, I have found the
book of the law in the house of the Lord. And Hilkiah gave the book to Sha-

9 phan, and he read it. And Shaphan the scribe came to the king, and brought
the king word again, and said, Thy servants have gathered [emptied out] the
money that was found [stored][a] in the house, and have delivered it into the
hand of them that do the work [the commissioners], that have the oversight of
10 the house of the Lord. And Shaphan the scribe shewed the king, saying, Hil-
kiah the priest hath delivered me a book. And Shaphan read it before the king.
11 And it came to pass, when the king had heard the words of the book of the law,
12 that he rent his clothes. And the king commanded Hilkiah the priest, and
Ahikam the son of Shaphan, and Achbor the son of Michaiah, and Shaphan the
13 scribe, and Asahiah a servant of the king's, saying, Go ye, inquire of the Lord
for me [on my behalf] and for [on behalf of] the people, and for [on behalf of]
all Judah, concerning [on account of] the words of this book that is found: for
great *is* the wrath of the Lord that is kindled against us, because our fathers
have not hearkened unto the words of this book, to do according unto all that
which is written concerning us [prescribed for us].[b]
14 So Hilkiah the priest, and Ahikam, and Achbor, and Shaphan, and Asahiah,
went unto Huldah the prophetess, the wife of Shallum the son of Tikvah, the son
of Harhas, keeper of the wardrobe; (now she dwelt in Jerusalem in the college
15 [lower city];) and they communed with her. And she said unto them, Thus
16 saith the Lord God of Israel, Tell the man that sent you to me, Thus saith the
Lord, Behold, I will [am about to] bring evil upon this place, and upon the
inhabitants thereof, *even* all the words of the book which the king of Judah hath
17 read: Because they have forsaken me, and have burned incense unto other
gods, that they might provoke me to anger with all the works of their hands;
therefore my wrath shall be [is] kindled against this place, and shall not be
18 quenched. But to the king of Judah which sent you to inquire of the Lord,
thus shall ye say to him, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, *As touching* the
19 words which thou hast heard; Because thine heart was tender, and thou hast
humbled [humbledst] thyself before the Lord, when thou heardest what I spake
[had spoken] against this place, and against the inhabitants thereof, that they
should become a desolation and a curse, and hast rent thy clothes, and wept
20 before me; I also have heard *thee* [*omit* thee] saith the Lord. Behold therefore,
I will gather thee unto thy fathers, and thou shalt be gathered into thy grave
in peace; and thine eyes shall not see all the evil which I will bring upon this
place. And they brought the king word again.
CHAP. xxiii. 1 AND the king sent, and they gathered unto him all the elders of
2 Judah and of Jerusalem. And the king went up into the house of the Lord, and
all the men of Judah and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem with him, and the
priests, and the prophets, and all the people, both small and great: and he read
in their ears all the words of the book of the covenant which was [had been]
3 found in the house of the Lord. And the king stood by a pillar [*or* on a plat-
form], and made a covenant before the Lord, to walk after the Lord, and to keep
his commandments and his testimonies [ordinances] and his statutes with all
their heart and all *their* soul, to perform [maintain] the words [terms] of this
covenant that were written in this book. And all the people stood to [joined
in][c] the covenant.
4 And the king commanded Hilkiah the high priest, and the priests of the
second order, and the keepers of the door, to bring forth out of the temple of the
Lord all the vessels that were made for Baal, and for the grove [Astarte], and
for all the host of heaven: and he burned them without Jerusalem in the fields
5 of Kidron, and carried[d] the ashes of them unto Beth-el. And he put down
[caused to desist] the idolatrous priests, whom the kings of Judah had ordained
to burn incense[e] in the high places in [of] the cities of Judah, and in the places
[*omit* in the places] round about Jerusalem; them also that burned incense unto
Baal, to the sun, and to the moon, and to the planets [constellations of the
6 Zodiac], and to all the host of heaven. And he brought out the grove [Astarte-
image] from the house of the Lord, without Jerusalem, unto the brook Kidron,
and burned it at the brook Kidron, and stamped *it* small to powder, and cast

the powder thereof upon the graves of the children of the people [common
7 people]. And he brake down the houses of the sodomites [male-prostitutes],
that *were* by the house of the Lord, where the women wove hangings for the
8 grove [tent-like shrines for Astarte]. And he brought all the priests out of the
cities of Judah, and defiled the high places where the priests had burned incense,
from Geba to Beersheba, and brake down the high places of the gates [both]
that *were* [which was] in the entering in of the gate of Joshua the governor of
the city, [and that] which *were* [was] on a man's left hand at the gate of the
9 city. Nevertheless the priests of the high places came not up to [were not
allowed to sacrifice upon] [8] the altar of the Lord in Jerusalem, but they did eat
10 of the [*omit* of the] unleavened bread among their brethren. And he defiled
Topheth, which *is* the valley of the children of Hinnom, that no man might make
11 his son or his daughter to pass through the fire to Molech. And he took away [9]
the horses that the kings of Judah had given to the sun, at the entering in of
the house of the Lord, by the chamber of Nathan-melech the chamberlain, which
was in the suburbs [colonnade *of the temple*], and burned the chariots of the sun
12 with fire. And the altars that *were* on the top of the upper chamber of Ahaz,
which the kings of Judah had made, and the altars which Manasseh had made
in the two courts of the house of the Lord, did the king beat down [demolish],
and brake [tear] *them* [*omit* them] down from thence, and [he] cast the dust of
13 them into the brook Kidron. And the high places that *were* before Jerusalem,
which *were* on the right hand of the mount of corruption, which Solomon the
king of Israel had builded for Ashtoreth [*or* Astarte] the abomination of the
Zidonians, and for Chemosh the abomination of the Moabites, and for Milcom
14 the abomination of the children of Ammon, did the king defile. And he brake
in pieces the images, and cut down the groves [Astarte-statues], and filled their
places with the bones of men.
15 Moreover the altar that *was* at Beth-el, *and* [*omit* and] the high place which
Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin, had made, both that altar
and the high place he brake down, and burned the high place, *and* stamped *it*
16 small to powder, and burned the grove [statue of Astarte]. And as Josiah
turned himself, he spied the sepulchres that *were* there in the mount, and sent,
and took the bones out of the sepulchres, and burned *them* upon the altar, and
polluted it, according to the word of the Lord which the man of God proclaimed,
17 who proclaimed these words. Then he said, What title [grave-stone] *is* that
that I see? And the men of the city told him, *It is* the sepulchre of the man
of God, which came from Judah, and proclaimed [foretold] these things that
18 thou hast done against the altar of Beth-el. And he said, Let him alone; let
no man move his bones. So they let his bones alone, with the bones of the
19 prophet that came out of Samaria. And all the houses also of the high places
that *were* in the cities of Samaria, which the kings of Israel had made to pro-
voke *the Lord* to anger, Josiah took away, and did to them according to all the
20 acts that he had done in Beth-el. And he slew all the priests of the high places
that *were* there [,] upon the altars, and burned men's bones upon them, and
returned to Jerusalem.
21 And the king commanded all the people, saying, Keep the passover unto
the Lord your God, as *it is* written in the [this] book of this [the] covenant.
22 Surely there was not holden such a passover from the days of the judges that
judged Israel, nor in all the days of the kings of Israel, nor of the kings of
23 Judah; But in the eighteenth year of king Josiah, *wherein* [*omit*, *and* wherein]
this passover was holden to the Lord in Jerusalem.
24 Moreover the *workers with* familiar spirits [necromancers], and the wizards,
and the [household] images, and the idols, and all the abominations that were
spied in the land of Judah and in Jerusalem, did Josiah put away, that he might
perform [establish] [10] the words of the law, which were written in the book that
25 Hilkiah the priest found in the house of the Lord. And like unto him was there
no king before him, that turned to the Lord with all his heart, and with all his
soul, and with all his might, according to all the law of Moses; neither after
him arose there *any* like him.

26 Notwithstanding, the Lord turned not from the fierceness of his great wrath,
wherewith his anger was kindled against Judah, because of all the provocations
27 that Manasseh had provoked him withal. And the Lord said, I will remove
Judah also out of my sight, as I have removed Israel, and will cast off this city
Jerusalem which I have chosen, and the house of which I said, My name shall
28 be there. Now the rest of the acts of Josiah, and all that he did, *are* they not
written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Judah?
29 In his days Pharaoh-nechoh king of Egypt went up against the king of
Assyria to the river Euphrates: and king Josiah went against him; and he
30 slew him at Megiddo, when he had seen him. And his servants carried him in
a chariot dead from Megiddo, and brought him to Jerusalem, and buried him in
his own sepulchre. And the people of the land took Jehoahaz the son of Josiah,
and anointed him, and made him king in his father's stead.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

[1] Ver. 5.—The chetib, יִתְּנָה, is altogether to be preferred to the keri, יִתְּנוּהוּ.—Bähr. [The E. V. follows the keri. Böttcher's explanation is to be preferred. He retains the chetib and punctuates יִתְּנֻה, explaining the suffix as an irregularity in gender. *Cf. Gramm.*, note on 2 Kings xvi. 17, and Böttcher § 877, e.—W. G. S.]

[2] Ver. 5.—[Here also the chetib, בַּבַּיִת, is to be preferred to the keri בַּיִת. *Cf.* Jerem. xl. 5; xli. 18. בַּיִת, in ver. 9, cannot prove the contrary.—Bähr.

[3] Ver. 9.—[They had emptied out the money from receptacles into which it had been put by the priests as it was offered from time to time by the people, and in which it was stored, so that it was "found" there, as the text says, literally.

[4] Ver. 13.—[Literally, "written upon," or "against us."

[5] Chap. xxiii. 3.—[Literally: *stood in.* Probably they signified their acquiescence and participation by standing in a certain place. Hence it means "joined in." So Keil, Thenius, Luther, De Wette, Bähr, Bunsen. Maurer and Gesenius take it to mean *persist* or *persevere*, which would be the modern colloquial significance of the "stood to" of the E. V., but is not the proper sense here.

[6] Ver. 4.—[וְנָשָׂא]; the strict rule of the language would here require the imperf. consec. Other instances of laxity in the use of this form occur in late books, Jerem. xxxvii. 15; Ezek. ix. 7; xxxvii. 7, 10; Dan. viii. 5, and in the book of Ecclesiastes. (Böttcher § 982, II.)

[7] Ver. 5.—[וַיְקַטֵּר]; *that one might offer:* the subject is the indef. sing. French, *on*, Germ. *man*. The singular, however, is very remarkable, and the text may be incorrect. The versions all translate as if it were לְקַטֵּר, "for which וַיְקַטֵּר is probably an error of the pen" (Keil). Böttcher takes the imperf. consec. as a pluperfect, because it follows another plup., and compares Gen. xxxi. 34, and 1 Sam. xix. 18.—"Whom the kings of Judah had appointed and [who, *i. e.* any one amongst them] had offered incense." This makes good sense, but the change from passive to active, and from plur. to sing. is awkward, and the grammatical principles are not clear.

[8] Ver. 9.—[Such is the force of the imperf. "They might not," *i. e.*, they were not allowed to.

[9] Ver. 11.—[Literally: *he caused to cease; i. e.*, these horses of the sun had been kept as an act of worship to the sun. He took them away and put an end to the arrangement.

[10] Ver. 24.—[הֵקִים, *set upright, i. e.*, that he might introduce the institutions and customs prescribed in the law and establish them in successful operation.—W. G. S.]

PRELIMINARY REMARKS.

The parallel account in the book of Chronicles coincides perfectly with the above in all its details. In some passages, indeed, it is identically the same (chap. xxii. 8–20 and xxiii. 1–3 compared with 2 Chron. xxxiv. 19–32); but the Chronicler cannot have made use of the book of Kings as his authority, for he gives a number of chronological data, and also certain proper names (xxxiv. 3, 8, 12; xxxv. 8, 9), which are wanting in the book of Kings, and which cannot possibly have been invented at a later time. The case is the same with this passage as with chap. xi. 1–20. Both accounts are taken from one and the same original source, viz., the work which both refer to at the close of the passage (chap. xxiii. 28; 2 Chron. xxxv. 27). Their principal points of difference are two: viz., that each one describes in great detail certain ones of the facts noticed, which in their turn are passed over more summarily by the other, and that the facts are not narrated by both in the same chronological order.

In the book of Kings the extirpation of idolatry and of illegitimate Jehovah-worship is described with care and detail, so that the passage here which deals with this point (xxiii. 4–20) is, as regards its external form, longer than the corresponding one in Chronicles; moreover, as regards its contents, it is by far the most important passage in the entire narrative, all that goes before it (xxii. 3–20 and xxiii. 1–3) serving only as an historical introduction, and all which follows (xxiii. 21–24) only as the conclusion and sequel to it. In Chronicles, on the other hand, the description of the passover festival is the object of greatest interest, as is evident, in the first place, from the fulness with which it is given (2 Chron. xxxv. 1–19), while the extirpation of the false worship is very briefly recorded. [This is in accord with what we observe in general in regard to the characteristics of the two books. The book of Kings attaches the interest to the religious and theocratic features of the history, while the book of Chronicles is especially interested in its ecclesiastical details. In Kings we have the history studied from the standpoint of the prophets; in Chronicles, from that of the levitical priesthood. In Kings we find those details especially prominent which refer to ethical, religious, and monotheistic truth; in Chro-

nicles the fortunes of the priesthood, and the ritualistic and hierarchical developments, are all fastened upon and described in detail.—W. G. S.] Evidently these fundamental charactisterics of the two authors present themselves in their accounts of this reign. The older author gives us an account from his theocratic and pragmatic standpoint. He desires to show that king Josiah stands alone in the history of the Jewish kings, in that he carried out in practice and execution the fundamental law of the theocracy with a zeal and severity equalled by none of his predecessors or successors (xxiii. 24 and 25. The statement is wanting in Chronicles.) The latter author, on the contrary, adopts the levitical and priestly standpoint. He desires to show that the passover had not been so solemnly or correctly celebrated since the time of Samuel as it was under Josiah. For this reason we must regard the account in Kings as more important, and use that in Chronicles merely as a valuable complement to it.—As for the chronological succession of the events, the author of the book of Kings puts the eighteenth year of Josiah's reign at the head of the narrative. He says that the repair of the temple, during which the Book of the Law was found, took place in this year; that the reading of this book agitated the king so much that he sought higher guidance in regard to it; that he, after this guidance had been given him through the prophetess Huldah, collected the people and bound them to observe the covenant prescribed in this book; that he then proceeded to extirpate all false worship, and abolish idolatry, first in Jerusalem and Judah, and then in Samaria, and when he had accomplished this, that he ordained an observance of the passover according to the strict prescriptions of the book. It must be admitted that this is a sequence of events in which each one follows naturally and necessarily from the preceding. The Chronicler, on the other hand, begins his account with these words: "In the eighth year of his [Josiah's] reign, while he was a boy [נַעַר], he commenced to seek the God of his father David, and in his twelfth year he commenced to purify Judah and Jerusalem from the high-places, and the Astarte-images, and the idols of stone and the molten images, and they tore down before him the altars of the Baalim," &c. After the same had been done in "the land of Israel" he "returned to Jerusalem" (chap. xxxiv. 3–7). After this followed, still in the eighteenth year, the repair of the temple, during which the Book of the Law was found. This occasioned the oracle of the prophetess and the oath of fidelity to the covenant from the assembled people. Immediately after the description of the last event follows the remark: "And Josiah took away all the abominations out of all the countries that pertained to the children of Israel, and made all who were present in Israel to serve, even to serve the Lord their God" (chap. xxxiv. 33). Then, in chap, xxxv., follows the description of the passover. The chronicler, therefore, puts the extirpation of idolatry before the repair of the temple and the discovery of the Book of the Law, and before the oath of fidelity to the covenant. This cannot, however, be the correct chronological sequence of the events, for the incentive which moved Josiah to collect the people and exact an oath of fidelity to the covenant from them was the threats of the newly discovered Law-book. Such an oath would have been useless and destitute of significance if every illegitimate cultus had already been abolished. The chronicler seems to have perceived this himself, for he repeats, in brief and condensed form, after the narrative of the discovery of the book, and after the public oath of fidelity, the statement of the reformation in the cultus which he had already given in vers. 4–7. On the other hand, his definite chronological statements in ver. 3: In the eighth and in the twelfth years of Josiah, statements which are wanting in the book of Kings, cannot be pure inventions of his own, especially if it is true that the sixteenth year of life, that is, in this case, the eighth year of the reign, was "the year in which, according to numerous indications, the king's sons became of age" (Ewald). It is also unlikely that the king, who had been remarkable for his piety from his youth up, should have suddenly undertaken such a startling reformation in the eighteenth year of his reign. The repair of the temple *previous* to the discovery of the book shows that he was disposed to foster the Jehovah-worship. What he did in his eighth and twelfth years may have been a commencement and preparation for what he carried out in his eighteenth year with thoroughness and severity, being impelled by the threats contained in the book which had been discovered. This eighteenth year was, therefore, the real year of the reformation, the year in which there was a complete change in the religious worship of the nation, and in which Josiah accomplished the work by virtue of which he stands alone in the history of the kingdom. This is the reason why the author of the book of Kings puts this date at the head of his narrative, omitting any mention of the eighth and twelfth years, and also repeats it at the close (chap. xxiii. 23). The chronicler, on the contrary, who only mentions the abolition of the illegal and illegitimate worship in the briefest manner, desired to add to his statement that Josiah "began" in his twelfth year "to purify Judah and Jerusalem" the further information how he carried this out, although somewhat later, in the land of Israel also. This uncertainty in the arrangement of the historical material is due to the imperfectness of the art of the historian, and it is not right to ascribe to the account in general, as De Wette does, "distortion of the sense, confusedness, and obscurity." Neither is it by any means correct to assert, as Keil and Movers do, that "the account of the chronicler is, on the whole, more correct, chronologically," for it is not possible that the abolition of idolatry, even in Judah, should have taken place before the discovery of the Law-book, as chap. xxxiv. 6, 7 seems to assert. The assertion that "not all the events mentioned in this account (chap. xxii. 3–xxiii. 23) could have taken place in the one eighteenth year," especially seeing that the passover feast belonged in the commencement and not at the end of the year (Keil), is not founded on conclusive arguments, for the eighteenth year is a year of the reign, not a calendar year, and its end may very well have fallen at the commencement of the calendar year; moreover, we do not see why the work of destruction might not have been accomplished in one year, seeing that it met with no opposition. Thenius even thinks that it was accomplished "in a period of four months." [Nevertheless, as Keil says (*Comm. s.* 352): "If

we take in review the separate events and incidents which *are* narrated in this passage, the repair of the temple, the discovery of the Law-book, the reading of it to the king, the inquiry of the prophetess and her oracle, the reading of the book to the people in the temple with the renewal of the covenant, the abolition of idolatry not only in Judah, but also in Bethel and the other cities of Samaria, and, finally, the passover festival, it is hardly necessary to remark that all this cannot have taken place in the one eighteenth year of his reign."] It is not necessary to suppose, as Bertheau does, that both narratives are chronologically inaccurate, inasmuch as "events are included in the narrative [xxiii. 4–20] which belong to the time before the eighteenth year." It is certain that Josiah "began" to reform before his eighteenth year, but the events mentioned in 2 Chron. xxxiv. 4–7 belong not to this time, but to the eighteenth year, and there is no reason to transfer to the time before this year events which belong to this year itself. [The author's opinion is, therefore, that Josiah's undertaking to repair the temple bears witness to his disposition to reform the cultus, and that this, in connection with the assertion of the chronicler that he made certain efforts to this end in his twelfth year, forces us to the conviction that the reformation *commenced* before the eighteenth year of the reign, but that *those* efforts in this direction which he is *said by the chronicler to have made* before his eighteenth year really belong to that year, including all the reformatory measures of which the Scripture has preserved a record.—W. G. S.]

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

Ver. 1. **Josiah was eight years old,** &c. Amon was twenty-four years old when he died (chap. xxi. 19). He must have begotten Josiah when he was only sixteen years old. This is not astonishing in view of the early marriages which are common in the Orient (see notes on chap. xvi. 2). Whether the young king was under a regency, or had an elderly man as tutor and governor, as Joash did (chap. xii. 3), is not stated. We know nothing of Boscath, the birth-place of his mother, except that it was in the plain of Judah (Josh. xv. 39). Ver. 2 characterizes in general the reign of Josiah, and forms, as it were, the title of the entire following passage. The expression: "Turned not aside to the right hand or to the left" (see Deut. v. 32; xvii. 11, 20; xxviii. 14) is only used of this king in this book.—On the chronological date: "in the eighteenth year," see *Preliminary Remarks*. The addition in the Sept.: ἐν τῷ μηνὶ τῷ ὀγδόῳ, is not found anywhere else, and does not deserve any attention. In Chronicles (xxxiv. 8) two other persons are mentioned whom the king sent with Shaphan, Maaseiah, the governor, and Joah, the recorder. Shaphan alone is mentioned here, as he was the one who had charge of the money. The others were merely companions. On סֹפֵר, see notes on 1 Kings iv. 3.

Ver. 4. **Go up to Hilkiah, the high-priest,** &c. Since the time of Joash (chap. xii. 5), a period of 250 years, the temple had not been repaired. It had, therefore, become very much dilapidated. Josiah went to work according to the precedent established by Joash. "The fact that we find here almost the same account as in chap. xii. 11 *sq.* is due to the similarity of the two incidents, and is perfectly natural, so that it cannot be regarded as a proof that the account is untrue (Stähelin, *Krit. Untersuch. s.* 156)" (Thenius). The account is here somewhat abbreviated and presupposes some things which are there distinctly stated. The author only mentions the temple-repairs because they brought the Law-book to light. The high-priest Hilkiah is mentioned in the list of the high-priests, and is designated as the son of Shallum (1 Chron. vi. 13). Nothing further is known in regard to him. Many have supposed that he was the father of the prophet Jeremiah (Jer. i. 1), (Eichhorn, Von Bohlen, and Menzel), but this is certainly an error, as Hitzig in the prolegomena to his *Comm.* on Jeremiah has shown. יַתֵּם is hifil from תָּמַם, and means, *to make perfect* (see Fürst *s. v.*) not, *to pay* (Gesen.). [This money was the result of offerings which came in slowly and steadily. The force of יַתֵּם is to take up the money which had been paid in up to this time, make an account and settlement, and so *finish up, make complete*, the sum on hand. The E. V. "sum" is, therefore, quite accurate.—W. G. S.] Hilkiah's duty in the circumstances was that which is described more fully in chap. xii. 10 *sq.* The conjecture וְחֹתֵם, *i. e., and seal up* (Thenius) is entirely unnecessary. The translation of the Sept., χωνεύσατε, is incorrect. So is also that of the Vulg.: *confletur pecunia.* According to 2 Chron. xxxiv. 9 the money was paid in "by Manasseh and Ephraim, and all the remnant of Israel, as well as by all Judah and Benjamin, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem." The names of the commissioners or inspectors are also given there (ver. 12), but they have no further interest or importance.

Ver. 8. **I have found the book of the Law in the house of the Lord.** The emphasis lies here, as the position of the words [Hebr. text] shows, on סֵפֶר הַתּוֹרָה, words which can only be translated "the book of the Law," according to the familiar rule: "If a compound notion. expressed by a governing noun and a dependent genitive, has to have the article, this is regularly placed before the genitive, but it then affects the entire compound" (Gesenius, Gramm. § 109, 1 [19th Ed. § 111, 1]; Ewald, *Lehrb.* § 290, a, 1). מָצָא is here emphatic, and does not mean, *to fall in with something which is known to be somewhere at hand*, but *to discover something which is concealed* (*cf.* Levit. v. 22 and 23 [English text vi. 3 and 4], where we find with it אֲבֵדָה, *i. e., something lost*). [מָצָא means *to find* in three different senses: (*a*) to find a thing of whose existence one has knowledge, and which one therefore seeks for; (*b*) to find, by accident, a thing whose existence was known, but which had for some time been lost sight of; (*c*) to find a new thing which one never had seen or heard of before. The author thinks that the second meaning is the one which it has here. Ewald, quoted immediately below, takes it in the third sense.—W. G. S.] We see in the course of the narrative that this book is always referred to as that which had been "found" [*i. e.*, rescued from concealment] (chap. xxii. 13; xxiii.

2, 24; 2 Chron. xxxiv. 14; xxi. 30). It is, therefore, arbitrary and violent of Ewald, who established the above rule, to give to these words. on account of other considerations, the "indefinite sense:" "Hilkiah also (!) spoke with Shaphan about a (!) book of the law which he said he had found in the temple," and to assert in the note: "There is no possible reference here to an old already known, and now only rediscovered, book of the Law." The appeal to סֵפֶר (ver. 10) has no force, for there הַתּוֹרָה is to be supplied from ver. 8, for Hilkiah had already definitely described it as the book of the Law, and Shaphan brought it to the king as such. [We have no right to interpolate the הַתּוֹרָה in ver. 10. The fact is rather as follows: In ver. 8 Hilkiah calls it "*the* book of the Law," because he is convinced that it is so; in ver. 10 Shaphan presents it to the king as *a* book, in regard to whose character he does not himself express any opinion, nor desire to raise any prejudice. It is simply an interesting book deserving the king's attention and examination. Such is the true meaning of the text as it stands with הַתּוֹרָה in Hilkiah's description, but omitted in Shaphan's. We obliterate this feature of the narrative if we supply התורה in ver. 10.—W. G. S.] Thenius justly says, in contradiction of Ewald: "The expression shows distinctly that it refers to a book which was known in earlier times, not to one which had now for the first time come to light," and Bunsen says: "It certainly refers to a work which had been previously known." Nothing but the critic's preconceived notion could lead him to contradict this. Now there can be no doubt as to what is meant by the expression סֵפֶר הַתּוֹרָה, for it is the well-known technical expression for the books of Moses as a whole. In the parallel passage in Chronicles we read (xxxiv. 14): "Hilkiah, the priest, found אֶת־סֵפֶר תּוֹרַת־יְהוָֹה בְּיַד־מֹשֶׁה," and according to Deut. xxxi. 24–26, Moses, after he had finished writing out the whole law (עַד־תֻּמָּם), said to the levites: "Take אֵת סֵפֶר הַתּוֹרָה הַזֶּה, and lay it by the side of the ark of the covenant." In chap. xxiii. 2, 3, 21; 2 Chron. xxxiv. 30, 31, we find instead סֵפֶר הַבְּרִית, but this expression also designates the books of Moses as a whole. It is the same as כָּל תּוֹרַת מֹשֶׁה, chap. xxiii. 25. This expression is never used of a portion, or of a single one, of the books of Moses, so that it proves that the "book" which was found could not be, as has often been supposed, the book of Deuteronomy. That book was certainly contained in it, for it was the "threats" contained in that book (Deut. xxviii.) which made such a deep impression on the king (ver. 11), and which were affirmed by the prophetess (ver. 16). It, however, presupposes the other books, and never formed a separate book by itself.

Josiah certainly could not renew the covenant on the basis of one book only, but only on the basis of the whole book of the law (chap. xxiii. 1–3). The opinion that this book was Deuteronomy alone has, therefore, been almost universally abandoned, and Bertheau justly observes of this opinion (*Zur Gesch. Isr. s.* 375): It "lacks all foundation, and only rests upon favorite assumptions, which cannot stand before a critical science which examines more carefully." It is now commonly assumed that "the law-book was a document which formed the basis of Deuteronomy at the final redaction" (Hitzig on Jerem. xi. *s.* 90), or that it was a "collection of the commands and ordinances of Moses which has been since incorporated in the Pentateuch, especially in Deuteronomy" (Thenius on the place), or that it was "a collection of the laws of Moses; in fact, that formally arranged collection of them which is contained in the three middle books of the Pentateuch" (Bertheau on 2 Chron. xxxiv. 14). But there is not the slightest hint of any such "collection" as existing before, or by the side of, the Pentateuch; much less is there any hint that any such collection was designated as "the book of the Law," or "the book of the Covenant." It is a pure hypothesis in which refuge has been sought, because, on the one hand, it was impossible to understand by the newly discovered "book" any one of the books of the Pentateuch; while, on the other hand, it was believed that the composition of the Pentateuch must be ascribed to a later date. This is not the place for an investigation into the origin of the Pentateuch. We simply hold firmly to this, on the authority of the text before us, that the newly discovered book was the entire Pentateuch. De Wette, even, declares (*Einleit.* § 162, a): "The discovery of he book of the law in the temple in the reign of Josiah is the first (?) certain hint which we find of the existence of the Pentateuch as we have it to-day."

[In the above discussion there are two points involved: (*a*) the general question of the date of the origin of Deuteronomy, and (*b*) the especial evidence of the text before us on that question. I dismiss the former point with the following remarks. (*a*) It is a question of great scope, involving the examination of many texts (very few of which are mentioned above), and calling for a comprehensive treatment. Such an undertaking is out of place and impossible here. (*b*) This question requires freedom, and scholarly independence from dogmatic prepossessions, for its discussion. It requires also thorough and wide knowledge of a variety of subjects. It cannot be settled by any arbitary and dogmatic assertions. (*c*) The reasons which are adduced for believing in the comparatively late origin of the book of Deuteronomy, if not convincing, are at least such as to demand the candid consideration of honest scholars. (For the summary of the arguments on either side see the Introductory Essays in the COMMENTARY on GENESIS, and the articles "Pentateuch" and "Deuteronomy," in Smith's *Dictionary of the Bible.*)

The other question, as to the bearing of this verse on the question of the date of the origin of Deuteronomy, is in place here, but, in fact, the text bears little or no evidence on that point. The reasons for thinking that Deuteronomy was not written by Moses, but at some time long after his death, are critical and independent of the verse before us. When this opinion had gained ground the question arose, *when was it written?* then attention was turned to this passage, and it was *suspected* that this was the time of its *publication*, if not of its *composition*. Then the text was tortured to try to make it bear evidence either to confirm or overthrow this suspicion. There is evi-

dence to this point drawn from other sources, but the text before us yields none to either side.

(*a*) In the first place, "the Book of the Law" is a name which may have referred at one time to the Decalogue, at another time to a collection of laws, at another time to a still later revision, and so on until it was applied finally to the Pentateuch in its present form, and so came down to us with that meaning. This is what the "critical school" affirm to have been the fact, and so far as the name, "The Book of the Law" goes, it is not inconsistent with that assertion. The "Revised Statutes" of a State, at any given time, means the volume of law as fixed, up to that time. Ten years later, the same title refers, perhaps, to a very different set of laws. The illustration answers rudely for the development which is supposed to have taken place from the original writings of Moses to the historical, political, religious, and ritual work which now bears his name. We have some indications of the extent of what is called "the Law of Moses," in the time which seems to have been required for reading it, but they are vague and uncertain. In Josh. viii. 32, however, we read that Joshua "wrote there upon the stones a copy of the law of Moses, which he wrote in the presence of the children of Israel." Probably no one will think that, in this case, it refers to the Pentateuch. Therefore, in the verse before us, "the Book of the Law" refers to whatever was so considered, or passed as such at this period, but what that was is exactly the point in dispute.

(*b*) The word מצא, as was said above, is used for different kinds of finding. It does not, therefore, give us any clue as to whether the thing found was an old thing, whose location had not, for some time, been known, or a thing which had not previously been known to be in existence at all. However, no one believes that nothing had previously existed, or been known to exist, which passed under the name of the "Law of the Lord." The question in dispute is, whether the thing now so designated was identical with what had previously been so called, or was a revision and extension of the same, containing especially, as a recent addition, the book of Deuteronomy. On that question the word מצא casts no light.

(*c*) Hilkiah uses the definite article. Let us endeavor to realize the state of things, and see what inference flows from this fact. We know that, at this time, certain religious doctrines were known and believed, and certain rites of worship were practised in Judah by those who maintained the worship of Jehovah. We also know (so much, at least, no one disputes) that Moses had given certain revelations of religious truth, and certain religious ordinances to the Israelites, in the name of Jehovah, and had written them down. The only dispute on these points can be as to the degree of knowledge, faith, and worship which existed in Judah, and as to the amount of revelation and law which Moses gave and wrote. It follows that the writings of Moses, either in their original, or in a modified and extended form, served as the authority for the doctrine and worship which still remained in Judah, or else, that this written law had passed from human knowledge, lost in the flood of heathenism which had poured over the nation during the last century, in which case the doctrine and worship which remained would be based on a tradition of the ancient writings as such; and the name "The Law" would refer only to the substance of them, so far as it was remembered. Hilkiah's announcement throws light on this alternative. If he had said: I have found a book of the Law,—it would have implied that he had found *a copy* of a generally well known volume. But he says: I have found "the Book of the Law." He refers to it as something known or heard of before, yet the tone of the announcement and the effect of the discovery show that *no other copies of this book could have been known to be in existence, or else that this copy was different from all others.* If the latter were the case, the suspicion would be forced upon us, by the reference to "threats" in the book, that what marked this copy, as distinguished from all others, was just the book of Deuteronomy. Many scholars so regard the incident. However, it is strange that, if other copies existed, while this copy contained matter which was missing from them, no hint of this should be found in the context. How was it that no one produced a copy of the "Law," or challenged the new copy as a forgery? Or, if it passed at once as genuine, because it was not in the "spirit of the age" to be critical about literary authorship, and if it was well known, from easy comparison with existing copies, that this copy gave new and valuable knowledge of the Law, why do we find no hint of this gain? The argument from silence is never conclusive, but in this case it is very strong. It seems rather that Hilkiah refers, by his words, to a book which was *unique*, so far as his, or the general public knowledge went, and that he meant to announce the discovery of *the* Book which contained *that* Law which was known to them by tradition, which formed the basis of their faith and worship, of whose existence, at a former time, in a written codex, they had also heard, but of which they possessed no written copy.

The only true inference from this text is, therefore, this, that during the time of apostasy the Scriptures had been lost to public knowledge, and "the Law" existed only as a tradition and memory. This leaves us face to face with the question: Of what did "this book of the Law" consist,—of our Pentateuch, or of some imperfect form of what we now call the Pentateuch? We must look for the answer to that question elsewhere. We shall not find it in this verse.—W. G. S.]

As for the particular *copy* of the book which was found, the Rabbis and many of the old expositors, Grotius, Piscator, Hess, and others inferred from the words 2 Chron. xxxiv. 14: "The book of the law of Jehovah בְּיַד מֹשֶׁה," that it was "the original manuscript from the hand of Moses," and Calmet was of the opinion that this supposition could alone account for the great effect which the discovery produced. In Numb. xv. 23 we find the same expression, but there it cannot possibly be understood literally of the "hand" of Moses. It is used in the sense in which we often find בְּיַד elsewhere (1 Kings xii. 15; Jer. xxxvii. 2), simply to denote the medium through which Clericus' statement is correct: *Satis est, exemplar quoddam Legis antiquum fuisse, idque authenticum.* As it was found "in the house of Jehovah," it

was most probably the temple-copy, *i. e.*, the official one which, as the documentary testimony to the covenant, was deposited in the temple, according to Deut. xxxi. 12, 26, and was used for public reading from time to time before the people. Perhaps this copy was distinguished by its external appearance, size, material, beauty of the writing, &c., from the ordinary private copies. [The passage in Deuteronomy must then be interpreted as a *general* injunction always to keep *a* copy in the tabernacle or temple, an interpretation which a glance will show to be incorrect, and it is assumed that there were private copies in existence. If private copies of "the Book of the Law" were common, or if a single one was known to be in existence, then we cannot understand why the discovery produced such a sensation, unless indeed we suppose that the newly discovered copy contained something which the other copies did not. In that case the reference to the "threats" contained in the book, as one of its prominent characteristics, would awaken the gravest suspicion that what it contained over and above the other copies was just the book of Deuteronomy. There is no reason to believe that private copies existed, and the definite article סֵפֶר הַתּוֹרָה bears witness to the contrary, as above stated.—W. G. S.] It is nowhere stated when and how this official copy was thrown aside and lost sight of. According to the tradition of the rabbis, this took place under Ahaz, who, they say, caused all the copies to be burned, but Kimchi justly objected that the reformation under Hezekiah presupposed the existence of the Law-book, and acquaintance with it. The supposition is therefore naturally suggested that under the fanatical idolater Manasseh, who sought to destroy all Jehovah-worship, and who reigned for fifty-five years, some faithful servant of Jehovah, perhaps the high-priest himself, took care to conceal and preserve the sacred Scriptures, and that the book only came to light again at the repairing of the temple under Josiah, after sixty or seventy years of concealment. During this period the priests "followed an imperfect tradition in their execution of the public worship of Jehovah, instead of being guided by the legal prescriptions" (Von Gerlach), and "it may be that the active practice of religious observances (which we must take for granted as existing in a well-ordered State) saved them from feeling the necessity for written rules" (Winer, *R.-W.-B.* I. *s.* 610). The discovery of the authentic Law-book was all the more important on this account, for by means of it the pure and correct worship of Jehovah could now be re-established. The idle question, where the book was found? whether under the roof, or under a heap of stones, or in one of the treasure chambers, may be left to the rabbis to contend over.

Ver. 11. **When the king had heard the words of the book of the law, &c.** Shaphan did not read to the king the *whole* book, but he read *therein* (2 Chron. xxxiv. 18: בּוֹ). Judging from the impression which the words made upon the king (rending one's clothes is a sign of the deepest anxiety and terror; see chap. vi. 30; **xix.** 1), those passages seem to have been read in which the transgressors of the law are threatened with the hardest punishments; such, for instance, as Deut. **xxviii.** "Perhaps the last part of the book-roll was unrolled first" (Richter).—The king now sends a deputation of his highest officers, as Hezekiah had done in similar uncertainty, to **inquire of the Lord**; not, as Duncker (*Gesch. des Alt.* I. *s.* 504) states, "in order to find out whether this really was the law of Moses," but rather, because the genuineness of the book appears to him to be beyond question, he sends to inquire whether and how the punishments which are threatened may be averted. "He desires to learn whether the measure of sin is already full or whether there is yet hope of grace" (Von Gerlach). Only a prophetical declaration—the word of the Lord—could give him an answer to this question. *Ahikam* appears afterwards as the friend and protector of Jeremiah (Jer. xxvi. 24), and as father of Gedaliah, the governor of the cities of Judah (Jer. xl. 5). *Achbor* is called, 2 Chron. xxxiv. 20, Abdon, perhaps only by a mistake of the letter characters. According to Jerem. xxvi. 22; xxxvi. 12, he was the father of Elnathan, who belonged to the most intimate associates of king Zedekiah. Asahiah, who is only mentioned here, is spoken of as "the servant of the king," that is, as an officer in his immediate service.—**Unto Huldah, the prophetess** (ver. 14). The king had commanded the deputation to inquire of the Lord without directing them to go to any particular person. The reason why they sought her is probably hinted at in the remark which is added, and which in itself appears unimportant, that "she lived in Jerusalem." The two prophets who made their appearance during Josiah's reign were Jeremiah and Zephaniah. The former came from Anathoth in Benjamin (Jer. i. 1). He was probably at this time still in that city. The latter, according to Pseudo-epiphanius (*De prophet.* 19), belonged to the tribe of Simeon and came ἀπὸ ὄρους Σαραβαθά. The deputation went to Huldah because she was the only one at Jerusalem who had the gift of prophecy. In order to show that she was a person of good position, not only the name and office of her husband are given, but also the name of two of his ancestors. He was keeper of the wardrobe, "either of the royal wardrobe, or of that of the sanctuary; the latter is more probable on comparing 2 Kings x. 22" (Bertheau). "In the second part," *i. e.*, in the lower city. See Nehem. xi. 9; Zeph. i. 10. Josephus: ἄλλη πόλις. Thenius: "In the second district of the (lower) city, which was afterwards included within the walls." [He thus identifies it with a small hill which formed the extreme north-western suburb of the city.]

Ver. 15. **And she said unto them, &c.** She addressed her reply in the first place to **the man that sent you** (vers. 15–17), afterwards **to the king of Judah which sent you** (vers. 18–20). The first part was addressed not only to the king but to "every one who would hear;" the second part was addressed to the king especially (Keil). This is more simple and natural than Thenius' notion: "In the first part, Huldah has only the subject matter in mind, while in ver. 18, in the quieter (?) flow of her words, she takes notice of the state of mind of the particular person who sent to make the inquiry."—**All the words of the book** (ver. 16), stands in apposition with רָעָה which precedes. In Chronicles we find instead: "All the curses that are written in the book which they have read before the king of Judah" (**xxxiv.**

24). הַדְּבָרִים in ver. 18 is not to be connected with what follows: "Thy heart was tender on account of these words" (Luther), but it is to be taken as a nominative absolute: as for the words which, &c. The sense of vers. 18 and 19 is: Because thou hast heard *me* and taken heed to my threats, I will also hear *thee* and not fulfil these threats upon thee. רַךְ is to be taken here in the sense of *timid*, Deut. xx. 8; Jer. li. 46. The threats had awakened terror and dismay in him.—**A desolation and a curse,** see Jerem. xliv. 22. The fact that Josiah was slain in battle (chap. xxiii. 29) does not contradict בְּשָׁלוֹם in ver. 20. That only means to say that he should die "without surviving the desolation of Jerusalem, as we see from the added promise: **thine eyes shall not see,** &c." (Keil). According to 2 Chron. xxxv. 24, 25, Josiah was laid in the sepulchre with high honors, followed by the lamentations of the whole people.

Chap. xxiii. ver. 1. **And the king sent and they gathered unto him,** &c. Although the king had received an answer which was favorable only in its bearings on himself, his first care was to bring together the entire people, to make them acquainted with the law-book, to lead them to repent, and so to avert as far as possible the threatened punishment. In ver. 2 all the classes of the population are mentioned in order to show how much Josiah had it at heart that the entire people, without distinction of rank or class, should become acquainted with the Law. Among these classes the priests and prophets are mentioned. Keil supposes that Jeremiah and Zephaniah were among these "in order that they might, by their participation, accomplish the renewal of the covenant, and that the prophets might then undertake the task of bringing home to the hearts of the people, by earnest preaching in Jerusalem and the cities of Judah, the obligations of the covenant." If that had been so, however, the prophets could not have been merely incidentally mentioned, but they would have been especially pointed out as prominent agents in the work. The נְבִיאִים, who here stand with the priests and form one class with them, are evidently not the prophets in the narrower and more especial sense [*i. e.*, as persons who foretold future events and pronounced the oracles of God], but the word is a general designation of the persons whose duty it was to preach and to explain the Law. The Chronicler (xxxiv. 30) has instead הַלְוִיִּם, which is no contradiction or arbitrary alteration, for it was the duty and calling of the house of Levi to preach and to interpret the Law (Deut. xvii. 18; xxxi. 9 *sq.*; xxxiii. 10; 2 Chron. xvii. 8, 9; xxxv. 3); the Chaldee paraphrase therefore interprets נביאים here by וְסָפְרַיָּא, γραμματεῖς.

[What we understand by "interpretation of the law" did not exist until after the captivity. The levites are represented in Deuteronomy as the guardians and readers of the Law, and in Chronicles we find them charged with its publication, but nowhere are they represented as doing what the "scribes" did at a later time. That is an interpretation of the rabbis which is borrowed from their own time, and is unhistorical as applied to this text. Neither were the prophets divided into two classes, one of which was charged with the office of interpretation. There is no evidence of such a division, or of such a duty of the prophets. Certainly if the duty of interpreting the Law had been given by Moses to the levites, the whole spirit of the Israelitish constitution forbids us to believe that other persons—prophets—persons of every tribe, could have interfered with that duty or shared in it. We cannot thus reconcile our text with that of Chronicles.—We may get a correct idea of the incident referred to by observing: (*a*) that the class of prophets was, at this time, very large. The name נביא applies to them all. No distinction is made, and the name is even applied to *false* prophets, whether with an epithet, marking them as false (Ez. xiii. 2 and 3; Isai. ix. 14; Jerem. vi. 13, &c.), or without any such epithet (Hos. iv. 5; ix. 7, 8). The same name is given to the "prophets" of Baal. The original meaning of the word is *speaker* or *orator*, but it is essential to the idea of a נביא in the O. T. that he speaks under the influence of divine illumination or inspiration. He may be false, and pretend to an illumination which he has not, or he may speak in the name of a false god, but, as one who claims and pretends to illumination, he is a נביא. (*b*) There were schools in which persons were trained to this office and work. Originally such persons were few in number, but the book of Jeremiah shows conclusively that, in the time of that prophet, they were numerous, and that many had the name without the spirit. Many were called, but few chosen. (*c*) The aim of the schools of the prophets was to nourish faith in Jehovah and worship of Him; to cultivate men who preserved the traditions of the Jehovah religion, perpetuated the great doctrines which the prophets continually reiterate, and cultivated insight into divine truth. (*d*) The schools could do no more than spend their labor on those who offered themselves for the work. The truth of their calling could only appear in their subsequent work. Hence the *authority* of the prophets was nothing more or less than their divine calling, which manifested itself in their later labors. In fact, it was not until Isaiah and Jeremiah had been long dead that their labors were ratified and could be estimated. (*e*) The words or writings of the fifteen or sixteen whose works remain to us comprise, if we may so speak, only the cream of the prophetic utterances of centuries. (*f*) The prophets never base their teachings on Moses, but teach originally. They do not say: Thus saith Moses. They do not quote the Pentateuch as an authority. They never impress their commands by quoting the "Law of Moses" as the supreme authority of faith and duty. If they did, their works would not be Holy Scripture, but commentaries, or, at most, sermons. On the contrary, they say: Thus saith the Lord. Their work is original and creative; it is not merely in the way of application or reflexion. When they quote the "Law of the Lord" they quote *principles* and *doctrines* which were fundamental in the Israelitish constitution. They do not refer to specific ordinances and enactments, but to the spirit and principles of the Jehovah-religion. We have an analogy in the frequent reference in modern sermons to "the *will* of God." This refers only generally to the Bible, and includes those things also which are not specifically

ordained in the Bible, but which a Christian conscience recognizes as God's will. (*g*) It is, therefore, an error to attempt to enhance the character and authority of the great prophets by supposing that, during their life-time, they were separated from others of their class. (*h*) It is also an error to suppose that they held any insubordinate or independent place in the body politic. We admire these men who rebuked kings, and dictated public policy in great crises, but we do them injustice if we believe that, on ordinary occasions, and in ordinary duties, they emancipated themselves from the obligations of subjects of the kingdom.—In the present case the text shows us the place of the prophets. They ranked with the priests as religious persons. If Jeremiah was in Jerusalem we may be sure that he took his place, simply and without ostentation, among his comrades in station and calling. We do not need to invent any special reason for the presence of the prophets. They were there simply as a class amongst the multitude assembled. (*i*) It is also an error to reconcile the text of Kings with that of Chronicles by identifying the levites, in function, with the prophets, or any class of the prophets. In the time of the chronicler the prophets had ceased to exist, certainly as a class. He was accustomed to see levites in this place by the side of the priests on such occasions, and that is the simple reason why he mentions them as occupying that place in the present instance.—W. G. S.]

Both small and great. This does not mean both the children and the grown-up persons, but, both the lower classes and the people of distinction. No doubt the king left to the priests or prophets the duty of reading the book, but himself took the oath of fidelity to the covenant from the people. He therefore took his place upon the platform (see notes on xi. 14).

Ver. 4. **And the king commanded Hilkiah the high priest,** &c. As in chap. xi. 17, 18, the conclusion of the covenant was followed by the extirpation of idolatry, first by the removal of the utensils of this cultus (ver 4), then by the execution of the priests of it (ver 5), then by the destruction and desecration of the places in which it was practised (ver. 6 *sq.*). כֹּהֲנֵי הַמִּשְׁנֶה are not, as the rabbis say, the deputies of the high-priest, but, in contrast with him, the younger and subordinate priests. See 1 Chron. xv. 18; 2 Chron. xxxi. 12; 1 Sam. viii. 2. The **keepers of the door** are the levites whose duty it was to guard the temple (chap. xxii. 4; 1 Chron. xxiii. 5). On *Baal* and *Aschera* and upon *the host of heaven*, see notes on chap. xxi. 3 [also notes on chap. xvi. 3 and xvii. 17]. This burning took place in obedience to Deut. vii. 25; xii. 3. It was accomplished outside of Jerusalem, because the things were unclean, on the fields of the Kidron, north-east of the city, where the Kidron valley is broader than between Jerusalem and the Mount of Olives. Asa had caused an idol to be burned there (1 Kings xv. 13), and Hezekiah caused all the impure things which were found in the temple to be carried thither (2 Chron. xxix. 16). Not even the ashes, however, might remain there. They were carried to Bethel, certainly for no other reason than because that had been the chief place of origin for all idolatrous and illegitimate worship ever since the time of Jeroboam (1 Kings xii. 33). That which had proceeded from thence Josiah sent back thither—in ashes. Thenius' conjecture: "בֵּית־אַל, he carried the ashes into *the house of nothingness*, *i. e.*, he scattered them on all the winds," is, to say the least, unnecessary.

Ver. 5. **And he caused to desist the idolatrous priests,** &c.: Not, he caused to perish, put to death (Sept. κατέκαυσε; Vulg. *delevit*), but, he caused to cease, or set aside. The word כְּמָרִים occurs besides only in Hos. x. 5 and Zeph. i. 4. The etymology of the word is uncertain. The rabbis derive it from כמר, *nigredo*, because they wore black garments, but we have no instance of priests who wore black garments, and this etymology is certainly false. According to Gesenius it comes from כמר, *to execute* or *accomplish*, and means the celebrant (of the sacred offices), ἐρδων, sacrificer. [This is Keil's opinion, not Gesenius'. The latter, in the *Thesaurus s. v.* follows the etymology above ascribed to the rabbis. He says that it means "blackness, sadness, and so, concretely, one who walks in black garments, *i. e.*, a grieving, sad, ascetic, priest." As it is only used of the priests of false worship, it would be very remarkable that the name applied to them should mean, strictly, *ascetics*.—W. G. S.] Fürst connects it with the Arabic *chamar=coluit deum*, hence, one who serves, a servant. It certainly refers to a kind of priests, not necessarily of idols, for in Hos. x. 5 the priests of Jeroboam's Jehovah-calf-worship are so called, and here they are distinguished from those who offered incense to Baal. Probably it refers to those who, without actually being priests, exercised sacerdotal functions either in the service of the calves or of false divinities. Baal "serves as a designation of the entire cultus which was covered by his name, as if it were said: Baal, *i. e.*, the sun, &c." (Thenius). The מַזָּלוֹת, from מַזָּל, *lodging*, *dwelling*, *station*, are the twelve divisions of the Zodiac marked by the figures and names of animals; the twelve constellations of the Zodiac, which are called in Job xxxviii. 22 מַזָּרוֹת (see Gesen. *Thes.* II. 869). הָאֲשֵׁרָה (ver. 6), means not one but many Astarte-statues which Manasseh had set up in the temple (chap. xxi. 7). If he removed them after his return from Babylon (2 Chron. xxxiii. 15), they were reinstated by Amon.—**On the graves of the common people.** The chronicler says: "On the graves of those who had sacrificed to them" (the false gods). Evidently this is a gloss added by the chronicler himself. Persons of the common folk [as the text reads literally] are not worshippers of false gods, but common people. These did not have hereditary sepulchres hewn out of the rock (Winer, *R.-W.-B.* I. 444), as the rich and noble had. They were buried in the open fields where the corpses were more likely to be dug up by wild animals. The present burying-place of the Jews is in the Kidron valley. It is evident from Jerem. xxvi. 23 that this burial was not disgraceful, although it was less honorable than that in a rock-hewn sepulchre. If this had been the burying-place for idol-worshippers, it would have been the usual burying-place in the time of Manasseh, whereas at that time it was rather the faithful servants of Jehovah who were dishonorably buried. Josiah's

reason for throwing the ashes on these graves was, therefore, not "to desecrate them as the graves of idolaters" (Keil), but in order still further to dishonor the ashes of the destroyed idols.—On הַקְּדֵשִׁים (ver. 7) see note on 1 Kings xiv. 24. Only male prostitutes, not female (Thenius) can be understood. They had their dwellings (tents or cabins) near the temple, perhaps in the outer court. In these also dwelt the women who wove בָּתִּים for the Ashera. Whether these were "tents," and, if so, of what kind they were (hardly, as Ewald thinks, "garments" [he alters the text and reads בְּגָדִים *Gesch.* III. 718]) is not clear. Chap. xvii. 30 does not throw any light on it. Movers (*Phœn.* I. *s.* 686) says: "The castrated male prostitute (קָדֵשׁ) imagines or pretends that he is a woman: *negant se viros esse* * * * *mulieres se volunt credi.* Firmic. He lives in association with women, and the latter, in their turn, have a peculiar inclination towards him."

Ver. 8. **And he brought all the priests out of the cities of Judah.** Vers. 8 and 9 belong together. The true levitical priests, who exercised their functions on the high places instead of in the temple, he caused to come to Jerusalem in order to make them desist from this. He caused the high-places to be made unfit for use by desecrating them. However, these priests, since they had forfeited their priestly dignity, were not allowed to perform priestly offices in the temple. They were employed simply as levites. They were allowed to eat unleavened, or sacrificial, bread, but not in company with the other priests (*cf.* Ezek. xliv. 10–14). They were, therefore, placed in the same category with those sons of Aaron who were prevented by some physical defect from undertaking the hereditary functions of their family (Levit. xxi. 21). It is not stated in the text that they continued to be *participes emolumentorum sacerdotalium* (Clericus).—**From Geba to Beersheba,** that is, throughout the entire kingdom. Geba is the Gibea in the territory of Benjamin, near Ramah, the home of Saul. See notes on 1 Kings xv. 22, and Knobel on Isaiah x. 29. It is mentioned as the northern limit. Beersheba is mentioned as the southernmost and last seat of illegal worship (Amos v. 5; viii. 15).—**The high-places of the gates** were places of worship (in this case simply altars), either close to the gates, or, since these were large open buildings for public meetings and intercourse (Nahum viii. 16; Ruth iii. 11; Prov. xxii. 22), even inside of them. Probably these altars served for the foreigners as they came in or went out to offer sacrifices of prayer or of thanksgiving in reference to the transactions in which they were about to engage, or which they had just completed. The two following clauses, each of which begins with אֲשֶׁר, define these high-places more nearly, and it is not admissible to supply *præsertim* or *imprimis* (Clericus, Dathe, Maurer) before the first אֲשֶׁר, and then to regard the second relative as referring to this. How can we comprehend the description of a high-place which was at the entrance of the gate of Joshua, and at the same time on the left hand of the gate of the city? As reference is made to two high-places in two different gates, the verse cannot be otherwise understood than as it is interpreted by Thenius: "He tore down the high-places of the gates, (the high-place) which was at the entrance of the gate of Joshua (as well as that) which was on the left hand in the gate of the city." So also Keil and Ewald. Neither of these gates is mentioned anywhere else, at least by the same name. Thenius locates the former in the inside of the city, because he assumes that the governor of the city must have lived in the citadel, Millo, and that this gate must have been one which connected the lower city with the citadel, and was close to his dwelling. This gate was called, in later times, Gennath. This, however, is a pure guess. The "gate of the city" may have been the valley-gate, or the Jaffa-gate, on the west side of the city towards the valley of Gihon, through which the traffic with the Mediterranean passed.

Ver. 10. **And he defiled Topheth.** הַתֹּפֶת is a special designation of the spot in the valley of Hinnom, south of the city, where, during the time of apostasy, children were sacrificed to Moloch. In Isaiah xxx. 33 this place is called the "pyre." Fürst derives the word from the unused root תּוּף, *to burn up.* The majority of the expositors, however, derive it from תּוּף, *to spit* or *vomit,* that is, *to detest, hold in abhorrence.* תֹּפֶת would then mean *abomination* (see Rödiger in Gesenius' *Thesaurus,* p. 1497). The place either had this name from the time of Josiah, who defiled it by burning there the bones of the dead (ver. 16), or else it was thus named still earlier, by the faithful servants of Jehovah, on account of the detestation they felt for the abominable child-sacrifices which were practised there. Hitzig and Böttcher take הִנֹּם as an appellative from הנם, *to groan,* and translate: "Valley of the wailings of children."—**And he took away the horses,** ver. 11. The same expressions are used here in regard to the horses as in ver. 5 in regard to the כְּמָרִים. They were *given* (נתן), that is, *established* or *instituted,* and he *took them away* (שׁבת). Both expressions must therefore be understood here as they are there. He did away with the horses, but did with the chariots as he had done with the idol-images (ver. 6), he burned them (שׂרף). If the horses had been of wood he would have burned them also. It follows that they were living horses. Horses are often mentioned as animals sacred to the sun among Oriental peoples (see the proofs quoted in Bochart, *Hieroz.* I. 2, 10). Horses were not only sacrificed to the sun, as the supreme divinity (Herod. i. 216), but they were also used to draw the sacred chariot (Curt. iii. 3, 11; see Herod. i. 189). This latter was the purpose for which they were kept here. They served to draw the sacred chariot in solemn processions, representing the course of the sun through the zodiac, not, as Keil asserts, following the rabbis, "to go forth to meet the rising sun." [This custom of keeping horses sacred to the sun is connected with the idea of the sun as a flaming chariot drawn through the heavens. Hence horses and a car were kept on earth as sacred to, and symbolical of, the sun.] מִבֹּא is not to be translated, as it is by De Wette: "so that they came no more into the house of Jehovah," nor is it to be connected with וַיַּשְׁבֵּת (he removed them

from the entrance of the temple), but it states where the place was where the horses were ordinarily kept: *from the coming into the house*, that is, when any one came into the temple (through the western or rear door of the fore-court, the gate שַׁלֶּכֶת, 1 Chron. xxvi. 16), the place of the horses was on the side of him to or towards (אֶל) the chamber of Nathan-melech. This chamber was בַּפַּרְוָרִים. The לִשְׁכוֹת in the outer court (see notes on 1 Kings vi. 36) were side rooms which served for different purposes; not only as dwellings for the priests who were on duty (Ezek. xl. 45 *sq.*), but also as store-rooms for different materials (1 Chron. ix. 26; 2 Chron. xxxi. 12). This chamberlain (chap. xx. 18), Nathan-Melech, of whom nothing further is known, was, no doubt, charged with the care of the sacred horses. It is impossible to decide whether the לִשְׁכָּה was his dwelling, and the stable of the horses was near by (Thenius), or whether this chamber itself was arranged as a stable for them (Keil). No one disputes that פַּרְוָר is the same as פַּרְבָּר, 1 Chron. xxvi. 18. In the latter place the divisions of the gate-keepers of the temple are stated in vers. 12–19. As these had their posts only in and near the temple, and two of them were especially appointed for the פַּרְבָּר, the word cannot mean *suburb* (the rabbis and De Wette), nor any other locality outside of the fore-court of the temple. The ordinary interpretation of the word as the colonnade (Gesenius, Bunsen) is also excluded, for the Parbar is distinctly designated in the place quoted as lying on the *west* or *rear* side of the temple, where certainly it is least likely that a colonnade was built which formed the feature distinguishing that side from the others. [Bähr, in his translation, renders בַּפַּרְבָּר by *in den Säulenhallen*, in the colonnades.] We have rather to think of some specially marked space on the west side, inside of the fore-court. Of the six watchmen who were posted at the west side, four had posts assigned them on the street, that is, at the gate which led to the street, and only two in the Parbar. The latter must therefore have been inside the court, otherwise it could not have been left to the weaker guard. It is not stated what particular use this space, called the Parbar, was put to. We can only suppose that it was used for purposes for which the other sides of the court were not well adapted. The more specific details as to the size of the space, the wall by which it was surrounded, &c., which Thenius gives in his notes on the passage, are the result of mere combinations.

Ver. 12. **And the altars that were on the top of the upper chamber of Ahaz.** The עֲלִיַּת of Ahaz was certainly not the upper chamber which was above the sanctuary of the temple (see notes on 1 Kings vi. 20), but only a chamber which was first erected by this idolatrous king, and which was probably over one of the outbuildings in the fore-court, which, according to Jerem. xxxv. 4, at least some of them, had different stories one above another. Perhaps it was over a gate. It probably served for observations on the stars, and the altars were for the worship of the constellations (Zeph. i., 5; Jerem. xix. 13). [It therefore proves that the Assyrio-Chaldean star-worship was introduced in the time of Ahaz and Pekah. See notes on chap. xvi. 3 and xvii. 17, above, pp. 169 and 186.] He tore down **the altars which Manasseh had made** (chap. xxi. 5). נתץ is used as in verse 7. Keil translates the following וַיָּרָץ: "He crushed them from thence," taking it from רָצַץ, *to crush, pulverize*, and making it equivalent to וַיָּדֶק in ver. 6. But מִשָּׁם does not coincide well with the notion of crushing, which, moreover, is fully expressed in נתץ. It must be taken from רוץ, *to run*, in the sense of *to hasten* (Isai. lix. 7); he hastened thence since he had yet all the high-places outside of Jerusalem to destroy (ver. 13). The Chaldee paraphrase explains it by וְאַרְחֵיק מִתַּמָּן, that is, *he removed from thence* (Ps. lxxxviii. 19); the Sept.: καὶ καθεῖλεν αὐτὰ ἐκεῖθεν. Thenius therefore agrees with Kimchi in reading וַיָּרֶץ: "He caused to run—and cast, &c., that is, He gave orders to remove and cast with all haste, &c. (Jerem. xlix. 19). In this case he probably cast the débris directly over the wall of the temple enclosure down into the valley." **And the high-places that were before Jerusalem,** &c. Vers. 13 and 14 are a direct continuation of ver. 12, and they state what Josiah did in regard to the high-places before the city, which had existed long before Ahaz and Manasseh. On these high-places, see notes on 1 Kings xi. 7. The **Mount of Corruption** is the southernmost peak of the Mount of Olives which lay to the East (עַל־פְּנֵי) of Jerusalem. It received this name on account of the idolatry which was practised there. Among Christians it is now called, Mount of Offence, *mons offensionis*, which the Vulg. has in the place before us. On the images and Astarte-statues (ver. 14) see notes on 1 Kings xiv. 23. מְקוֹמָם does not mean "their elevated pedestals" (Thenius), for וַיְמַלֵּא would not fit into this meaning, but, in general, their places. It is to be observed that it is not said in reference to Solomon's high-places (in ver. 13) that he tore them down, as it is said of those which were of later origin (vers. 6, 7, 8, 12), but only that he defiled them. No doubt this is because they had been already torn down by Hezekiah, or perhaps even before his time (2 Chron. xxxi. 1). He only defiled the places where they had been (perhaps some parts were still remaining) in order to obliterate thoroughly all the false worship. Thenius is certainly mistaken when he asserts: "The idol-temples which Solomon had erected remained until the time of Josiah, though they were several times, *e. g.*, under Hezekiah, placed under interdict." How could Hezekiah, who even removed the heights where Jehovah was worshipped (chap. xviii. 4), have allowed idol-temples to stand untouched, with their images, over against Jerusalem? [As far as the text gives any information in regard to the matter, either here or elsewhere, Solomon's heights, &c., remained until this time. The inference as to what other reformers *must* have done, is only an inference. If we allow ourselves to infer that such and such things had been done before this time, we obliterate those peculiarities of Josiah's reformation which make it especially interesting.—

W. G. S.] We do not need to assume, as Menochius does: *Ab impiis regibus excitata sunt fana et idola iis similia, quæ excitaverat Salomon iisdem locis, ideoque Salomoni tribuuntur primo illorum auctori.*

Ver. 15. **Moreover the altar that was at Beth-el.**—After Josiah had put an end to all illegal worship in Judah, he extended the reformation to the former kingdom of Israel, whence that worship had originally sprung, and where it had been made the basis of the political constitution (1 Kings xii. 26 *sq.*). It is told in vers. 15–20 what he did there. From the time of Jeroboam Bethel had been the chief seat of the calf-worship (1 Kings xii. 28; xiii. 1; Amos iii. 14; vii. 10, 13; Jerem. xlviii. 13; see Hos. x. 5). This altar was the one mentioned in 1 Kings xii. 33 and xiii. 1. The first הַבָּמָה in ver. 15 cannot be taken as an accusative of place, "on the high-place," as Thenius takes it, but only as apposition to "altar." The Bamah was a house on an elevation, for he tore it down and burned it. The altar did not stand in the house, but before it. In what follows the statement is clearer: "that altar and the high-place." After the immigration of the heathen colonists an Astarte-statue seems to have taken the place of the calf-image there.—On ver. 16 *sq.* see the *Prelim. Rem.* on 1 Kings xiii. Vers. 16 to 18 belong, according to Stähelin (*Krit. Untersuch. s.* 156), to the author and not to the document which served him as authority. According to Thenius they are taken from the sequel to 1 Kings xiii. 1–32. This, he says, is evident "from וְגַם in ver. 19, which corresponds to that in ver. 15, and, still more distinctly, from the consideration that Josiah could not defile the altar by burning men's bones upon it (ver. 16) after he had broken it in pieces (ver. 15)." But, if the remarkable incident in vers. 16 to 18 was to be narrated, it could not be mentioned anywhere but here, because it took place at the destruction of the high-place at Bethel. Ver. 19 then carries on the history of the destruction and extirpation of the illegal cultus throughout Samaria, and goes on to tell what was done elsewhere than at Bethel. As for the difficulty about the altar, the author must have been very careless to make a statement in ver. 16 which was inconsistent with what he had said in ver. 15. He says nothing in ver. 15 about burning the altar, but only about burning the house and the Astarte-statue. He caused bones to be burned on the spot where the altar had stood in order that that also might become unclean and never more be fit for an altar, *i. e.*, for a place of worship. The author, no doubt, in many ways made use of old authorities and incorporated them into his work, but he certainly never thoughtlessly patched separate pieces together, or arbitrarily inserted a bit here and there. —**He turned himself,** *i. e.*, to look about; *cf.* Exod. ii. 12; xvi. 10. The "mount," where the sepulchres were, cannot be the one on which the altar and the Bamah stood, but one in the neighborhood, which was to be seen from the one where the Bamah stood. After אִישׁ הָאֱלֹהִים the Sept. have the words: "When Jeroboam, at the festival, stood at the altar, and he turned his eyes upon the sepulchre of the man of God who had spoken these words." Thenius regards this addition as originally having belonged to the perfect text, but it may easily be recognized as a gloss.—Ver. 17. **What grave-stone is that?** The sepulchres of prominent persons were marked by monuments placed before them (Ezek. xxxix. 15; Gen. xxxv. 20; Jerem. xxxi. 21). This monument attracted the king's attention and he asked whom it commemorated.—Ver. 18. **Out of Samraia.** The name here refers not to the city but to the country, and stands in contrast with the words "from Judah" in ver. 17. It therefore marks the origin of this prophet; "he was an Israelitish, not a Jewish prophet" (Thenius). The priests whom Josiah caused to be put to death (ver. 20) were not levitical or Israelitish priests at all. but, unquestionably, idol-priests who had established themselves in the country. וַיִּזְבַּח cannot be understood as if Josiah offered these priests as a sacrifice to God. If that were so he would have helped to establish the human sacrifices which it was the object of his reformation to root out. זָבַח here has the sense of *to slaughter*, as often elsewhere (see *Exeg.* on 1 Kings xix. 21). They suffered upon their own altars the death-penalty imposed by the Law (Deut. xvii. 2–5). At the same time these altars were thereby defiled and made unfit for use. According to Tertullian public child-sacrifices lasted in Africa *usque ad proconsulatum Tiberii, qui eosdem sacerdotes in iisdem arboribus templi votivis crucibus exposuit.*

Ver. 21. **And the king commanded all the people.** Josiah had abolished with relentless severity all which was forbidden in the book of the covenant and the Law to which he had bound the people by an oath of allegiance (ver. 3); now, however, he proceeded to perform all which was there commanded, and he began, as Hezekiah had done (2 Chron. xxx. 1), by ordaining a passover, for this feast had been instituted to commemorate the exodus and the selection of Israel to be the peculiar people, which was the foundation of its national destiny, and of its calling in human history. No other feast could have served so well to inaugurate the restored order as this one, which had been celebrated even in Egypt. The statement: כַּכָּתוּב **in the book of this covenant** does not mean: which is mentioned in this book. That would be a superfluous remark, and the translation would not be a correct rendering of the original. It means that the Passover was to be observed according to the regulations prescribed in the book which had been found. The translation of Luther [E. V. also] following the Sept. and Vulg. is not correct: "*Im Buch dieses Bundes*" [in the book of this covenant], for that would require הַזֹּאת. The emphasis falls on "book." Josiah does not wish that the passover shall be celebrated according to precedent and tradition, but according to the regulations of the book which had been read before the people. This is the only conception of its meaning according to which we get a good sense, for the remark in ver. 22: **surely there was not holden such a passover, &c.** כִּי refers to what immediately precedes: "In this book of the covenant," so that the sense is: No passover had been so strictly observed according to the regulations of the Law since the times of the judges. Even the Passover of King Hezekiah had not been perfectly conformed to the law, for he was compelled by circumstances to deviate in some respects (2 Chron. xxx. 2, 17

sq.). Clericus: *Crediderim hoc velle scriptorem sacrum: per tempora regum nunquam ab omnibus secundum omnes leges Mosaicas tam accurate Pascha celebratum fuisse. Consuetudinem antea, etiam sub piis regibus, videntur secuti potius quam ipsa verba legis; quod cum fit, multa necessario mutantur ac negliguntur. Sed inventi nuper libri verba attendi diligentissime voluit Josias.* It is difficult to understand how any one could understand from this passage, as De Wette does, that no Passover had ever been celebrated before this one. Thenius also asserts that "it can hardly be doubted that the celebration of the Passover was neglected from the time of the Judges on, and that it did not begin again until after the ordinances of the Law in regard to it had once more become known under Josiah," because "there is no reference whatever to the Passover either under Samuel, or David, or Solomon." He therefore infers that "in order to bring about an accord with the story in Chronicles of the Passover feast instituted by Hezekiah" הָיָה was substituted for הָיְתָה in ver. 21, and כַּפֶּסַח for הַפֶּסַח in ver. 22. In this way, of course, anything may be found in the text which any one wants to read there. Neither the day of Atonement nor the Feast of Pentecost is expressly mentioned in the historical books, and the Feast of Tabernacles is only mentioned in connection with the consecration of the temple (1 Kings viii. 2). It would therefore follow that the Israelites alone of all ancient peoples had no religious festivals from the time of the Judges. If, however, one festival was celebrated it was certainly the feast of the Passover, which was moreover a natural festival (Levit. xxiii. 10 *sq.*; Deut. xvi. 9). The same chronicler who recorded the Passover under Hezekiah also gives a detailed account of the one under Josiah, and adds at the close of his account (xxxv. 18) the same comment which we here find in ver. 22. We cannot, therefore, assume that ver. 22 has suffered any alterations "in order to bring it into accord with the record of the Passover under Hezekiah." On ver. 23 see the *Prelim. Rem.*

Ver. 24. **Moreover the necromancers.**—"After Josiah had completed the reformation of the public worship, he went on to put an end to all the superstitious practices and idol-worship which were carried on in private houses" (Thenius). The necromancers and wizards had arisen under Manasseh (chap. xxi. 6). The *Teraphim*, or household-images, were the penates, the gods of the fireside, to which a magical power was ascribed. They served as a kind of talisman for the family, and as a kind of private oracle. *Cf.* Gen. xxxi. 19; Judges xviii. 14; Ezek. xxi. 26; Zach. x. 2. On גִּלֻּלִים see 1 Kings xv. 12 and 2 Kings xvii. 12. They were doubtless private household gods. **And all the abominations that were spied**, *i. e.*, everything which was to be abhorred and which was found anywhere, "for it might well be that many things of this character were concealed" (Thenius). **That he might establish**, *i. e.*, put in operation. Even private and family religious observances were to be regulated according to the newly discovered book, in order that it might serve as the norm and rule for the entire life of the people. The author therefore proceeds (ver. 25): **And like unto him**, &c., by which he means, according to the context, that the entire law of Moses was not so strictly and severely carried out by any king before Josiah, not even by Hezekiah, although the latter was not at all inferior in genuine piety and in trust in the Lord (see notes on chap. xviii. 5). **With all his heart**, &c., has distinct reference to Deut. vi. 5.—In vers. 26 and 27 "the author passes on to the story not only of the end of Josiah, but also of the fall of the kingdom" (Keil). שָׁב in ver. 26 stands in contrast with שָׁב in ver. 25. Josiah turned to Jehovah, but Jehovah turned not from his wrath. *Quamvis enim rex religiosissimus esset populusque metu ei pareret, propterea tamen animus populi non erat mutatus, ut satis liquet a castigationibus Jeremiæ, Sophoniæ, et aliorum prophetarum, qui circa hæc tempora et paulo post vaticinati sunt* (Clericus). *Cf.* Jerem. i. 10; Zeph. i. 2–6; iii. 1–4. The corruption had struck such deep root during the reign of Manasseh that it could not be eradicated even by Josiah's severe measures. The Law was observed externally, but the conversion of the entire people was out of the question. This became distinctly apparent after Josiah's death. Hence the long-threatened judgments of Jehovah must now fall. On ver. 27 see Jer. xxv. 26, and notes on chap. xxi. 4–7.

Ver. 28. **Now the rest of the acts of Josiah**, &c. The author now hastens to the close of the history of Josiah. It is necessary to tell how he met his end, but he does this very briefly (ver. 29). The more specific details are given by the chronicler (II. xxxv. 20–27). Necho (in Chronicles and in Jerem. xlvi. 2: נְכוֹ; in the Sept. and Josephus Νεχαώ) was, according to Herodotus (ii. 158), who calls him Νεκώς, the son of Psammetich I. According to Manetho he was the sixth king of the twenty-sixth, Saite, dynasty, and was an energetic prince who built fleets both on the Mediterranean and on the Red sea. **The King of Assyria**, against whom Necho was marching, can hardly have been Sardanapalus, under whom Nineveh was destroyed by the Babylonians and Medes, but the Babylonian Nabopolassar, the father of Nebuchadnezzar, who, as ruler of Assyria also, might now be called king of that country. For Necho lost the battle of Carchemish (2 Chron. xxxv. 20) to Nebuchadnezzar (Jerem. xlvi. 2), and Josephus says (*Antiq.* x. 5, 1) that Necho undertook this expedition against Μήδους καὶ Βαβυλωνίους, οἳ τὴν Ἀσσυρίων κατέλυσαν ἀρχήν, τῆς γὰρ Ἀσίας βασιλεῦσαι πόθον εἶχεν. Evidently Necho desired, now that the Assyrian empire had come to an end, to hinder the Medes and Babylonians from forming a world-monarchy, and to become himself ruler of Assyria (see Winer, *R.-W.-B.* I. *s.* 105 *sq.* II. *s.* 143. Duncker, *Gesch. des Alterthums* I. *s.* 499 *sq.*). He did not take the long and tedious way through the desert *et Tih* and southern Palestine, but made use of his fleet, and landed probably in the neighborhood of the Phœnician city of Akko, in a bay of the Mediterranean. This is evident from the fact that Josiah did not march southwards to meet him, but northwards, and that they met at Megiddo, in the plain of Jezreel, at the foot of Mount Carmel. On the situation of this city see *Exeg.* on 1 Kings iv. 12 and ix. 15. Herodotus calls it Μάγδαλον, and Ewald understands him to refer to Megdel, southeast of Akko; but, as Keil shows in his comment

on the verse, this can hardly be correct. **He slew him.** This curt statement finds its explanation in 2 Chron. xxxv. 22–24, according to which it was not Necho himself that slew Josiah, but the latter was mortally wounded by an arrow from the Egyptian bowmen, and then died at Hadad-Rimmon (Zach. xii. 11), not far from Megiddo.—**The people of the land** (see chap. xxi. 24) made the *younger* son of Josiah king, as we see by comparing ver. 31 with ver. 36, perhaps because they had greater hopes of him, though in this they were mistaken (Jerem. xxii. 10 *sq.*). It is stated that they **anointed him** (a ceremony which is not elsewhere expressly mentioned in speaking of a change upon the throne), perhaps because he was not the son whom Josiah had chosen to succeed him (see notes on 1 Kings i. 5 and 34), but nevertheless they desired to give him the consecration of a legitimate king.

[On the contemporaneous history see the *Supplementary Historical Note* after the next *Exegetical* section.]

HISTORICAL AND ETHICAL.

1. *King Josiah was the last true theocratic king of Judah.* Higher praise is given to him than to any other king, even to Hezekiah, namely, that he "turned to the Lord with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his might, according to all the Law of Moses." Sirach, in his panegyric on the fathers, groups him, as we have said above, with David and Hezekiah, besides whom there was no king who did not more or less abandon the Law of the Lord. He also further says of him what he says of no other king: *Μνημόσυνον Ἰωσίου εἰς σύνθεσιν θυμιάματος, ἐσκευασμένον ἔργῳ μυρεψοῦ, ἐν παντὶ στόματι ὡς μέλι γλυκανθήσεται, καὶ ὡς μουσικὰ ἐν συμποσίῳ οἴνου* (Sir. xlix. 1). Josephus also (*Antiq.* x. 4, 1) is loud in his praise. If we take into consideration, on the one hand, that under his two immediate predecessors, Manasseh and Amon, who together reigned for sixty years, apostasy and corruption had spread far more widely, and penetrated far more deeply, than under Ahaz, who only reigned sixteen years, and, on the other hand, that Josiah, at the time of his accession, was only a boy of eight years, who might be easily influenced and led astray, then it appears to be almost a miracle that he became what he was. This miracle is not by any means explained by supposing that, after the death of Amon, "the priests of Jehovah once more gained influence at court" (Duncker), or that "the priests of Jehovah succeeded in getting the young prince, whom the opposite party had elevated to the throne, under their control" (Menzel). We have not the slightest hint that Josiah was educated or controlled by any priest of Jehovah, as was the case with Joash under entirely different circumstances (chap. xii. 2). Neither did the prophet Jeremiah have influence upon his education, for that prophet made his first appearance, while he was yet a young man, in Josiah's thirteenth year, at Anathoth, from whence he was driven away; moreover he was not the son of the high-priest, but of another Hilkiah (Jerem. i. 1, 6). Ewald's comment is far better (*Gesch.* III. *s.* 696): "We cannot reach an accurate notion of the educational development through which he passed during his minority, but the decision and strictness with which he defended and maintained the more austere religion, in the eighteenth year of his reign and the twenty-sixth of his life, show plainly enough that he had early attained to a firm determination in favor of true nobility and manliness of life. It may well be that the grand old history of Israel, with its fundamental truths, as well as the memory of David's greatness, of the marvelous deliverance of Jerusalem from Sennacherib, and of all else which was glorious in the history of his ancestors, had early made a deep impression upon him." True as this is, however, it is not sufficient to account for such a phenomenon as Josiah was, since he stands before us almost like a *Deus ex machina.* His character is, as Hengstenberg says (*Christol.* III. *s.* 496), "as little to be comprehended on the basis of mere natural causes as is the existence of Melchisedek . . in the midst of the Canaanites, who were hastening on with steady tread and ceaseless march towards the consummation of their sins. The causes which produced Josiah, such as he was, are the same which produced Jeremiah." If it was marvelous that a man like Hezekiah followed a man like Ahaz, it was still more marvelous that an eight-year old boy like Josiah followed men like Manasseh and Amon, and that he, during all his reign, should have turned "neither to the right hand nor to the left," and should have been unexampled in the entire history of the kings. It was no accident that a king like Josiah arose once more, and attained to the height of David as the model of a genuine theocratic king. It was a gracious gift from the God who had chosen Israel as His own peculiar people, for the accomplishment of His redemptive plan, and Who continued to raise up men who were endowed with gifts and strength to work in and for His plans, and to manifest themselves to His people as His instruments. If a king like Josiah could not restore the people to its calling, then the monarchy, as an institution, had failed of its object and was near its end. The kingdom must hasten to its downfall and the threatened judgments must come.

2. We are made acquainted, in this passage, only with *those events in the reign of Josiah* (thirty-one years) *which appertained to the abolition of idolatry, and the restoration of the legitimate Jehovah-worship.* It was by virtue of these events that his reign formed an epoch in the history of the kingdom. In comparison with these events, all else, in the judgment of this historian, sank into insignificance. We see, however, from a passage in the book of Jeremiah, that he was remarkable also in other respects, for the prophet presents him to his son, Jehoiakim, as a model: "Shalt thou reign because thou closest thyself in cedar? Did not thy father eat and drink, and do judgment and justice, and then it was well with him?" &c. (Jerem. xxii. 13–17). Josephus says of him (*l. c.*): *Τὴν δὲ φύσιν αὐτὸς ἄριστος ὑπῆρχε, καὶ πρὸς ἀρετὴν εὖ γεγονὼς . . . ὡς ἂν πρεσβύτατος καὶ νοῆσαι τὸ δέον ἱκανώτατος, . . . σοφίᾳ καὶ ἐπινοίᾳ τῆς φύσεως χρώμενος . . . τοῖς γὰρ νόμοις κατακολουθῶν, οὕτω περὶ τὴν τάξιν τῆς πολιτείας καὶ τῆς περὶ τὸ θεῖον εὐσεβείας εὐοδεῖν τε συνέβαινε . . . ἀπέδειξε δὲ τινὰς κριτὰς καὶ ἐπισκόπους, ὡς ἂν διοικοῖεν τὰ παρ' ἑκάστοις πράγματα, περὶ παντὸς τὸ δίκαιον ποιούμενοι, κ. τ. λ.* The fact that he extended his reforming work into Samaria shows that he had attained to power and authority there: when and how he obtained this is nowhere stated, but the fact that he had it stands firm, and might be inferred even from other historical hints. After Esarhaddon, the successor of

Sennacherib, the Assyrian power began to sink. The Scythians invaded the country from the North; on the East and South it was threatened by the Medes and Babylonians, who sought to make themselves independent of its power. These events belong to the time of the reign of Josiah. Josiah must have made vigorous opposition to the Scythians who were pressing forward in Palestine towards Egypt, devastating everything, for he remained undisturbed by them. It is very probable that it was easy for him, after their departure, to extend his authority over the territory of the former kingdom of the ten tribes, since the Assyrians were not, at that time, in a position to pay much attention to Israel, or to maintain intact their supremacy over it. In the year 625 the Assyrian power was being hard pushed by Nabopolassar, the father of Nebuchadnezzar, and Josiah's reformation falls in the year 623, that is, in the time when the Assyrian empire was tottering and falling. Whether Josiah, as "a king who desired in all things to be a genuine successor of David," had the intention of "restoring the authority of the house of David over all the surrounding peoples" (Ewald), or whether he "regarded himself, after the fall of the northern kingdom, as king of the entire covenant people, and took advantage of the impending or already accomplished dissolution of the Assyrian empire, in order to conciliate to himself the Israelites who remained in Samaria, to make them well disposed towards his authority, and to win them to his reforms" (Keil), we cannot decide, but this is certainly far more probable than that he "as a vassal of the Assyrian king had a certain limited authority over this territory," and that "his enterprise was permitted by the Assyrian authorities" (Hess), or that he petitioned the new ruler of Assyria (Nabopolassar) for permission to exercise authority there in matters of religion (Thenius). However this may be, Josiah certainly stands before us as a king who was endowed with the above-mentioned virtues of a ruler, and with an enterprising spirit and warlike courage. These last traits are proved by his attempt to resist Necho, in regard to which see below. It is utterly erroneous, therefore, to see in this king, as modern historians are disposed to do, merely a passive instrument in the hands of the priesthood. [See the *Supplementary Notes* after the *Exeg.* sections on chaps. xx. and xxi., and on the next following section of the text.]

3. *The discovery of the book of the Law* was, in spite of its apparent insignificance, an event of the first importance for all the subsequent history of Israel. Although Josiah had, before that event, turned to the Lord and sought to inaugurate a reform (see the *Prelim. Rem.*), yet it was this discovery which determined him to take measures of the utmost severity against all idolatry, and to restore the worship of Jehovah in Judah and in Israel. From this discovery dates the complete revolution in the circumstances of the kingdom, and from this time on this book had such authority that, in spite of all vicissitudes, and in spite of renewed apostasy, yet it held its place in the respect of the nation, it has been recognized until to-day by the Jews as their most sacred religious document, and their religion, in all its distinctive peculiarities, is built upon it. Suppose that this book had never been discovered, but had been lost for ever, so that only incomplete and inauthentic private copies had been preserved, scattered here and there, what would then have been the state of Judaism, and how different must have been the shape which its religious and moral development would have taken. The whole history of Israel bears witness to the guiding and controlling hand of God, but if there is any one event in which, more than in any other, the Providence of God is visible, then it is this important discovery. It was a physical proof that God watches over this document, which is the testimonial to Israel of its election, and the highest divine revelation; that he preserves it from the rage of idolaters; and that, even if it lies long unnoticed and unknown in the night of apostasy, he will bring it again to light, and make it to show its force once more, so that it is like a fire which consumes all which is false and corrupt, and like a hammer which breaks the rocks (Jerem. xxiii. 29). The discovery of the book was a pledge to the king and people of the indestructibility of the divine written word.—Modern historical science has taken an entirely different view of this event. "The impression left by the devastations of the Scythians," says Duncker (*Gesch. d. Alt.* I. *s.* 503 *sq.*), "who had left the land a desert, was deep and fresh in the minds of the people. The king was young, and, as it seems, open to influence. The priests were bound to take advantage of these circumstances to set up a stronger barrier against the Syrian forms of worship. Manasseh's persecutions had led the Jehovah-priests to look about for means to prevent the recurrence of similar oppression. They naturally found themselves forced to an attempt to secure their creed and their official position against the changing will of the kings, to emancipate it from the fickle disposition of the people, and to put an end, at last, to the vacillation between Jehovah-cultus and foreign and heathen forms of worship." There was room to hope that "by means of a law-book, which made the worship of Jehovah the basis of all national life, and embraced all social interests in its scope, all future perils to the priesthood might be prevented, their position might be permanently assured, and the Jehovah-worship might be securely established and strictly carried out. . . . A codification of the rules which had been gradually formed by the priests as the scheme of life which would be pleasing to Jehovah, a compendium which should sharply emphasize the chief demands which religion made upon the laity, was, therefore, needed. For such a law-book alone was there hope that it would find acceptance, that it would be recognized by the king and by the people as an unquestionable authority, and as the organic law of the country, and that it might be completely and successfully put in operation. This was the purpose, and these were the fundamental principles on which this book (Deuteronomy), which Hilkiah, the high-priest, sent to the king, was compiled. . . . Josiah was deeply moved by the contents of it, and by the threats which it pronounced against those who transgressed the Law of Jehovah. In order to convince himself of the genuineness of this book as the real law of Moses, he appealed from the authority of the temple and the high-priest to a female soothsayer. The wife of one of the king's officers, Huldah, was asked in regard to the genuineness of the book, and she declared that the words of the book were the words of Jehovah."

We have an example, in this entire presentation of the incident, of the inexcusable manner in which modern historical science treats the biblical history. The book which was found was, according to this view, simply the book of Deuteronomy, an assumption which, as we have seen, is so contrary to the text that even the most daring and advanced critical science has recognized its falsehood. This book, too, is represented as having been secretly compiled after the Scythian invasion of Palestine, that is, as we have seen above, after 627 B. C., by the priests, without the knowledge of the king, and then as having been sent to the latter by Hilkiah, as the book written by Moses, and now rediscovered, so that it would be in fact forged. The king permits himself to be deceived, and is deeply moved by the threats invented by the priests, yet he turns, superstitiously, to a "female soothsayer," inquires of her in regard to the genuineness of the book, and she, being of course initiated into the secret of the priests, answers that the words of the priests are the words of Jehovah. The whole affair is thus reduced to cunning, deceit, and falsehood, on the part of the priests, in their own selfish interests. The priests, with the high-priest at the head, are vulgar cheats, and the king and people are cheated. The entire grand reformation, and the complete revolution in the state of the kingdom, with all the religious development which followed, rest upon a forgery. Such an arbitrary and utterly perverse conception refutes itself, and Ewald (*l. c. s.* 700) justly says: "We must beware of obscuring the view of the incident by any such incorrect hypothesis as that the high-priest composed this book himself, but denied its origin. Want of conscientiousness in the conception of history cannot be more plainly evinced than by such unfounded and unjust suppositions." Ewald himself, on the other hand, ascribes the composition of Deuteronomy to a prophet who, during the persecution by Manasseh, took refuge in Egypt, and says: "If the book was written thirty or forty years before, by a prophet who, at this time, was dead, and if it found circulation only gradually, so that it finally reached Palestine as it were *by accident*, a copy might *accidentally* have found its way into the temple, and there have been found by the high-priest." But the notion that the book of Deuteronomy was composed in Egypt "stands in the air," and has thus far been adopted by none but Eisenlohr. Moreover, that it came to Palestine by accident, came into the temple by accident, by the hand of an unknown priest, and without the knowledge of the high-priest, so that it was found by him, again—"by accident," not only does not explain the incident, but it even makes it still more marvelous and inexplicable than it is according to the biblical account. If we assume that the book of Deuteronomy was first written in the time of Manasseh, or in the time of Josiah, and that the book of the Law thereby first reached its completion, then we are compelled to have recourse to all sorts of arbitrary hypotheses to account for the alleged "discovery" of the book at this time.

[It seems hardly probable that the question of *the date and authorship of the book of Deuteronomy* will ever be definitely settled. On the one hand, the traditional view is firmly fixed in the belief of the Church. On it are supposed to hang doctrinal inferences which would fall if the Mosaic authorship were surrendered, and these doctrines are regarded as too essential to the structure of the Christian faith to admit of any weakening. Such a position is false philosophically, as it involves a reasoning from dogma to fact, instead of the contrary and only legitimate process. Nevertheless, there seems little reason to expect that this position will be overthrown, at least as far as we can yet foresee. Moreover, the admission that Moses was not the author involves, or seems to involve, the admission of a literary forgery, although no one can believe that Moses wrote the account of his own death in the 34th chapter. On the other hand, the grounds for believing in the comparatively late origin of this book are such as only scholars of great attainments can appreciate or understand. Therefore the position of the question now is, and probably for a long time to come will be, that the opinion which enjoys ecclesiastical sanction is the traditional opinion of the Mosaic authorship, while the scholars (with very few exceptions, and those of inferior authority) are firmly convinced that Deuteronomy was written at a time long after that of Moses, and by an unknown hand. The grounds on which the latter opinion is based are critical and historical. The former are, in the briefest statement, these: (*a*) The language of the book. It is marked by archaisms such as are peculiar to the other books of the Pentateuch, but these are found side by side with peculiarities of the late language, especially those which mark the book of Jeremiah. It is said that this is a clear proof that the author lived in the later days of the Jewish monarchy, and either unconsciously adopted ancient forms from familiar acquaintance with the old Scriptures, or purposely affected archaic forms. (*b*) Its literary style. It bears the character of a codification or digest of the previous books. It is also marked by a handling of the ordinances of Moses, in the spirit of their principles, but with the freedom of one who had thoroughly studied them, and digested them, and now purposed to codify and arrange them in a more practical and available form. (*c*) It presents, however, certain variations from the other books of the Pentateuch, always in the sense of making the ordinances more flexible and of freer application, as it were to a higher civilization and a more complicated society. (*d*) It contemplates a state of things in which the nation is living a settled and ordered life, under a king, face to face with neighbors, not like the Canaanites, but powerful and large enough, if victorious, to swallow up Israel in captivity. (*e*) It is too long to be delivered as a speech, as it is represented.—The historical arguments are these: (*a*) Deuteronomy ordains worship at *one* central sanctuary, a thing which was not regarded as important until after the time of Solomon, but which, from the time of Josiah on, became a fixed and fundamental doctrine of the Hebrew religion. (*b*) The spirit of the book of Deuteronomy is that which marked Josiah's reformation and the preaching of the later prophets. It controlled the ultimate development of the Jewish religion after the captivity.—All these arguments meet with answers from the opposite school, the weight of which depends on the philosophical or dogmatic prepossessions of the persons who are called upon to weigh them. They are only mentioned here to show in general and in brief what is the character of the grounds on which "critical science" has based the belief that Deuteronomy

was not written by or in the time of Moses. They are independent and critical throughout. To estimate them requires close knowledge of the Hebrew language and history, a knowledge which goes beyond grammar and dictionary, and involves philosophical insight, and critical sagacity and skill. Certainly it devolves upon all who are charged with the study of the Scriptures to give to the subject a candid and unprejudiced consideration, in order that the truth, on whichever side it may lie, may be established. There is not a subject on which the tyro in biblical learning may more easily fall into rash error, nor one upon which those who cannot, or will not, enter upon the tedious investigation which is involved ought more carefully to refrain from passing a dogmatical judgment.

Strictly speaking, this question lies aside from our present occupation. In commenting on the 23d chapter of the 2d book of Kings, and noticing the bearing of the facts which it records upon the "development of the plan of redemption" (see *Preface*), we have only to notice the effect produced by the discovery of the "book of the Law." But it is asserted by some that *this* book was not the same, nor a mere copy of any, which had existed before, but a revision of the former records, with an addition consisting of a repetition and codification of the ancient ordinances. They assert that this new work was an extension and re-application of the legislation of Moses, which was especially adapted to the time of Josiah, and that herein lie the grounds of its great and peculiar influence. If such an assertion be true, and if the peculiar character of this new revision, as compared with the ancient records, was a new and broader apprehension of the spirit of the Mosaic legislation, and if this new spirit gave to that legislation a new impetus which made it the controlling principle in the subsequent development of the Jewish religion, then certainly it was a most important event in the development of the history of redemption. In fact, if this assertion be true, the composition of the book of Deuteronomy was the most important incident in the history of the Israelites after the time of Moses. Hence the importance of studying the question involved in the most thorough manner, by its proper evidence, with all the light which history or criticism can throw upon it.

Our present chapter bears upon it in so far as we discern in the reformation of Josiah a *peculiar character*, as compared, for instance, with that of Joash, or that of Hezekiah, and in so far as these peculiar features of this reformation are traceable to Deuteronomy *as distinguished from the other books* of the Pentateuch. On this point we observe that this book of the Law produced a profound sensation. It brought to the king's notice things which he had never heard or known of, and which, therefore, were not popularly known of, as parts of the "Law of the Lord," although *something* was certainly known *under that name*. It is also said that the thing in the new book which especially attracted his attention, and stirred him to the action which he took, was the "threats" or denunciations which it contained (*cf.* Deut. xxviii. especially vers. 25 and 64). But these only occur in the book of Deuteronomy. When we read the description of future and possible degeneracy under the kingdom, and the threats of captivity, &c., which are contained in the book of Deuteronomy, and compare them with the state of things under Josiah, when the northern kingdom had already disappeared in Assyrian exile, we cannot wonder at the effect produced on the king's mind. He saw himself and his nation in this description as in a mirror.—We also notice particular expressions: "Turned neither to the right hand nor to the left," as the description of a perfect king (*cf.* Deut. v. 32; xvii. 11, 20; xxviii. 14); the "burning" of idolatrous images and utensils (ver 4. *cf.* Deut vii. 25; xii. 3); "With all his heart" (xxiii. 25. *cf.* Deut. vi. 5); the death penalty for idolatry (xxiii. 20. *cf.* Deut. xvii. 2–5). The fact that, from this time on, the "Law" played a far more important part in forming and guiding the faith and practice of the Jews than ever before is indisputable. The author describes its influence above. Whether we can discern in the further developments the peculiar effect of the book of Deuteronomy, so far as that book differs in character from the other books of the Old Testament, or not, is a question which must be left to the study of the passages and books from which it may appear.—W. G. S.]

4. *The prophetess Huldah*, who is mentioned only here, offers a very remarkable proof that prophecy, "as a free gift of the divine spirit, was not confined to a particular sex," and that "God imparts the gifts of his spirit, without respect to human divisions and classifications, to whomsoever He will, according to the free determination of His holy love. The people were to recognize the truth, although, it might be, in imperfect measure, that the time would come when there would be a general pouring out of the spirit upon it, Joel iii. 1 *sq.*" (Havernick on Ezek. xiii. 17.) Besides Huldah there are two women mentioned in the Old Testament who are designated as prophetesses, Miriam (Ex. xv. 20), and Deborah (Judges iv. 4). But she was a נְבִיאָה in another and fuller sense than they. What they did and said was produced in a state of ecstasy; they did not prophesy in the narrower and stricter sense of the word, *i. e.*, they were not instruments by means of which God made known His will and purpose to those who asked it. She solemnly and expressly pronounces her oracle as the word of Jehovah (chap. xxii. 16, 18: "Thus saith the Lord"), and she uses the manner and form of speech of the true and great prophets. The same or similar fact is not true of any other woman. She stands alone in the history of the old covenant, and it is very significant that just at this point, where the entire future of the people and its grandest and highest interests are at stake, the Lord makes use of a weak and humble instrument to bring about the execution of His purpose. Huldah cannot, therefore, be at all brought into comparison with the witch of Endor (1 Sam. xxviii. 7), or with the prophetesses of whom Ezek. speaks (chap. xiii. 17). The wife of Isaiah is also called הַנְּבִיאָה (Isai. viii. 3), but in an altogether different sense, viz., as wife of the prophet and mother of the prophet-sons. Finally Noadiah is designated (Nehem. vi. 14) as a false prophetess. The rabbis arbitrarily fix the number of prophetesses in the Old Testament at seven (*Seder Olam* 21). Their statements in regard to Huldah, as, for instance, that an honor was shown her after her death which was not shown to anybody else not of the house of David, namely, to be buried inside of the walls of Jerusalem, belong purely to tradition, it is true, but they show in what high esteem she stood (*cf.*

Witsius, *De Prophetissis* in the *Miscell. Sacr.* I. *p.* 288).

5. *The abolition of idolatry and of the illegitimate Jehovah-worship under Josiah* is distinguished from every earlier attempt of the kind, even from that under Hezekiah, by the fact that it was far more thorough. It extended not only to the kingdom of Judah but also to the former kingdom of Israel. not only to the public but also to the private life of the people. The evil was everywhere to be torn out, roots and all. Nothing which could perpetuate the memory of heathen, or of illegitimate Jehovah-worship remained standing. All the places of worship, all the images, all the utensils, were not only destroyed but also defiled; even the ashes were thrown into the river at an unclean place that they might be borne away forever. The idol-priests themselves were slain, and the bones of those who were already dead were taken out of the graves and burned. The priests of Jehovah who had performed their functions upon the heights were deposed from their office and dignity, and were not allowed to sacrifice any more at the altar of Jehovah. This reformation has been charged with "violence," and this has been offered as the explanation of the fact that it was so short-lived. So Ewald: "This attempt at reformation bears the character of violence in all its details of which we have any knowledge. . . . The evil results of such violent conduct in religious and civil affairs soon showed themselves, and all falling together in an accumulated evil produced a discord and confusion which could not be smoothed over," &c. To this Niemeyer (*Charakt. d. Bib.* V. *s.* 100) answers: "In the case of such corruption which had already eaten into the vitals of the State, and, above all, in the face of such unnatural customs as were connected with it, let any one say what he will about the compulsion of conscience and the harshness of compelling a man to adopt a religion which he does not choose, I believe that it was a political right and duty to eradicate the evil, if indeed it was any longer possible to eradicate it. I will not say that the mass of men generally goes whither it is led, and that there is no instruction or improvement possible for them but that which is based upon authority and belief, so that better leaders and a more reasonable authority are a gain at all times. I will only reply to those who charge Josiah with cruelty and tyranny, in putting the priests of Baal to death, that those who should preach murder as a religious duty, and as an exercise pleasing to God, would not be left unpunished in any enlightened State. Josiah, therefore, when he put an end to these abominable sacrifices of innocence, for vengeance for which mankind seemed to stretch forth its hands to him, did no more than the kindest ruler would have considered it his duty to do." Hess also well remarks (*Gesch. d. Könige*, II. *ss.* 236 and 238): "To allow them [the priests of Baal] to live would be to nourish seducers for the people, and to transgress the law to which a new oath of allegiance had just been taken, for this demanded that those who introduced idolatry should be exterminated. . . . Josiah's fundamental principle was that a half-way eradication of idolatry would be no better than no attempt at all. If anything of this kind had been permitted to remain, the door would have been left open for the evil sooner or later to return. The idolatrous disposition and tendency took advantage of the slightest circumstance, and seized upon the slightest trace of former idolatry, to once more gain a footing." We should like to know how Josiah should have undertaken to get rid of the harlots and male prostitutes who had settled themselves in the very forecourt of the sanctuary, and there carried on their shameful occupations, or to abolish the horrible and abominable rites of Moloch, with their child-sacrifices and licentiousness. That would never have been possible in the way of kindness, as we see from the attempts of the prophets. When was a reformation ever accomplished, when corruption had reached such a depth, without "violence"? Even Luther, who publicly burned the popish law-books, cannot be acquitted of it; and how would the reformation of the 16th century have come to pass if no violence had been used against the corruptions which had affected not only religious, but also moral and social order, and if those corruptions had been treated only by kind and mild means? Nothing is more mistaken than to criticise and estimate antiquity from the standpoint of modern humanity and religious freedom. Even the Lord Jesus Christ did not pronounce a discourse to those who had made the house of God a den of thieves (Matt. xxi. 13); he made a whip and scourged them out of the temple (John ii. 15). That also was "violence." It is nowhere hinted that Josiah forced the people to accept the Jehovah-religion against their conviction. He only put an end by violence to the heathen usages and licentious abuses, and this he did not do until after he had collected the people, made them acquainted with the Law-book, and received their assent to it. The Israelitish monarchy was not instituted to introduce religious liberty; on the contrary, it was its first and highest duty to sustain the fundamental law of Israel (Deut. xvii. 18, 19; 1 Kings ii. 3). To use the physical force which it possessed in the service of this law was its right and its duty.

[Let us endeavor to analyze the circumstances, and the principles which are here at stake, and to arrive at a sharper and firmer definition of our position in regard to them. What deserves distinctly and permanently to be borne in mind is this: if mild measures would not have availed to accomplish the desired object of rooting out idolatry and restoring the Mosaic constitution, *neither did these violent measures have that effect*. Josiah's reformatory efforts failed of any permanent effect, and his arrangements disappeared almost without a trace. It is very remarkable that the prophets, who might have been expected to rejoice in this undertaking, and to date from it as an epoch and a standing example of what a king of Judah ought to do, scarcely refer to it, if at all. A few pages back we had occasion to use strong terms in condemnation of a violent and bloody attempt of Manasseh to crush out the Jehovah religion and establish the worship of other gods. Violence for violence, can we approve of the means employed in the one case any more than in the other? Is the most highly cultured Christian conscience so uncertain of its own principles that it is incapable of any better verdict than this: violence when employed by the party with which we sympathize is right; when employed against that party it is wrong? We justify Josiah and we condemn the Christian persecutors and inquisitors. Are these views inconsistent,

and, if not, how can we reconcile them? We have to bear in mind that it is one thing to admit *excuses* for a line of conduct, and another to *justify* it. Judaism certainly had intolerance as one of its fundamental principles. Violence in the support of the Jehovah-religion was a duty of a Jewish king. In attempting to account for and understand the conduct of Josiah, it would be as senseless to expect him to see and practise toleration as to expect him to use fire-arms against Necho. We can never carry back modern principles into ancient times and judge *men* by the standards of to-day. To do so argues an utter want of historical sense. On the other hand, however, when we have to judge *actions* which may be regarded as examples for our own conduct, we must judge them inflexibly by the highest standards of right and justice and wisdom with which we are acquainted. How else can we deny that it is right to persecute heresy by violent means when that is justified by the example of Josiah? Judged by the best standards, Josiah's reformation was unwise in its method. The king was convinced, and he carried out the reformation by his royal authority. The nation was not converted and therefore did not heartily concur in the movement. It only submitted to what was imposed. Hence this reformation passed without fruit, as it was without root in public conviction. We are sure of our modern principles of toleration, and of suffering persecution rather than inflicting it. We believe in these principles even as means of propagating our opinions. Let us be true to those principles, and not be led into disloyalty to them by our anxiety to apologize for a man who is here mentioned with praise and honor. Violence is the curse of all revolutions, political or religious. Has not our generation seen enough of them to be convinced of this at last? Do we not look on during political convulsions with anxiety to see whether the cause with which we sympathize will succeed in keeping clear of this curse? Is it not the highest praise which we can impart to a revolution, and our strongest reason to trust in the permanence of its results, that it was "peaceful"? The Protestant Reformation was indeed violent, but it was weak just in so far as it was violent, and the bitter fruits of the violence which attended it follow us yet in the bitter partisan hatred which marks the divisions of the Church of Christ. The most successful reformation the world has ever seen was the one our Lord brought about—how?—by falling the victim of violence, and by putting the means of force and authority utterly away from himself. Josiah's reformation is not an example for us. Its failure is a warning. We have not to justify the method of it. We cannot condemn the man, for his intentions and motives were the best, but we cannot approve of or imitate the method of action. Its failure warns us that no reformation can be genuine which is imposed by authority, or which rests on anything but a converted heart, and that all the plausible justifications of violence which may be invented are delusions. See further the bracketed notes in the next section.—W. G. S.]

6. *Josiah's measures aimed at a thorough reformation of the kingdom.* This king, who sought the Lord in his early youth, turned neither to the right hand nor to the left, and had devoted himself to the Lord with all his heart and all his might (chap. xxii. 2; xxiii. 25; 2 Chron. xxxiv. 2 and 3), did not aim merely at the extirpation of idolatry and the external observance of all the prescriptions of the Mosaic Law, but at the conversion of his entire people to the Lord, and at the renewal of their religious as well as of their moral and political life (see the passage from Josephus under § 2). In spite of all the energy and severity with which he sought to accomplish this, he nevertheless failed. He succeeded in suppressing all public forms of idolatry, and in maintaining the Jehovah-worship in its integrity as long as he lived, but a real and sincere conversion was no longer to be hoped for. The nation had, since the time of Manasseh, advanced so far in the path of corruption that a halt was no longer possible. Apostasy from the living God had gained too strong a hold in all classes, among the rich and great, and even among the priests. It had contaminated all and had corrupted all the relations of life. Judah was in a worse state than any which even Israel had ever been in. The Jehovah-worship which had been reintroduced became a mere external ceremonial worship, and finally degenerated into hypocrisy and pretended righteousness. This is clear from the writings of the contemporary prophets, Jeremiah and Zephaniah (Jerem. iii. 6 *sq.*; Zeph. iii. 1 *sq.*). "The State seemed to arise once more, but it was only like the last flicker of an expiring fire. The internal corruption was so great that the new and good religious order seemed to be only produced by a kind of enchantment. All the props and supports on which it rested broke in pieces when the king, whose early death seemed like an inexplicable dispensation of Providence, closed his eyes" (Vaihinger in Herzog's *Real-Encyc.* VII. *s.* 36). Only the severest chastisements of Providence could avail here, and they were not long in falling. Ewald presents the matter somewhat differently (*l. c.*, *s.* 700 *sq.*), and, as usual, Eisenlohr follows him. He finds the grounds of the failure of Josiah's reformation not so much in the irreformability of the people as in the character of the reform itself. In the first place he says that it was "the spirit of violence which had from the beginning characterized the Jewish nation and which was now reawakened, which necessarily impaired his [Josiah's] work," inasmuch as "it might do away for a time with the evils, but could not permanently stop up their sources. . . . . The true religion could only impair its own good effect and progress, if it clung, at this late and changed time, to the narrowness which marked its youth. Since such violence had been used in rooting out all which was heathenish, the reconstruction of all which was peculiar in the Jehovah religion must be carried out in the same spirit. The first new Passover served as a sign of the severity with which the regulations of the Jehovah-worship were hereafter to be observed." Then again "a new series of evils" was developed from the circumstance that "a book, especially such an imperfect Law-book and history as the Pentateuch, was made the fundamental law of the nation; first of all, that evil which naturally arises where a sacred document is made the basis of all public and social life, viz., a puffed-up book-wisdom, and a hypocritical and false learning in the Scriptures." Finally, instead of reconciling the parties which had existed ever since the time of Solomon, he thinks that Josiah's violent reformation intensified the party divisions and sharpened the party lines. "The party which may be called the deuteronomical, or stricter, party de-

manded unsparing severity in rooting out heathenism; . . . the heathen, or more liberal, party, on the other hand, . . . not only allowed the worship of heathen gods, but also took pleasure in the low standard of morality which attended idolatry. While, therefore, the strict party demanded a policy which, in fact, was no longer adapted to the circumstances of the country, and sought to carry it out by force, the liberal party fell short of the standard of morality which the times required. But though the latter no less than the former relied upon physical force, it nevertheless had the entire tendency of the time towards a wider and freer development in its favor. It therefore gained the upper hand immediately after Josiah's unfortunate death, . . . so that the whole kingdom fell into a complete confusion which nothing but greater force than either party had at its disposal could put a stop to." Eisenlohr also, speaking from a similar point of view (*Das Volk Israel* II. *s.* 354 *sq.*), says: "The entire reformation degenerates into a slavish restoration, a seeking out again and dragging forth of all the old institutions and ordinances of the kingdom . . . if possible, in a still more stiff and immobile form, so that . . . they produced the strongest reaction under the existing imperfect organization of the religious life. . . . The State-religion exerted its utmost powers to effect a renewal of the national vigor, and a preservation of the national identity, by setting the theocratic law and constitution in operation in its fullest, and most rigid, and most peculiar, construction," but "hardly had the State-religion begun, under royal protection, to forcibly control anew the public life, before a cry of sharp complaint began to arise against the evils which are the inseparable concomitants of every privileged form of religion,—hypocrisy, and external or pretended piety." To this must be added that "a sacred codex became the standard of all public life. . . . The effects of the entire method in which the reformation exerted its influence on the national life, and sought to accomplish its ends, were, for the moment, all the more disastrous (!) inasmuch as its internal principle was violence and its external policy was bigoted exclusiveness." It needs no proof to show that this entire manner of conceiving of the circumstances stands in the most pronounced antagonism to the biblical representation. The Scriptures contain no hint of all these reasons why Josiah's reformation failed, and even became finally disastrous, so that it brought about the downfall of the kingdom. Neither the historical books nor the discourses of the contemporary prophets contain a word of disapproval of the reformation; they offer only one reason for the failure of it, and that is the total corruption and perversity which had grown up since the time of Manasseh (chap. xxii. 16 to 20; xxiii. 26, 27; Jerem. xv. 1-4.

[No reason at all is specifically assigned anywhere why this reformation failed. Its failure is not spoken of, recognized, or accounted for. Manasseh's sins are referred to as the explanation of the judgments which fell upon Judah. But when we speak of the national "corruption" which had been spreading since the time of Manasseh as the ground of the failure of Josiah's reformation, it is allowable to go farther and ask: In what did this corruption consist? What were the especial forms of vice which were prevalent in Judah? What were the tendencies which the reformation had to encounter? What were the faults of national character which were in play? What were the selfish interests which the reformation threatened? These all make up what we call in a word national corruption and decay. It is only by such analysis that we are able to present to our minds the state of things in detail and to comprehend the situation. "Corruption" is only a general word which serves to cover the state of things, to conceal it from us, and to keep us from penetrating to a satisfactory conception of it. It is not difficult to gather from the documents, historical and prophetical, answers to the above questions. When we examine the subject we find that Ewald's picture of the parties and their characteristics, of the tendencies in play, &c., is exceedingly faithful. It would certainly be wrong if any one should say that the "violence" of Josiah's reformation *caused* the subsequent decay and downfall of Judah. Also the effect of using a document as ultimate authority is exaggerated by Eisenlohr, if not by Ewald. The pedantry of the rabbis, and the ritual righteousness of the Pharisees, did not arise for centuries. But this much is certainly true: The corruption had advanced so far that perhaps all hope of converting the nation by moral and religious appeals was vain. Even, however, if such were the case, a violent reformation, imposed on royal authority, could do no good, but only additional harm. It did not stem the tide of corruption, while it embittered parties and left deep-rooted hatred and thirst for revenge.—Stanley gives tables of the parties which existed in Jerusalem, at this time, in his *Lectures on the Jewish Church*, II. 565 and 566.—W. G. S.]

In the view above quoted [Ewald's and Eisenlohr's] it is really Josiah who, on account of his mistaken zeal and unwise measures, was to blame for the ruin of the kingdom, but the text says of him that there was no king like him before him, who so completely clung to the Lord with all his heart (chap. xxiii. 25), and thereby presents him as the one who, among all the kings after David, was just what a king of Israel ought to be. But the charge is entirely incomprehensible that he did not allow to the "liberal party" "the worship of all gods" together with their "baser standard of morality," and that "a sacred book became the standard of all public life." Not to speak of anything else, it is exactly for this reason that he received the promise that he should not himself live to see the desolation, but should be gathered to his fathers in peace (chap. xxii. 19, 20). [Josiah is not charged with any fault in not having done this. It is said that the measures which he took did not tend to correct or convert these misguided men, but only to compel them to submit to force, and that thus their opinions were not altered, while their feelings were embittered. As soon as they dared, they returned, with renewed zeal, to the practice of their opinions, and also sought revenge for the oppressive persecution which they (as they thought) had suffered.—W. G. S.] The charge against Josiah of having made a sacred book the standard involves an insult to the fundamental Protestant doctrine of the authority of the Bible as the sole standard of religion and morality, and, therefore, also of civil life. We see here whither we are led when we allow ourselves to be guided, in the interpretation of the Old Testament, by the doctrines of modern liberalism.

[The idea here presented of the danger which attends the use of a written document as the standard of religious truth and of morality is not a liberalistic doctrine. It is a truth which deserves solemn attention, most of all from Protestants. Those who believe in the authority of the Bible, and teach it and use it continually, are the very ones who need to have always distinctly in mind the dangers which inhere in the use of a literary standard, in order that they may guard against them. In the use of any such standard the *interpretation* of it becomes a matter of transcendent importance. Witness the rabbis, and the scribes and lawyers of Gospel times, that the danger of a class of men growing up who will hold knowledge of the Scriptures to be their privilege, who will develop an artificial and radically false and vicious system of interpretation, and who will overburden the Word with fancies and fables and arbitrary inventions, is no imaginary one. Witness the scholastics of the middle ages that the text of Scripture may be made a stem on which to hang frivolities and casuistical toys without end. Witness the papacy that the interpretation may come to be regarded as a matter so all-important that the Scriptures, except *as* interpreted, may be reserved as an exclusive possession of a privileged class. The danger of hypocritical book-wisdom and esoteric exegetical knowledge is one to be guarded against continually.

With regard to the general estimate of Josiah's reformation we may sum up as follows: The attempt, on the part of the king, to arrest the dissolution and corruption of the nation by bringing it back to sincere devotion to the national religion is worthy of our most hearty admiration. The source of his early inclination towards the Jehovah-religion we cannot trace. It is clear that a violent persecution like that of Manasseh must have produced terror, bitterness, stubborn though concealed opposition, and a relentless purpose, on the part of those who had all the law and traditions of their nation, together with patriotism, on their side, and who could compare with pride the moral purity of their religion with those abominations of heathenism which were shocking and abhorrent to the simplest instincts of human nature, to repay their persecutors at the first opportunity. Where those abominations were the only religious observances taught, education might avail to make them pass without protest; but where there was any, even a slight knowledge of a purer religion and a better morality, the protest could never entirely die out. The Jehovah-religion was, as compared with heathen religions, austere. It warred against the base passions of men and the vices which they produce. Heathenism seized upon those passions as its means. It fostered them in the name of developing what was "natural," and therefore must be right. Modern civilized heathenism does just the same thing. Heathenism therefore seemed to represent enjoyment of life, while the Jehovah-religion seemed to repress pleasure. It is remarkable that a boy-king should have chosen the latter. We are ignorant of the persons or considerations which may have influenced his choice. There is an undeniable resemblance in features between the revolutions of Hezekiah, Manasseh, and Josiah, which seems to point to a relationship between them. A chain of reprisals seems to have been started, and each successive revolution or reformation was more radical, more bloody, and more unsparing than the last. The newly discovered book, with its commands and threats, gave the king a stimulus to undo all that Manasseh had done, to put a stop to the abominations which the latter had firmly established, to reintroduce the ancient national cultus in its perfection, to requite the heathen party for its cruelty, to avenge the slaughtered servants of Jehovah, to foster those religious observances and moral principles which might regenerate the State, and to establish the new order of things securely. The thought of vengeance he may not have had, but it would be most natural, and not by any means shocking to the mind of a man of his generation. His purpose then was perfectly laudable and good. The means which he adopted for carrying it out were the only ones which could suggest themselves to him. They were the same in kind as Hezekiah had adopted, and as Manasseh had employed on behalf of the contrary interest, only he went still farther. No Jewish king would ever have thought of employing other means. It is idle to sit in judgment on him. His example in this, however, cannot form any rule for an age which enjoys a higher enlightenment, and a truer wisdom. As for the evil effects of the "violence" employed by Josiah, they may be limited to the embittering of those party divisions which seem to have hastened this fall of Jerusalem as they did the one under Titus. The great reason for his failure, however, was that the means which he employed encountered too strong opposition in the popular feelings and tendencies of the nation at the time. He was working up hill, so to speak, in trying to bring back the nation to a more severe religion, a sterner morality, and a purer patriotism. They preferred their luxury, and pleasure, and vice. He had only a small party with him, and the reformation which was accomplished by royal authority controlling the physical force of the realm, which was conducted in the interest of a written code which could not have been thoroughly understood and appreciated, and which did not have the hearty co-operation of the body of the people, failed when the king fell upon whose will it mainly depended. The death of Josiah was a disappointment and discouragement to the Jehovah party far beyond the mere loss of their protector and friend. They no doubt had no little superstitious confidence in the favor of heaven for the pious prince, and this was struck to the ground when the life on which all the prosperity of the Jehovah-worship seemed to depend was taken away, as it were by a stroke of Providence.—W. G. S.]

7. *Josiah's expedition against Necho*, which brought about his early death, fell in the year 608 B. C., fifteen years after he accomplished his reformation in Judah and in the former territory of Israel. He must, therefore, have gained possession of the latter, or, at least, must have regarded himself as ruler of it. Necho, therefore, had no right to pass through this territory without paying any respect to Josiah's authority, even though, as he asserted (2 Chron. xxxv. 21), he had no hostile intention towards the king of Judah. Josiah, therefore, undertook to intercept him, as Josephus says (*Antiq.* x. 5, 1): *μετὰ δυνάμεως εἶργεν αὐτὸν διὰ τῆς ἰδίας ποιεῖσθαι χώρας τὴν ἐπὶ τοὺς Μήδους ἔλασιν*, and, in spite of Necho's assurance that he meant him no harm, Josiah persisted in refusing to allow him

τὴν οἰκείαν διέρχεσθαι. The ground for this conduct of Josiah was not, as many have assumed, that he had already formed an alliance with Nabopolassar, the Babylonian, the new ruler of Assyria, or that he desired to secure the favor of this conqueror in the hope that he would thus make sure of being left in undisturbed possession of his kingdom, but the grounds of his conduct were very simple and close at hand. "A very little reflection sufficed to see that it was all over with the independent existence of the kingdom of Judah if the Egyptians secured a foothold in the country to the North" (Ewald). [Judah would thus be placed between Egypt and its outlying conquests, and of course its independence would not be long respected.] Niebuhr justly characterizes Josiah's undertaking (*Gesch. Assyr. s.* 364) as a "thoroughly correct policy . . . Josiah knew that, although Necho asserted that he had no hostile intention towards him, yet, if the Egyptians conquered Cœlo-Syria, the independence of Judah was at an end." As a true theocratic king, and as a man of warlike courage and disposition (the Sept. translate the words 2 Chron. xxxv. 22 by πολεμεῖν αὐτὸν ἐκραταιώθη), he did not allow himself to be deceived by Necho. By the dispensation of Providence he fell at the very beginning of the campaign (Josephus: τῆς πεπρωμένης, οἶμαι, εἰς τοῦτ' αὐτὸν παρορμησάσης). His death was a great misfortune for the nation, but it was nevertheless honorable. It was universally lamented, especially by Jeremiah (2 Chron. xxxv. 24 and 25). All felt what they had lost in him. The more detailed account in Chronicles gave occasion to some of the older historians to blame Josiah severely. For instance, Hess (*Gesch. der Könige Jud. und Isr.* II. *s.* 455 *sq.*): "He was so over-hasty as to dispute the passage through the country with Necho, and collected an army at Megiddo. . . . This was not at all necessary for the security of his own kingdom, for Necho had advanced so far without doing him any harm, and had sent an embassy expressly to assure him that he intended him no harm, but was directing his attack against the mighty monarchy to the East, being stimulated thereto by a divine calling. . . . To thus attack the Egyptian without the counsel of a prophet, or any sign of divine direction, was not trust in God, but in his own power. . . . It was, in any case, unwise to offend a ruler who was mighty enough to measure forces with the Babylonian power." It is incorrectly assumed in this view that the "God," whose approval Necho claimed, was Jehovah, the God of Israel. It is nowhere asserted that Josiah made this expedition without having consulted "the true oracle of Jehovah," that is, without the "counsel of a prophet." To judge from what Jeremiah says about Egypt in his forty-sixth chapter, he would hardly have dissuaded the king from this undertaking. We see how far it was from the intention of the chronicler, in his fuller account, to hint at anything unfavorable to Josiah, for he is the very one who makes especial mention of the universal grief for the death of Josiah, of the songs of lamentation which the singers sang for him "until this day," and of the lament which Jeremiah wrote. We cannot conceive that all this would have been so if he had entered rashly into the war, contrary to the advice of the prophet, and had thus plunged the nation into misfortune. Von Gerlach very mistakenly infers from the account in Chronicles that "Josiah, in spite of his sincere piety, belonged to the number of weak and inefficient and imprudent rulers who closed the long series of kings of the house of David." In that case how could Jesus Sirach, who certainly was not ignorant of what is there narrated, say of him, centuries later (xlix. 1), that the memory of him was like costly incense, and sweet as honey in the mouth of all. [On the historical connections of this event see the *Supplem. Note* at the end of the next *Exeget.* section, below.]

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

Vers. 1 and 2. The panegyric of Josiah, Sir. xlix. 1 and 2. His name is like costly incense and sweet as honey; for as he walked, &c. Although his father walked in evil ways, yet Josiah did not take him as an example, but that one of his ancestors who was a man after God's own heart. He sought the Lord while he was yet a boy, and increased in knowledge and in favor as he grew in stature (2 Chron. xxxiv. 3; Luke ii. 40, 52). "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way, &c.," Ps. cxix. 9. STARKE: Beginners in the Christian life must choose good examples and follow them faithfully (Phil. iii. 17; 1 John ii. 14). He turned not either to the right hand (like the later Pharisees), nor to the left (like the Sadducees); although he lived in a corrupt age, he fell neither into superstition nor unbelief. The way which leads to life is narrow, and it is well to have a firm heart so as not to totter on either side.—WÜRT. SUMM.: We are seduced on the right by hypocrisy, and on the left by epicureanism, but the word of God says: This is the way, walk therein, and turn neither to the right hand nor to the left (Isai. xxx. 21).—CRAMER: We have in Josiah the mirror of a true ruler. (1) Such an one is given by God, out of pure grace, as a blessing to the country. (2) Such an one is bound, not only to protect the life and property of his subjects, and to preserve peace and order, but also to care for the Church and Kingdom of God.—WÜRT. SUMM.: We ought not to despair of the children of the godless and to give them up; they may become, as in this case Josiah did, the most pious, through whom God accomplishes wonders. Good instruction and discipline may, by the blessing of God, correct much evil which such children have inherited or learned from their parents.

Vers. 3–10. The Discovery of the Law-Book. (*a*) The occasion of it, vers. 3–7. (*b*) The significance of it, vers. 8–10.—Vers. 3–7. The Restoration of the House of God. (*a*) The king undertakes it impelled by pure love to the Lord (Ps. xxvi. 8). (*b*) The people of all the provinces willingly contribute to it (2 Chron. xxxiv. 9). (*c*) The laborers work without reckoning, with fidelity.—See the homiletical hints on chap. xii. 5–17.—Josiah was zealously interested in the repair of the temple before the law-book was found and he had become acquainted with it. We have not only the old law-book but also the entire word of God; each one may hear and read it, nevertheless the churches are often allowed to fall into decay, and it is only at the last moment that any one thinks of spending money and time upon them. — BERL. BIBEL: All are here earnestly interested in the work upon the house of God. Would that our zeal might be aroused for the same interests! that we might not rest where we should work, nor

work where we should rest; not to tear down where we ought to build, nor to build where we ought to tear down, but to carry on the work of the Lord orderly and properly.—CRAMER: The physical temples are useless, if the spiritual temples are not properly cared for.—Vers. 8-10. What is the use of building and arranging and adorning churches, if the word of God is wanting in them, and instead of being a light to shine, and bread to feed, is hid under a bushel or locked up, and concealed by the ordinances of men and their own self-invented wisdom?—PFAFF. BIB.: Wretched times when the law-book has to be concealed; happy times when it is rediscovered. How happy are we who have the word of God in such abundance! WÜRT. SUMM.: As in the times of Josiah the law-book had been pushed aside and become lost by the carelessness of the priests, so that scarcely any one knew anything about the law of God, so, before the time of Luther, under the papacy, the Holy Bible lay, as it were, in the dust, and, although it was not entirely lost, yet there were very many, not only among the common people, but also among the ecclesiastics and men of rank, who had never seen and read the Bible, until God called Luther and others, through whose faithful services the Bible, the holy and divine Scripture, was once more brought forth, brought into the light, and given to every man, in all languages, to read for himself; which goodness of God we still recognize and praise, and read, on account of it, more diligently in the Bible, and exercise ourselves in the word of God day and night, that we may obey the words of the Apostle Paul (Col. iii. 16): "Let the words of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom."—There is indeed nowadays scarcely a family, in countries where evangelical religion is professed, in which a Bible is not to be found. but it is often laid aside, and covered with dust, or it is regarded as an old book which is no longer adapted to our times. What higher praise, however, could be given to a family than to say: I found therein the Word of God, not hid under a bushel, but set on a candlestick, so that it gave light to the whole house (Matt. v. 15).—Vers. 9 and 10. Nothing which is undertaken with zeal and faith to glorify the name of God ever remains unblessed. Shaphan brought to his master the greatest and best treasure possible out of the temple which was falling to ruin.—The Book of books is there to be read by every one, king or beggar. The minister was not ashamed to read it before the king, and the king was not ashamed to listen with the utmost attention.

Vers. 11-14. The Impression which the Divine Word made on the King when he had heard it. (*a*) He rent his garments (sorrow and grief on account of the transgressions of the people, horror in view of the divine judgments. PFAFF. BIB.: How profitable it is to have such respect for the word of God and to be terrified at His threats! If the word of God had such effect upon us, how much better it would be for us). (*b*) He asks how the threatened judgments may be averted. (Wherever the word penetrates to the heart, there the question always follows: What shall I do? Acts ii. 37. Felix trembled, but he said: "When I have a more convenient season," &c., Acts xxiv. 25.)—WÜRT. SUMM.: When we hear of God's threats against sin, let us not allow them to pass as idle winds, but take them to heart and seek the means of grace. We must only ask of the Apostles and Prophets who wrote as they were impelled by the Holy Ghost. God speaks with us through their words. His answer is: Repent, believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and forsake sin.—Ver. 14. See *Histor. and Eth.* § 4.—STARKE: True fear of God is humble and honors the gifts of God wherever it finds them, but in itself least of all.—Vers. 15-20. The Oracle of the Prophetess a Threat for the people (vers. 15-17), and a Promise for the King (vers. 18-20).—The Lord will bring temporal misfortune upon the city which despises and scorns His law; what will He do to that which rejects His Gospel? 2 Tim. i. 8, 9.—Those who humble themselves at the word of the law will come to the grave in peace. The just are taken away before the calamity comes (Isai. lvii. 1). If the Lord takes thee early away from the earth, submit to His will and say: Lord, let now thy servant depart in peace, as Thou hast said (Luke ii. 29).

Chap. xxiii. 1-25. Josiah's Great Work of Reformation. (*a*) He renews the covenant on the basis of the newly discovered law-book, vers. 1-3. (*b*) He puts an end pitilessly to all idolatrous worship in the kingdom, vers. 4-20. (*c*) He restores the legitimate worship with the celebration of the Passover, vers. 21-25.—Every true reformation must proceed from the word of God, and have that as its basis; then it is strong, not only in destroying and denying, but also in building up and restoring (Luther and the reformers).—Vers. 1-3. The king collects the entire people and lays the law-book before them; not until after they have approved does he begin the work. The civil and spiritual authorities ought not to proceed violently and in self-will in matters of the highest importance for Church and State, nor to force the consciences of the people. They ought to secure the assent of the latter. The entire people, small and great, learned and unlearned, ought to be made acquainted with the word of God, so that no one can plead ignorance as an excuse. To deny to the people the right to read the Word of God is not to reform, but to destroy. KYBURZ: Josiah caused the light which he had received to shine to all; so do ye also. We ought not to enjoy any treasure which we discover without sharing it with others. —The people joined in the covenant outwardly but not heartily, therefore it had no permanence. How often now a whole congregation promises obedience to God and does not keep it. Do not expect hearty conversion everywhere where you hear assent to the word of God (Matt. vii. 21; Isai. xxix. 13).

Vers. 4-20. WÜRT. SUMM.: Here we may see that when God's word is laid aside people fall into all kinds of vice. So it was under the papacy. If we observe the word of God we shall be saved from sin and error.—Although the civil authorities ought to apply no force to conscience, yet they ought to punish murder and licentiousness, no matter what may be the pretence under which they are committed. The more severely and more pitilessly they do this, the more honor they deserve. —Weeds grow most rapidly; they can only be destroyed by being pulled up by the roots.—The abominations which took root in Israel were a proof of what St. Paul says, Rom. i. 21-28. In times of corruption, and against inveterate evils, mild measures are of no avail, but only the utmost severity, which has no respect of persons. Eccle-

siastics who, instead of being pastors of the people, become their seducers, are doubly worthy of punishment, and ought to be removed without mercy.—Vers. 16, 17. STARKE: Divine prophecies will certainly be fulfilled at last, though the fulfillment may be delayed so long that it seems as if it would never follow (1 Kings xiii. 2, 31).—Ver. 18. THE SAME: The bones of departed saints ought to be left in their graves and not to be carried about or displayed.—Vers. 21–24. The building up of a new life must follow upon the eradication of sin. The Passover cannot be celebrated until all the old leaven is removed. The Passover was the feast with which each new year began; we also have a passover or Easter lamb (1 Cor. v. 7, 8).—The festivals and fasts are the frame-work of the common life of the congregation; where they are neglected this life is decaying. If Israel had kept up the celebration of its appointed feasts, it would never have fallen so low.—Vers. 25–27. Why did the Lord not return from His anger? Not because Josiah's efforts were not pure and sincere (on the contrary, they proceeded from pure zeal, and perfect love, and the best intention), but because the people were not converted with their king. They only assented externally and in form; in their hearts they were obstinate and perverse (Jerem. xxv. 3–7).—ROOS: Jeremiah seems to have fallen on a good time with his warnings and exhortations to repentance, but the contents of his books show that such was not the case. This should be a warning to those who look to the authorities for the chief power to convert men, and do not wish to act without them.—LUTHER: Before God inflicts a severe judgment he always grants a great illumination. Therefore a great judgment will fall upon those who now neglect the Gospel.—Vers. 29 and 30. See 2 Chron. xxxv. The early death of the king was no punishment for him, for he was thus gathered in peace to his fathers, but it was a chastisement for his unrepentant people, who now lamented him and saw, when it was too late, what noble purposes he had had in their behalf.

THIRD SECTION.

THE MONARCHY FROM THE REIGN OF JEHOAHAZ TO THAT OF ZEDEKIAH.

(CHAPS. XXIII. 31—XXV. 30.)

A.—*The Reigns of Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin, and Zedekiah.*

CHAP. XXIII. 31–XXV. 7.

31 Jehoahaz *was* twenty and three years old when he began to reign; and he
reigned three months in Jerusalem. And his mother's name *was* Hamutal, the
32 daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah. And he did *that which was* evil in the sight
33 of the Lord, according [like] to all that his fathers had done. And Pharaoh-
nechoh put him in bands [took him captive] at Riblah in the land of Hamath,
that he might not reign[1] in Jerusalem; and put the land to [laid upon the land]
34 a tribute of a hundred talents of silver, and a talent of gold. And Pharaoh-
nechoh made Eliakim the son of Josiah king in the room of Josiah his father,
and turned his name to Jehoiakim, and took Jehoahaz away: and he came to
35 Egypt, and died there. And Jehoiakim gave the silver and the gold to Pha-
raoh; but he taxed the land to give the money according to the commandment
of Pharaoh: he exacted the silver and the gold of the people of the land, of
every [each] one according to his taxation [assessment], to give *it* unto Pharaoh-
nechoh.
36 Jehoiakim *was* twenty and five years old when he began to reign; and he
reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name *was* Zebudah, the
37 daughter of Pedaiah of Rumah. And he did *that which was* evil in the sight of
CHAP. xxiv. 1. the Lord, according to all that his fathers had done. In his days
Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came up, and Jehoiakim became his servant
2 three years: then he turned and rebelled against him. And the Lord sent

against him bands of the Chaldees, and bands of the Syrians, and bands of the
Moabites, and bands of the children of Ammon, and sent them against Judah to
destroy [devastate] it, according to the word of the Lord, which he spake by
3 his servants the prophets. Surely [Only] at the commandment of the Lord
came *this* upon Judah, to remove *them* out of his sight, for the sins of Manasseh,
4 according to [in][2] all that he did; And also for the innocent blood that he
shed: for he filled Jerusalem with innocent blood; which the Lord would not
5 pardon. Now the rest of the acts of Jehoiakim, and all that he did, *are* they
6 not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Judah? So Jehoiakim
7 slept with his fathers: and Jehoiachin his son reigned in his stead. And the
king of Egypt came not again any more out of his land: for the king of Babylon
had taken from the river of Egypt unto the river Euphrates all that pertained
to the king of Egypt.
8 Jehoiachin *was* eighteen years old when he began to reign, and he reigned
in Jerusalem three months. And his mother's name *was* Nehushta, the daughter
9 of Elnathan of Jerusalem. And he did *that which was* evil in the sight of the
10 Lord, according [like] to all that his father had done. At that time the ser-
vants of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came[3] up against Jerusalem, and the
11 city was besieged. And Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came against the
12 city, and his servants did besiege it. And Jehoiachin the king of Judah went
out to the king of Babylon, he, and his mother, and his servants, and his princes,
and his officers: and the king of Babylon took him in the eighth year of his
13 [the king of Babylon's] reign. And he carried out thence all the treasures of the
house of the Lord, and the treasures of the king's house, and cut in pieces all the
vessels of gold which Solomon king of Israel had made in the temple of the
14 Lord, as the Lord had said. And he carried away [captive] all Jerusalem, and
all the princes, and all the mighty men of valor, *even* ten thousand captives,
and all the craftsmen and smiths: none remained, save the poorest sort of the
15 people of the land. And he carried away Jehoiachin to Babylon, and the king's
mother, and the king's wives, and his officers, and the mighty of the land, *those*
16 carried he into captivity from Jerusalem to Babylon. And all the men of might,
even seven thousand, and craftsmen and smiths a thousand, all *that were* strong
and apt for war, even them the king of Babylon brought captive to Babylon.
17 And the king of Babylon made Mattaniah his father's brother king in his stead,
and changed his name to Zedekiah.
18 Zedekiah *was* twenty and one years old when he began to reign, and he
reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name *was* Hamutal, the
19 daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah. And he did *that which was* evil in the sight
20 of the Lord, according [like] to all that Jehoiakim had done. For through the
anger of the Lord it came to pass in Jerusalem and Judah, until he had cast
them out from his presence [.] that [*omit* that; *insert* And] Zedekiah rebelled
CHAP. XXV. 1. against the king of Babylon. And it came to pass in the ninth year
of his reign, in the tenth month, in the tenth *day* of the month, *that* Nebuchad-
nezzar king of Babylon came, he, and all his host, against Jerusalem, and pitched
2 against it; and they built forts [siege-works] against it round about. And the
3 city was besieged unto the eleventh year of king Zedekiah. And on the ninth
day of the *fourth* [*omit fourth*][4] month the famine prevailed in the city, and there
4 was no bread for the people of the land. And the city was broken up [a breach
was made in the city], and all the men of war *fled* by night by the way of the
gate between two walls, which *is* by the king's garden (now the Chaldees *were*
against the city round about [had invested the city]:) and *the king*[5] went the
5 way toward the plain. And the army of the Chaldees pursued after the king,
and overtook him in the plains of Jericho: and all his army were scattered from
6 him. So they took the king, and brought him up to the king of Babylon to
7 Riblah; and they gave judgment upon him. And they slew the sons of Zede-
kiah before his eyes, and [he] put out the eyes of Zedekiah, and [they] bound
him with fetters of brass, and carried him to Babylon.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

[1] Ver. 33. On the keri see remarks under *Exegetical.*

[2] Chap. xxiv. ver. 3. [כְּכֹל. כְּ here has peculiar force. It means in or throughout all that he did, infecting all according to a certain measure. Whatever he did there was a certain measure of wickedness in it according to its character. The somewhat subtle force of the particle led to variants. "One codex has בְּכֹל, Sept. and Syr. וּבְכֹל. The reading in the text is correct" (Thenius).—W. G. S.]

[3] Ver. 10. The keri is to be preferred.—Bähr. [The chetib is sing. The keri is a grammatical correction. The sing. may have been written with the mind fixed on Nebuchadnezzar. This point has importance for the question whether he accompanied the expedition from the outset. *Cf.* ver. 11.

[4] Chap. xxv. ver. 3. [The statement that it was the fourth month is here imported into the text by the translators from Jeremiah, who gives it in both places; chap. lii. and chap. xxxix.

[5] Ver. 4. [וַיֵּלֵךְ is singular, and our version supplies "the king" as the subject. It is more likely that it is a case of the indefinite subject "one" (Fr. *on;* Germ. *man*). *The army went*, or, as we are obliged to translate, *they went.* The king's presence in the train is implied and assumed. In Jerem. lii. 7 we find וַיֵּלְכוּ, and in Jerem. xxxix. 4, the sing. וַיֵּצֵא, but there the king is mentioned in the context.—W. G. S.]

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

Ver. 31. **Jehoahaz was twenty and three years old.** This son of Josiah is called by Jeremiah (xxii. 11) Shallum (שַׁלּוּם), which name, according to Hengstenberg, Keil, and Schlier, is significant, and means: "He who shall be recompensed," referring to his fate (vers. 33 and 34). But why should this king be expressly so named when others, as, for instance, Jehoiachin and Zedekiah, met with a similar fate (chaps. xxiv. 15; xxv. 7)? According to Junius, Hitzig, and Thenius, Jeremiah gave him the name Shallum, with reference to his reign of three months (chap. xv. 13), in the same manner as Jezebel named Jehu "Zimri, murderer of his master" (chap. ix. 31). But this also is forced and invented. In 1 Chron. iii. 15, in the enumeration of the sons of Josiah, he is called Shallum instead of Jehoahaz, but we may be certain that the chronicler did not put in a "symbolical" name, which the prophet only once used with particular significance and emphasis, by the side of three other actual names, and in a dry genealogical list. Shallum was the name which this king actually bore before his accession to the throne. When he became king he received another name, just as Eliakim and Mattaniah did (ver. 34 and xxiv. 17). Shallum took the name Jehoahaz, *i. e.*, He-whom-Jehovah-sustains. The people made him king in place of his elder brother, and Shallum seemed a name of evil omen, inasmuch as the former king Shallum [of Israel] only reigned for one month. According to Josephus, Jehoahaz reigned three months "and ten days."

Ver. 33. **And Pharaoh-necho took him captive at Riblah in the land of Hamath.** וַיַּאַסְרֵהוּ is generally translated: *he bound him*, or *put him in bands*, but אסר has also "the primary meaning, *to make captive*, without the notion of fettering, Gen. xlii. 16" (Gesenius), and, taking into consideration chap. xvii. 4, this more general signification is here to be preferred.—The city of *Riblah* (now the village *Ribleh*) belonged to the district of the Syrian city Hamath at the foot of Mt. Hermon (Antilebanon), on the river Orontes, that is, therefore, on the northernmost boundary of Palestine towards Damascus (1 Kings viii. 65; 2 Kings xiv. 25; Amos vi. 14). Riblah lay in a large and fruitful plain on the high-way which led, by way of the Euphrates, from Palestine to Babylon. At a later time Nebuchadnezzar also established his headquarters there (chap. xxv. 6, 20, 21. See Winer, *R.-W.-B.* II. s. 323). It can hardly be the same Riblah which is mentioned in Numb. xxxiv. 11 (see Keil on that passage). If Necho had already advanced, since the battle of Megiddo in which Josiah fell (ver. 29), on his way to the Euphrates, as far as Riblah, it cannot be that, during the three months that Jehoahaz reigned, he had also made a detour to Jerusalem and besieged and taken that city. Shalmaneser spent three years in besieging and taking Samaria, which was not so strongly fortified (chap. xvii. 5). Moreover, Necho did not probably "quit the main army without great necessity while it was advancing against a powerful enemy" (Winer). The text says distinctly that he took Jehoahaz prisoner in Riblah and not in Jerusalem, and it gives no support to Keil's statement, that, while the main army advanced slowly towards Riblah, "he sent a detachment to Jerusalem to take that city and dethrone the king." In that case he must have captured the king in Jerusalem and not in Riblah. The attempt has been made to sustain this notion that Necho took Jerusalem by a statement of Herodotus (II. 159): μετὰ τὴν μάχην (at Megiddo) Κάδυτιν πόλιν τῆς Συρίης ἐοῦσαν μεγάλην εἷλε. But it is now universally admitted that Κάδυτις cannot mean Jerusalem, but rather that it was some sea-port (*cf.* Herod. III. 5), although this does not necessarily imply that it was Gaza, as Hitzig and Starke affirm. [It is Kadesh, a city of Syria, on the Orontes, near to Emessa, the ruins of which have lately been discovered.—Lenormant.] We are not told how Jehoahaz came to Riblah, but it certainly was not, as the old expositors supposed, with a large army in the intention of repeating his father's attempt to arrest Necho's advance, for the army of Judah had perished in the battle of Megiddo. According to Josephus, who says nothing of any capture of Jerusalem by Necho, the latter summoned Jehoahaz to come to his camp (μεταπέμπεται πρὸς αὐτὸν), and took him captive when he came. This is more probable than that he came of his own accord, "perhaps to seek from the victor the ratification of his election to the throne" (Thenius). However that may be, he was unexpectedly made a

captive at Riblah. We may infer, as Ewald does, from Ezek. xix. 4, where he is likened to a young lion whom "the nations" had taken "in their pit" (certainly not, therefore, at Jerusalem), that he was "treacherously" bound and carried away captive to Egypt. [See the *Supplem. Note* below, at the end of this section.]—The words בְּמְלֹךְ בִּירוּשָׁלִָם are translated by Keil: "When he had become king in Jerusalem." That, however, had been said just before in ver. 31, and is understood from the connection as a matter of course, so that it would be a mere idle remark. Neither can the translation: "Because he had exalted himself to be king in Jerusalem" (Dereser), or, *dum regnaret* (Vatablus) be sustained. We must, therefore, adopt the keri מִמְּלֹךְ, as is done by the Chaldee version, the Sept. (τοῦ μὴ βασιλεύειν ἐν Ἱερουσαλήμ), and the Vulg. (*ne regnaret in Jerusalem*). This is further confirmed by the parallel passage (2 Chron. xxxvi. 3) in which the verse is abbreviated: "And the king of Egypt put him down (וַיְסִירֵהוּ) [*i. e., removed him, set him aside*] at Jerusalem." (The Sept. have in that place ἔδησεν which represents the Hebrew of Kings, and they have here μετέστησεν which represents the Hebrew of Chronicles.) In 3 Esra i. 3 also we find: καὶ ἀπέστησεν αὐτὸν βασιλεὺς Αἰγύπτου τοῦ μὴ βασιλεύειν ἐν Ἱερουσαλήμ. It is not necessary to suppose, with Ewald, that מִמְּלֹךְ was "dropped out" from 2 Chron. xxxvi. 3; still less, with Thenius, to read in this place, וַיְסִירֵהוּ instead of וַיַּאַסְרֵהוּ.—**And laid upon the land a tribute.** The relative amount of the silver and the gold is remarkable, one hundred talents of silver to one of gold, but, as the same figures are given in 2 Chron. xxxvi. 3 and in 3 Esra i. 36, we are not justified in changing them, as Thenius does, appealing to chap. xviii. 14, and adopting the statement of the Sept. that there were ten talents of gold instead of one. It may be that Necho wanted silver, which was rarer in the Orient, or that he did not wish to alienate the country too much from himself by pitiless severity. The entire tribute amounted, according to Thenius, to 230,000 *thaler* [$165,600]; according to Keil the gold amounted to 25,000 *thaler* [$18,000], and the silver to 250,000 *thaler* [$180,000].

Ver. 34. **And Pharaoh-necho made Eliakim, son of Josiah, king,** &c. After the victory at Megiddo and the death of Josiah, Necho regarded himself as master of the country, and therefore he would not recognize as king Jehoahaz, who had been elevated to the throne by the people without his (Necho's) consent. Possibly also, as has often been assumed, either the elder brother Eliakim, who had been passed over, had appealed to Necho, or the Egyptian party had, by its intrigues, induced Necho, after setting aside Jehoahaz, to appoint the elder brother, and not a foreigner, for instance one of his own generals. He changed his name, as was the customary sign of subjection and vassalage (chap. xxiv. 17; Dan. i. 7). It appears that the choice of a name was left to Eliakim, who only changed—אֵל to—יְהוֹ in the composition of his former name so that its signification: God (Jehovah) will-establish, remained the same. Whether he did this "in intentional contradiction to the humiliation of the royal dynasty of David, which Jeremiah and the other prophets had threatened" (Keil), is very doubtful. Menzel very mistakenly infers that the name Jehoiakim pleased Necho better "on account of the connection with the Egyptian moon-God."—**And took Jehoahaz away,** לָקַח does not mean here: "He had taken prisoner," any more than it does in ver. 30. This much has already been stated in ver. 33. It only means that he did not leave him in Riblah where he had taken him captive, but took him away from there (Gen. ii. 15). The Sept. and the Vulg. read, instead of וַיָּבֹא, וַיְבִאֵהוּ; *et duxit*, and in Chronicles we find וַיְבִיאֵהוּ, but וַיָּבֹא implies that Jehoahaz came to Egypt before Necho returned thither.—"In ver. 35 the details in regard to the payment of the tribute imposed by Necho are given before the history of the reign of Jehoiakim is entered upon, because the payment of that tribute was one of the conditions on which he was elevated to the throne" (Keil). אַךְ =*nevertheless, but* in order to obtain the sum; he did not pay it out of his own means. He demanded contributions "from each one, even from the humblest inhabitant" (Ewald). This place shows that by "the people of the land" we have not to understand, as Thenius does, the "national militia," or the "male population fit for war."

Ver. 36. **Jehoiakim was twenty and five years old.** He was therefore two years older than Jehoahaz (ver. 31), and must have been begotten by Josiah in the fourteenth year of the latter's age. His mother was not the same person as the mother of Jehoahaz. *Rumah*, her native place, is probably identical with *Arumah* in the neighborhood of Shechem (Judges ix. 41).—

Chap. xxiv. 1. **In his days Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came up.** On the name נְבֻכַדְנֶאצַּר (Jeremiah generally, and Ezekiel always, writes it נְבוּכַדְרֶאצַּר), its different forms, and its significance, see Gesenius, *Thesaurus*, II. *p.* 840, and Niebuhr, *Gesch. Assyr. s.* 41. [The name is Nabu-kudurri-uzur, and means either Nebo-protects-the-youth (Oppert), or, Nebo-is-the-protector-of-landmarks (Sir H. Rawlinson)—Rawlinson, *Five Great Mon.* III. 80.] He was the son of Nabopolassar, and he appears here for the first time in this history. The question as to the time in Jehoiakim's reign at which he made this expedition can be answered from other data with tolerable certainty. According to Jerem. xxv. 1, the fourth year of Jehoiakim's reign was the first of Nebuchadnezzar, and according to Jerem. xlvi. 2 this fourth year of Jehoiakim was the year in which Nebuchadnezzar inflicted a decisive defeat upon Necho near Carchemish, a large well-fortified city at the junction of the Chaboras and the Euphrates (Winer, *R.-W.-B.* I. *s.* 211 *sq.*). Moreover, according to Jerem. xxxvi. 1, Jeremiah commissioned Baruch, in this fourth year of Jehoiakim, to write down his discourses in a book which was read in public on a great fast day which was held in the ninth month, that is, towards the end of the fifth year of Jehoiakim (ver. 9). This fast-day was not ordained on account of a misfortune which had already been experienced, "in order, by humiliation

and submission, to turn aside the wrath of God, and to implore the divine pity" (Keil), but "evidently, because Jehoiakim was alarmed at the approach of the Chaldeans, and saw in it danger of a calamity to the country which might perhaps yet be averted" (Ewald); for Jehoiakim, when he heard that the book had been read, commanded it to be brought, and then cast it into the fire, because there was written in it: "The king of Babylon will certainly come and destroy this land" (ver. 29, *cf.* also ver. 3). At the time of this fast-day, therefore, Nebuchadnezzar had not yet come. His coming was something to be looked forward to even in the ninth month of the fifth year of Jehoiakim. It follows that his expedition took place, at the very earliest, at the end of the fifth, or at the beginning of the sixth, year of Jehoiakim's reign. How far southward he penetrated, whether as far as Egypt, as some suppose, is uncertain. The supposition that he at this time captured the strongly fortified city of Jerusalem (Keil), and even took captive a part of the inhabitants of the city or country, as he did at a later time under Jehoiachin, is not sustained by anything in the Book of Kings or in Jeremiah. It is inconceivable that he should have done so and yet no mention of it be found in Scripture. This much only is certain: that Jehoiakim then "became subject to him for three years," that is, until the eigth or ninth year of his reign (chap. xxiv. 1), which may well have come to pass without the capture of Jerusalem, or the deportation of its inhabitants, although we do not know the manner in which it did come about. We have, therefore, to present to our minds the course of events as follows: After Necho had defeated Josiah at Megiddo and taken Jehoahaz captive at Riblah, and had made Jehoiakim king, he pushed on northeasterly towards the Euphrates, but he was met and so severely defeated by Nebuchadnezzar at Carchemish that he was obliged to give up his plan of conquering Assyria and retreat to Egypt. The victor, Nebuchadnezzar, then advanced through the territory east of Jordan, where he had little opposition to encounter (Knobel, *Prophet.* II. *s.* 227), and made the king of Judah, who had for five years been a vassal of the king of Egypt, subject to himself. After three years, however, Jehoiakim revolted, but for the remaining two or three years of his reign he was hard pressed by bands of Chaldeans, Syrians, Moabites and Ammonites, who were probably incited to invasion by Nebuchadnezzar, for he was too much occupied in other directions, in consequence of the death of his father, to march against Judah in person. When he found opportunity he appeared in person with an army "to punish the revolt, and he took vengeance for it upon the son [Jehoiachin] who had recently succeeded Jehoiakim" (Thenius), especially because Jehoiachin had not, at his accession, immediately submitted to the Babylonian authority.

Against this natural and simple conception of the course of events two biblical texts may be cited. 2 Chron. xxxvi. 6 reads: "Against him came up Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, and bound him in fetters, to carry him to Babylon. Nebuchadnezzar also carried [some] of the vessels of the house of the Lord to Babylon, and put them in his temple at Babylon." It is not here asserted that Jehoiakim was actually brought as a captive to Babylon, and this can, in fact, hardly have been the fact, for he was king in Jerusalem not eight or nine but eleven years (2 Kings xxiii. 36; 2 Chron. xxxvi. 5). It would be necessary, therefore, to assume that he was set at liberty again and came back to Jerusalem as king, of which we have no hint anywhere, and which is highly improbable. Certainly he did not die in Babylon (chap. xxiv. 6; *cf.* Jerem. xxii. 17–19). The Sept. filled out the meagre story of Jehoiakim in Chronicles from this account, but omitted entirely the words: "And bound him in fetters," &c., evidently because they considered them incorrect. In view of the remarkable brevity and superficiality with which the chronicler treats the history of Jehoiakim and Jehoiachin, it appears, as Hitzig supposes (note on Dan. i. 2), that he confused the two, for, according to our more detailed and more accurate account, the incidents which he mentions as having occurred to Jehoiakim really happened to Jehoiachin (chap. xxiv. 13–15). Josephus (*Antiq.* x. 6, 1) seems to have made the same mistake, for he confuses the history of the two kings. He says that Jehoiakim, on the promise that no harm should happen to him, admitted Nebuchadnezzar into the city, but that the Babylonian broke his word and put to death the king and the principal men, threw the body of the king under the wall, and left it unburied, took about 3,000 Jews, among whom was Ezekiel, away captive to Babylon, and placed Jehoiakim's son, Jehoiachin, on the throne. Then that, fearing lest Jehoiachin might, out of revenge for his father's murder, lead the city to revolt, he sent an army to Jerusalem, but gave an oath to Jehoiachin that, in case the city should be taken, no harm should befall him. That then the king of Judah surrendered, in order to spare the city, but was nevertheless taken away into captivity with 10,000 other captives. It appears that Josephus was not able to harmonize the account in Chronicles with the account here, and so he mixed them both up together, not writing history but inventing it.—

The other text which may be cited against the construction of the history above given is Dan. i. 1: "In the third year of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, came Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon unto Jerusalem and besieged it (וַיָּצַר [pressed it hard] see Isai. xxi. 2; Judges ix. 31; Esther viii. 11), and the Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, with part of the vessels of the house of God," &c. It is true that this passage does not say that the city was besieged and taken, and that then the king was bound and taken away to Babylon. When the Chaldeans had driven the Egyptians out of Palestine, Jehoiakim found himself in great distress, and, in order not to lose his crown and his kingdom, he surrendered to the king of Babylon, gave him some of the temple ornaments and utensils, and, probably enough, also gave him certain hostages, among whom was Daniel. But the statement that this took place in the third year of Jehoiakim does not agree with the statements above quoted from Jeremiah. No one has yet succeeded in removing the discrepancy, although very many attempts have been made (see a critical analysis of these attempts by Rösch in Herzog's *Real-Encyc.* XVIII. *s.* 464). The latest of these attempts, that of Keil, which insists that we "must regard the third year of Jehoiakim, in Dan. i. 1, as the *terminus a quo* of Nebuchadnezzar's coming, *i. e.*, must understand that statement to mean that

Nebuchadnezzar began the expedition against Judah in that year; that Necho was defeated at Carchemish in the beginning of Jehoiakim's fourth year, and that, in consequence of this victory, Jerusalem was taken and Jehoiakim was made tributary in the same year," is unsatisfactory especially in view of Jerem. xxxvi. 9. There is scarcely any escape remaining except to assume that Daniel reckoned from some other point of time which we cannot now specify. It is not admissible to give his one statement the preference over the numerous chronological statements of Jeremiah, since these are consistent with one another, and with the historical connection, and are, moreover, as will be shown below in the review of the chronology of this period, in perfect harmony with all the other chronological data both in Jeremiah and in the Book of Kings, while the statement in Daniel, if it is taken as fixed and correct, introduces confusion. [See the *Supplement. Note* below.]

Ver. 2. **And the Lord sent against him bands**, &c. It is not stated what impelled Jehoiakim after three years to try to throw off the yoke of Nebuchadnezzar. Perhaps his courage rose again when Nebuchadnezzar had withdrawn and was fully occupied in other parts of his immense kingdom. Perhaps also he hoped for aid from Egypt. Before Nebuchadnezzar himself could come, "bands" (גְּדוּדִים in distinction from חַיִל, chap. xxv. 1, not an organized army) devasted the country, though they could not take the capital. "All the nationalities here mentioned had no doubt been obliged to recognize Nebuchadnezzar's supremacy, and they gratified their own hate against Judah at the same time that they served his purposes" (Thenius). The ו in לְהַאֲבִידוֹ does not refer to Jehoiakim (Luther: *dass sie ihn umbrächten* [that they might put him to death]), but to "Judah" which immediately precedes. This is evident from ver. 3. On vers. 2–4 Starke observes: "It is expressly said: 'The Lord sent,' and again: 'According to the word of the Lord,' and in ver. 3 again: 'Surely at the commandment of the Lord came this' (*i. e.*, it came to pass *only* because the Lord had commanded it), and again in ver. 4: 'The Lord would not pardon,' in order that in all this the hand of God might appear and be recognized, and that men might not think that these judgments came upon Judah by accident, or merely on account of the physical strength of the Babylonians." The author means to say that the judgments which had long been threatened and predicted by the prophets (Isaiah, Micah, Huldah, Habakkuk, Jeremiah) now began. The invasion of all these bands on every side was the presage of the downfall of the kingdom, for from this time on came one misfortune after the other, and the kingdom and nation moved on steadily towards their downfall.—Ver. 3. **Only at the commandment of the Lord**, *i. e.*, it came only for the reason that God had so willed it. Instead of עַל־פִּי Ewald and Thenius desire to read עַל־אַף as in ver. 20, *i. e.*, because of the *wrath* of God. The Sept. have: *πλὴν θυμὸς κυρίου ἦν ἐπὶ τὸν* Ἰούδαν; the Vulg. has: *per verbum*. The change in the text is not necessary. **For the sins of Manasseh**, see notes on chap. xxi. The sin of Manasseh was far greater and heavier than that of Jeroboam. Judah gave itself up to this sin so entirely that not only were all the warnings and exhortations of the prophets ineffectual, but also the stern measures of Josiah could not effect anything in opposition; on the contrary, as we see from the words of Jeremiah, after his death this sin once more permeated the national life. The sins of Manasseh were not, therefore, avenged upon the people, but, because they persisted in them, they fell under the judgments of God. [That is, the nation was not punished under Jehoiakim for sins which Manasseh and his contemporaries had committed. The "sins of Manasseh" had become a designation for a certain class of offences, and a particular form of public and social depravity, which was introduced by Manasseh, but of which generation after generation continued to be guilty.—W. G. S.] Keil is mistaken when he thus states the connection between ver. 1 and ver. 2, and the following verses: "After God had given the nation into subjection to the Babylonian supremacy, as a punishment for its sins, every revolt against that power was a revolt against Him."—In ver. 5 we find the last reference to the **Book of the Chronicles of the kings of Judah.** The history of Jehoiakim therefore seems to have formed the conclusion to this book.

Ver. 6. **So Jehoiakim slept with his fathers.** The details which are given elsewhere in mentioning the death of a king, as to his burial and the place of his sepulture, are here wanting, certainly not through accident or error. Jeremiah says of Jehoiakim, chap. xxii. 19: "He shall be buried with the burial of an ass, drawn and cast forth beyond the gates of Jerusalem," and, chap. xxxvi. 30: "He shall have none to sit upon the throne of David, and his dead body shall be cast out in the day to the heat and in the night to the frost." As the statement that he "slept with his fathers" means neither more nor less than that he came to death, this text does not exclude or deny the fulfilment of the prophecy; nor can the statement which is interpolated in the Sept.: *καὶ ἐκοιμήθη* Ἰωακεὶμ *μετὰ τῶν πατέρων ἑαυτοῦ, καὶ ἐτάφη ἐν γανοζὰν μετὰ τῶν πατέρων ἑαυτοῦ*, for which there are no corresponding words in the Hebrew, avail, as Thenius believes, to prove the non-fulfilment of the prophecy. On the contrary, Ewald infers from the prophecy, which, however, he says "was written, in its present form, after the event," that the following is the circumstantial story of Jehoiakim's death: "Probably he had complied with a treacherous invitation of the enemy to visit his camp, for the purpose of making a treaty, and as soon as he came out he was taken prisoner in the very sight of his own capital. But as he resisted with rage and violence, he was borne away by force, and shamefully put to death. Even an honorable burial, for which his family no doubt entreated, was harshly refused." This representation of the incident goes beyond the prophecy even, and builds history upon it. Winer supposes that Jehoiakim's body was thrown out after, and in consequence of, the capture of the city in the reign of Jehoiachin (ver. 10), "on which occasion either the enemy, or perhaps the inhabitants of Jerusalem themselves, showed their rage against the hated king," but, according to Jeremiah, he met with no burial at all. We therefore limit ourselves to the assumption, which is also made by Keil, "that he perished in a battle with some one

of the irregular marauding bands mentioned above, and was not buried."—Ver. 7. **And the king of Egypt came not again any more, &c.** This remark is here inserted in order to show under what circumstances Jehoiachin succeeded his father (ver. 6), and how it came that he only reigned for so short a time (ver. 8). Necho had retired finally from Asia after such losses that he could not venture again to meet his victorious enemy, therefore Judah could expect no more support from him. Much less could it attempt alone to resist the conqueror from whom it had revolted. **The river of Egypt** is not the Nile, but the stream now known as *Arish*, which forms the southern boundary of Palestine (1 Kings viii. 65; Isai. xxvii. 12).

Ver. 8. **Jehoiachin was eighteen years old, &c.** The form of the name יְהוֹיָכִין which occurs here and in Chronicles (II. xxxvi. 8, 9), is the full and original form. The signification is "He-whom-Jehovah-confirms." In Ezek. i. 2 we find יוֹיָכִין; in Jer. xxvii. 20; xxviii. 4: יְכָנְיָהוּ; and in Jer. xxii. 24, 28: כָּנְיָהוּ, which last is probably a popular abbreviation of the name. Instead of eighteen years the chronicler gives eight years, evidently through an omission of י=10. The grounds adduced by Hitzig (note on Jer. xxii. 28) in favor of eight are swept away by ver 15 of this chapter, where the king's "wives" are mentioned. There is no reason to cast suspicion upon the more accurate statement of the chronicler: "three months and ten days," as Thenius does. Elnathan belonged to the שָׂרִים at the court of Jehoiakim, Jerem. xxvi. 22; xxxvi. 12, 25.—Ver. 10. **At that time, &c.** The chronicler says instead: "When the year was expired" [more correctly it would read: "At the turning-point of the year," *i. e.*, either the spring equinox, or the beginning of the Jewish year, both of which came at nearly the same time; the time at which military movements were commenced], *i. e.*, in the spring, not "late in the summer or in the autumn" (Thenius). Nebuchadnezzar sent out his generals (עֲבָדִים), in the first place, with the army to besiege the city. Afterwards he came himself, in order to be present at the capture (see notes on ver. 2).—**And Jehoiachin, king of Judah, went out, &c.**, ver. 12. יָצָא, as in chap. xviii. 31, is the ordinary expression for besieged who go out to surrender to the besiegers (1 Sam. xi. 3; Jerem. xxi. 9; xxxviii. 17). Jehoiachin perceived that the city would not be able to hold out very long, and therefore determined to surrender, in the hope of meeting with grace from Nebuchadnezzar, and of being allowed to keep his kingdom, though as a vassal. He therefore went out with his mother as the *Gebirah* (1 Kings xv. 13), and with his ministers and officers, but his hopes were all disappointed. Nebuchadnezzar distrusted him, not without reason, and he desired to punish the father in the son. וַיִּקַּח, *he seized* him, not "he received him graciously" (Luther and the *Calw. Bib.*), for, if the latter were the meaning, he would have restored him as a vassal, but he dethroned him and took him into exile. The eighth year of Nebuchadnezzar, who became king in the fourth year of Jehoiakim (Jer. xxv. 1), fell in the year after the eleven-year reign of Jehoiakim had closed. On Jerem. lii. 28 sq. see below.

Ver. 13. **And he carried out thence, &c.**, that is, from the city which he had entered after seizing the king and his chief men. In the first place he took all there was in the treasuries of the temple and the royal palace, and then he took the utensils of the temple. The meaning of וַיְקַצֵּץ is not altogether clear. "To tear off the gold surface" (Keil) is a meaning which is not applicable to "all the vessels," for many of these were entirely of gold, as, for instance, the candlesticks, and such, we may be sure, he did not leave behind. The Sept. have συνέκοψε, the Vulg. *concidit* or *confregit* (chap. xviii. 16), hence Thenius renders it: "to crush into shapeless masses," but, if this had been done, Cyrus would not have been able to give these articles back again to the Jews, as it is stated in Ez. i. 7–11 that he did do. We must understand it to mean, *to tear away violently*, *avellit* (Winer), for the most of these articles were no doubt fastened to the floor of the temple. הֵיכָל does not mean the temple as a whole, but the sanctuary, the "dwelling," all the articles in which were of gold. Nebuchadnezzar did not take away the brazen vessels from the forecourt until he destroyed Jerusalem (chap. xxv. 13 *sq.*).—**As the Lord had said,** chap. xx. 17; *cf.* Jerem. xv. 13; xvii. 3.—Ver. 14. **And he carried away captive all Jerusalem.** He left only the poorest and humblest of the population, because nothing was to be feared from them (see Jerem. xxxix. 10: "the poor of the people which had nothing"). Ver. 14 states in general, and in round numbers, what persons were taken into exile. There were two classes: first, the שָׂרִים, the chiefs [E. V. "princes"], not the military chiefs, but the chief men of rank, the nobles, and the גִּבּוֹרֵי הַחַיִל, *i. e.*, the mighty men of wealth, the rich (chap. xv. 20); and second, הֶחָרָשׁ, the artisans, the workers either in brass, or iron, or wood (Isai. xliv. 12, 13; Gen. iv. 22; 1 Kings vii. 14), and הַמַּסְגֵּר, *i. e.*, not "common laborers who broke stone and carried burdens" (Hitzig on Jerem. xxiv. 1), but, literally, *one who shuts in*, *encloses*, or *locks up*, from סגר, *to close*, or *shut up*, and so, according to Ewald: "persons who are skilled in siege operations (from הסגיר, to *invest* or *enclose*, *cf.* Jerem. xiii. 19)," but we prefer to understand by it *locksmiths*, inasmuch as these also made weapons (1 Sam. xiii. 19). When these persons were taken away into captivity the rest were deprived of the power to revolt or to make war. There were in all ten thousand of the exiles. Vers. 15 and 16 are not a mere repetition of ver. 14; they particularize what ver. 14 stated in general. The king and his court are mentioned first, then the אֱוִלֵי הָאָרֶץ (keri, אֵילֵי), that is, the mighty men of the land, who are included in the שָׂרִים in ver. 14, then the אַנְשֵׁי הַחַיִל, who are there called גִּבּוֹרֵי הַחַיִל. There were seven thousand of the rich and noble, and one thousand of the two classes of artisans. הַכֹּל in ver. 16 (not וְכֹל) "gathers in one all who have been mentioned, and it is then

specified in regard to them that they were all men in the prime of life, and that they were familiar with the use of weapons" (Thenius). We see from Jerem. xxix. that there were also priests and prophets among them, and according to Josephus, (*Antiq.* x. 6, 3) especially ὁ προφήτης Ἰεζεκιῆλος παῖς ὤν. *Cf.* Ezek. i. 1–3. Ver. 17. *Mattaniah* was, according to 1 Chron. iii. 15, the third son of Josiah, so that he was the uncle of the exiled king Jehoiachin (Jerem. xxxvii. 1). אָחִיו, 2 Chron. xxxvi. 10, must not, therefore, be translated: "his brother," but: "his cousin," or, "his relative," a sense in which it frequently occurs. (Sept. ἀδελφὸν τοῦ πατρὸς αὐτοῦ). On the change of name see notes on chap. xxiii. 34. Nebuchadnezzar did not choose the name, he only approved of the new name chosen by the king, as Necho had done in the case of Jehoiakim. מַתָּן, *gift*, is changed to צֶדֶק, *justice, righteousness*, so that the name means: "the righteousness of Jehovah," that is, "he by whom Jehovah executes justice." It is hardly probable that the king meant by this name to identify himself with יְהוָֹה צִדְקֵנוּ promised by Jeremiah (xxiii. 6), as Hengstenberg and Von Gerlach think; it is much more likely that the prophet took occasion from the king's name, with which his character did not at all correspond, to promise that one should come to whom alone this name might justly be applied.—Nebuchadnezzar showed himself merciful in that he put another member of the native dynasty on the throne, and did not appoint a stranger and foreigner as viceroy.

Ver. 18. **Zedekiah was twenty and one years old.** Of the passage from this verse on to the end of the book, Jerem. lii. 1–34 is a duplicate, almost word for word. The only differences are that Jerem. lacks 2 Kings xxv. 22–26, and 2 Kings lacks Jerem. lii. 28–30. It follows that neither one is borrowed from the other. Moreover there are also a few other slight differences, as, for instance, 2 Kings xxv. 16, 17 compared with Jerem. lii. 20–23. It is certain that the fifty-second chapter of Jeremiah is an appendix to the discourses of that prophet, and that it does not come from his hand, for it is impossible that he should have survived the liberation of Jehoiachin (ver. 31). (See the *Introd.* § 1.) Although it is not true that the text in Kings is "thoroughly corrupt" (Hitzig), yet that in Jerem. is, on the whole, to be preferred, and is therefore the more original. On the other hand, that of Kings has some peculiar excellences, as, for instance, xxv. 6, 7, 11, 17 compared with Jerem. lii. 9, 10, 15, 20. We are driven to a conclusion similar to that which we reached in regard to the history of Hezekiah (see p. 201), and which is adopted also by Keil and Thenius, that both narratives were borrowed from one source which is now lost.—The mother of Zedekiah was also, according to chap. xxiii. 31, the mother of Jehoahaz; he was, therefore, the full brother of the latter, and the step-brother of Jehoiakim (xxiii. 36). On ver. 20 see notes on xxiv. 3. The author means to say that, as this king and the people persisted in their evil ways, the judgment which had long been threatened was executed in this reign. The special occasion of it was his revolt from Nebuchadnezzar who had put him upon the throne, and, according to 2 Chron. xxxvi. 13 and Ezek. xvii. 13, had taken an oath of fidelity from him. The year of this revolt cannot be accurately determined. At the commencement of his reign he sent an embassy to Babylon, as it seems, in order to bring about the release of the captives who had been carried away under Jehoiachin (Jerem. xxix. 3 *sq.*). In his fourth year he himself went thither with Seraiah, probably with the same intention, but in vain (Jerem. li. 59). Then came ambassadors from the neighboring peoples who wanted to unite with Zedekiah in a common effort to cast off the Babylonian yoke (Jerem. xxvii. 3). False prophets encouraged him to agree to this (Jerem. xxviii.). This led him to send to Egypt "that they might give him horses and much people" (Ezek. xvii. 15). As the Chaldean army was before Jerusalem in Zedekiah's ninth year, the revolt must have taken place, at the latest, in his eighth year, but it probably took place in his seventh, or perhaps even earlier.

Chap. xxv. 1. **And it came to pass in the ninth year, &c.** These dates can be given thus accurately to the month and the day, because the Jews were accustomed during the exile to fast on the anniversary of these days of disaster (Zach. vii. 3, 5; viii. 19). It is evident from ver. 6 that Nebuchadnezzar did not come to Jerusalem himself, but remained at Riblah (chap. xxiii. 33), and sent his army from thence against Jerusalem. According to Jerem. xxxiv. 7 they also besieged Lachish and Azekah, the only two strongholds remaining. The word דָּיֵק cannot mean a "wall" (De Wette), for it stands in contrast with סֹלְלָה as something different (Ezek. iv. 2; xvii. 17; xxi. 27). It is ordinarily derived from דיק *speculari, to observe, to watch*, and is understood to mean a "watch-tower," or, collectively, "watch-towers" (Hävernick on Ezek. iv. 2; Gesenius, Keil), but סָבִיב, which does not refer to observation but to an encircling on all sides, does not fit this meaning. The Sept. translate it in Ezek. iv. 2, by προμαχῶν, *a bulwark, a rampart*, in Ezek. xvii. 17; xxi. 27 by βελόστασις, *a machine for throwing missiles*, and this place they translate: περιῳκοδόμησεν ἐπ' αὐτὴν τεῖχος κύκλῳ; the Vulg. has *munitiones*. Hitzig understands by it "lines of circumvallation," and Thenius "the outermost of the siege lines, built only of palisades, and intended to prevent the introduction of supplies," &c., but this last cannot be so accurately determined. We must, therefore, content ourselves with the less definite meaning, "bulwark," or, "siege-work." Vatablus: *Machinam bellicam, qualisqualis fuerit.*—Ver. 2. **Unto the eleventh year, &c.** The siege lasted in all one year five months and twenty-seven days, for the city was very strongly fortified (2 Chron. xxxii. 5; xxxiii. 14). This is conclusive against the assumption that a capture of the city is implied in xxiv. 1 *sq.* According to Jerem. xxxvii. 5, 11, the besieging army, or at least a part of it, raised the siege and marched against the Egyptian army which was coming to the help of the Jews. It would thus appear that the siege was interrupted for a time.—Jeremiah gives the date in ver. 3 more accurately (see Jerem. xxxix. 2, and lii. 6): "In the fourth month, on the ninth [day] of the month." The first words בַּחֹדֶשׁ הָרְבִיעִי have been omitted by some accident in the version in Kings, and they must be supplied. How severe the famine was, and what horrors came to pass as

a consequence of it, may be seen from Lament. ii. 11, 12, 19; iv. 3–10 (Ezek. v. 10; Baruch ii. 3). See also Jerem. xxxvii. 21. The famine did not begin on the ninth of the fourth month, but had become so severe at that time that the people were no longer capable of making a strong resistance; so on that day the enemy was able to storm the city.

Ver. 4. **And a breach was made in the city.** This breach was on the north side, for, according to Jerem. xxxix. 3, the leaders of the Chaldean army, when they came in, halted and seated themselves in "the middle gate," that is, in the gate which was in the wall between the upper, southern city (Zion), and the lower northern city, and which led from one of these into the other. When the king learned of this he took to flight with his warriors **by night.** In the text before us not only is "Zedekiah, king of Judah" (Jerem. xxxix. 4) omitted after הָעִיר, but also the predicate יִבְרְחוּ וַיֵּצְאוּ (Jerem. xxxix. 4; lii. 7) is omitted after "men of war." All the old versions supply at least one of these words. They fled towards the south, because the enemy had penetrated by the north side, and there was no hope of escaping that way, but even on this side they had to fight their way through, for the Chaldeans had invested the entire city (סָבִיב). The attempt derived its only hope of success from the darkness, and from the greater weakness of the besieging force on the south side. —**By the way of the gate between,** &c. This gate, called the gate of the fountain (Nehem. iii. 15), was at the southern end of the ravine between Ophel and Zion, the Tyropoion. At this point, inasmuch as it was the site of the pool of Siloam and there were cisterns to be protected, and inasmuch also as the formation of the ground made it a convenient place for the enemy to attack (Thenius), two walls had been built, between which was this gate (Sept.: ὁδὸν πύλης τῆς ἀνὰ μέσον τῶν τειχῶν, and in Jerem. lii. 7: ἀνὰ μέσον τοῦ τείχους καὶ τοῦ προτειχίσματος). This double wall is also mentioned in Isai. xxii. 11. The way of the gate is the way through that gate out of the city. It is not quite certain whether the king's garden was inside or outside of this double wall; Thenius assumes that it was outside (see Map of Jerusalem Before the Exile, appended to his commentary). It is said in Ezek. xii. 12: "The prince . . . shall bear upon his shoulder in the twilight, and shall go forth; they shall dig through the wall (בַּקִּיר) to carry [him] out thereby." Here קִיר cannot be understood to refer to either of those walls, for he went through the gate; moreover it would have been impossible to break through such a wall in the night. We must therefore understand it of that wall which the enemy had built all around the city (ver. 1), and which it was necessary to break through. The fugitives then took the way to the plain (הָעֲרָבָה), that is, to the plains or meadows through which the Jordan flows, and which were called *the* plain (Josh. xi. 2; xii. 3; 2 Sam. ii. 29; iv. 7). Their intention was to cross the Jordan and escape, but they were overtaken near Jericho, six hours' journey from Jerusalem.

Ver. 6. **So they took the king,** &c. On *Riblah* see notes on chap. xxiii. 33. "Nebuchadnezzar was not present at the storming of Jerusalem (Jerem. xxxix. 3), he awaited the result in his camp" (Thenius). Instead of the plurals וַיְדַבְּרוּ and שָׁחֲטוּ in ver. 7, we find in Jerem. xxxix. 5 and lii. 9 the singular with Nebuchadnezzar as the subject. Although the latter may be the more original reading, the sense is the same in either case, for Nebuchadnezzar certainly did not put Zedekiah's sons to death with his own hand; he appointed a tribunal which judged and executed them. Instead of the singular מִשְׁפָּט Jeremiah has, in the places quoted and elsewhere, the plural, מִשְׁפָּטִים. With דִּבֶּר it means, *to deal with and decide a question of law.* This trial cannot have occupied much time, for it was a matter of common notoriety that Zedekiah had broken his oath of allegiance and revolted. The sons of Zedekiah, not all his children, had fled with him. They also were regarded as rebels and put to death, in order to put an end to the dynasty. His daughters were taken away as captives according to Jerem. xli. 20. As for Zedekiah himself, he was to suffer a painful punishment as long as he lived. His eyes were put out. This form of punishment was used by the Chaldeans and ancient Persians (Herod. vii. 18). Princes are still disabled in this way in Persia when it is desired to deprive them of any prospect of the throne. "A rod of silver (or of brass), heated glowing hot, is passed over the open eye" (Winer, *R.-W.-B.* II. *s.* 15). The Vulg. has *oculos ejus effodit,* and on Jerem. lii. 11: *oculos eruit.* It was also a customary mode of punishment in the Orient to pierce out the eyes (*Ctes. Pers.* 5). "Plate No. 18 in Botta (*Monum. de Nin.*) represents a king who is in the act of piercing out with a lance the eyes of a captive of no ordinary rank who kneels before him" (Thenius). See Cassel on Judges xvi. 21. However the act of piercing out the eyes is not generally expressed by עִוֵּר, but by נִקֵּר, Judges xvi. 21; 1 Sam. xi. 2; Numb. xvi. 14.—**With fetters of brass,** and double fetters at that, נְחֻשְׁתַּיִם. He was doubly fettered hand and foot, and brought to Babylon. In Jerem. lii. 11 the words follow: "And put him in prison till the day of his death." The Sept. have: εἰς οἰκίαν μύλωνος, evidently having in mind Judges xvi. 21. The author of the Book of Kings may have thought that this statement was unnecessary, since every person who was in chains was put in the prison as a matter of course. According to Jerem. xxxix. 6, and lii. 10, "All the nobles of Judah" were put to death with the sons of Zedekiah, that is, those who had fled with him. There is no reason to regard this as a false feature of the story borrowed from 2 Kings xxv. 21, as Thenius does.

[SUPPLEMENTARY NOTE *on contemporaneous history.* In the note on p. 247 we brought our notice of contemporaneous history down to the year 640, the year in which Josiah ascended the throne. The commotion of the next sixty years, during which Assyria ceased to be a nation, Egypt was humbled, and the Median and Babylonian empires advanced to the first place, amounted to an historical cataclysm. In the Bible we have references to these movements only when, and in so far as, they affected the fortunes of the Jewish people. This they did in the most important manner, and, in

order to understand the influence of the neighboring nations on Judah at this time, it is necessary to have a comprehensive, if not exhaustive, knowledge of the historical movements which were in progress in Asia.

It should be distinctly understood that the history of the period now before us is very obscure. We have no historical inscriptions to guide us, and are thrown upon the authority of literary remains which are imperfect and inconsistent. Our chief authorities, Rawlinson and Lenormant (Sir H. Rawlinson and Oppert) differ very materially. It is therefore to be understood that what is here given is only conjectural and provisional.

The great question in dispute, on which the adjustment of the fragments of information which we possess into a smooth narrative depends, is as to the year in which Nineveh was taken, whether it was in 625 (Rawlinson), or in 606 (Lenormant). The weight of authority is in favor of the latter, though it is open to serious historical objections. It is, at present, impossible to bring this question to a final decision.

In 640 Asshur-edil-ilani (L.), or, Asshur-emid-ilin (R.) was on the throne of Assyria. His reign ended about 626–5. Rawlinson, putting the fall of Nineveh at this date, identifies this king with the Saracus, or Assaracus, of Abydenus. Lenormant, putting the fall of Nineveh in 606, supposes that Saracus was another and the last king, who reigned from 625 to 606. The last king was far inferior to his ancestors. Under him the empire was unable to meet the attacks which fell upon it.

The Medes, whose first attack on Assyria, under Phraortes, we mentioned above (p. 247), were a hardy mountain people who now arose into prominence. Cyaxares, the successor of Phraortes, made elaborate preparations to renew the attempts at conquest towards the west. He was ready for the attack (Rawl.), or made it (Lenor.), either alone (R.) or in conjunction with the Chaldeans, under Nabopolassar (L.), either in 634 (R.) or in 625 (L.). This attack was interrupted by the appearance of new actors on the scene. A horde of barbarians from the north, Scythia, poured down upon the nations in the Euphrates valley. They were of the same origin as the Goths, Huns, Avari, and Vandals, who appeared in Europe early in the Christian era, and their behavior, whithersoever they came, was the same as that of the barbarians who entered Europe. They poured over Media, Assyria, and Babylonia, and spread westward into Syria and Palestine. On the borders of Egypt they found Psammetichus besieging Ashdod. He persuaded them by gifts to turn back, and thus checked their advance in this direction. Herodotus says that their sway lasted for nineteen years. It is difficult to tell what this means, for in some countries, Media for instance, the natives overcame them sooner than in others. They were not able to found any permanent authority in any country. They perished by luxury and vice, were slain, or employed as mercenaries. Jeremiah refers to them in chap. vi. 22 *sq.*; viii. 16; ix. 10; v. 15, and, in the 50th chap., where he foretells the destruction of Babylon, the Scythian invasion furnishes the colors of the picture in which he describes it. Rawlinson puts their invasion in 632; Lenormant in 625. Rawlinson supposes, that after the Scythian invasion had subsided, the Medes renewed the attack on Nineveh, and secured the alliance of Nabopolassar, in 625, when Nineveh was taken and destroyed.

In 610 Psammetichus died, and Necho succeeded on the throne of Egypt. Necho reigned from 610 to 595. He was young and ambitious, and he planned an expedition into Asia, no doubt, if Assyria had already fallen, with the intention of winning the western provinces for himself. He marched through Philistia and Samaria. Here Josiah of Judah marched out to meet him (chap. xxiii. 29). We do not need to seek far for a reason for Josiah's action. It may have been inspired, as is generally supposed, by a desire to manifest fidelity to his suzerain, Babylon (R.), but it is a more simple explanation to notice that, under the existing weakness of Assyria, Josiah had been able to exercise sovereignty over some portion of Samaria (chap. xxiii. 15 *sq.*). If the Babylonians were already the supreme power, they had not interfered with this. If Egypt conquered Samaria, it was at an end. Josiah, therefore, had a very natural and simple interest in opposing the Egyptian invasion. If Necho intended at this time to measure his strength with the Babylonians, he certainly desisted from that project. The words in 2 Chron. xxxv. 21 throw no light on the party he intended to attack. There is ground here for believing that Nineveh had not yet fallen, and that the Babylonians had not yet displayed their power. Necho saw in the feebleness of Assyria an opportunity to conquer its western provinces, and the force which he had was probably only such an one as he considered necessary for this purpose. Josiah was not, therefore, as rash as we might at first suppose (*cf.* Ewald III. 762—3d ed. He seems to think, however, that Necho may have taken Carchemish at this time, *cf. ss.* 782–3). However, the Jewish king was killed in the battle, and his second son Jehoahaz was made king. Necho pursued his course of conquest with success for three months. On his return, he regarded Judah also, by virtue of his victory at Megiddo, as a conquered province, although he had declared at the outset that he had no hostile design against that country (2 Chron. xxxv. 21). He refused to ratify the election of Jehoahaz, but took him (probably sent a detachment to bring him) from Jerusalem to the camp at Riblah (chap. xxiii. 33), where he put him in chains, and carried him captive to Egypt. He made Judah tributary. Jeremiah (xxii. 10) calls Jehoahaz more worthy of pity in his captivity than his father in his death, and Ewald, with good reason, interprets the parable (Ezek. xix., especially vers. 2–4) of Jehoiakim. Necho put the elder brother Eliakim on the throne, changing his name to Jehoiakim (chap. xxiii. 34). This was in 609 or 608. Necho at this time took Gaza (Jerem. xlvii. 1), and remained sovereign over the western provinces for two or three years.

We come now to the year 606 in which Nineveh was taken according to Oppert, Lenormant, Ewald, and others. The historical features of this event, aside from the question of its date, are as follows. The king of Assyria sent to Babylon, as satrap, a general named Nabopolassar (Nebo-protects-my-son), probably an Assyrian. It is certain that, when the final attack was made, it was twofold, both from Media and from the south. Nabopolassar and Cyaxares formed an alliance which was cemented by the marriage of Nebuchadnezzar, son of Nabopolassar, with Amyitis, daughter of Cyax-

ares. Rawlinson's idea is that Nabopolassar was charged with the defence against the attack from the south, but turned traitor. This supposition is necessary since he does not think that the Chaldeans participated in the first attack. Lenormant supposes that Nabopolassar was sent to Babylon as satrap, that he matured plans of revolt, that he joined in the first attack, and that he employed the interval of nineteen years in establishing his independence. He also thinks that Nabopolassar was, in 607, an old and broken man, that he associated his son Nebuchadnezzar with himself on the throne in that year, and that, therefore, the capture of Nineveh is really to be reckoned among the exploits of that prince. He supposes that certain chronological discrepancies are to be accounted for by the fact that Nebuchadnezzar became joint ruler in 607, so that two starting-points for his reign were confused. (See chap. xxv. 8, and Jerem. lii. 28–30.) The attack of the confederated Medes and Chaldeans was successful, and Saracus perished with his court and treasures in the downfall of the city.

Nebuchadnezzar now becomes the chief figure in the drama. He was a prince of extraordinary talents and energy, and he consolidated, if we may not say that he actually established, the Babylonian monarchy. Having destroyed Nineveh, his next task was to recover that portion of his new conquest which the Egyptians had held in possession for two or three years. In 605, the fourth year of Jehoiakim (Jerem. xlvi. 2), he met Necho, who came out to defend his possessions, at Carchemish, on the Euphrates, and totally defeated him. He pursued the Egyptians to the border of Egypt (chap. xxiv. 7), and no doubt intended to push on into that country, when news came to him (604) that his father was dead. He hastened to Babylon with a small escort through the nearer, but more dangerous, way of the desert. He met with no opposition in ascending the throne, in the fourth year of Jehoiakim of Judah (Jerem. xxv. 1).

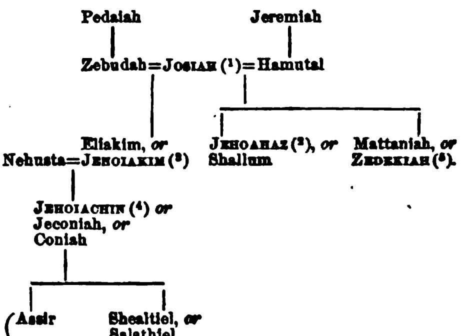
In the haste of these movements, Judah had remained secure in its mountains. Nebuchadnezzar's army marched to Egypt in two columns, one through Philistia and one through Perea (Lenormant). But Nebuchadnezzar soon returned to Palestine and Phœnicia to complete the work of conquest. In 602 or 601 he made Jehoiakim tributary (chap. xxiv. 1) and took away certain hostages or captives. In 599 or 598 Jehoiakim planned a revolt (chap. xxiv. 1), relying on help from Egypt. Rawlinson thinks that the embassy mentioned in Jer. xxvi. 22 had for its object to form this alliance, and that the matter of Urijah was only a pretext. Nebuchadnezzar first incited the neighboring nations against him (chap. xxiv. 2), and then himself marched into Judah. Jehoiakim died at this time, and Jehoiachin, his son, succeeded (chap. xxiv. 8). He was not able to resist the Chaldeans, and surrendered at discretion (chap. xxiv. 12). He was taken away prisoner, with 10,000 other captives (chap. xxiv. 13 and 14), the most energetic and independent portion of the people. The city and temple were plundered, and Mattaniah, the youngest son of Josiah, was put upon the throne by Nebuchadnezzar, under the name of Zedekiah (xxiv. 17).

Lenormant justly says of Zedekiah that he was only a Babylonian satrap. A strong party urged him continually to revolt, but Jeremiah counselled patience and submission. In 595 the princes of the neighboring countries met at Jerusalem (Jerem. xxvii. 3) to plan a concerted revolt, but Zedekiah was persuaded by Jeremiah to renounce this plan (Jerem. xxvii.). He went to Babylon (in his fourth year, 594) to counteract suspicions of his fidelity which had been aroused (Jer. li. 59). However, he again cherished similar plans, and entered into negotiations with Uaprahet (Uaphris, Apries, Hophra) of Egypt. The Chaldeans again invaded Judah in 590. The siege of Jerusalem began early in January, 589 (Lenorm.). During this siege the serfs were manumitted, that they might help in the defence (Jerem. xxxiv.). The Egyptians advanced to the relief of Jerusalem, the Chaldeans turned to meet the attack, and the hopes of the Jews revived so far that the freedmen were once more enslaved. This diversion, however, produced no effect. It is uncertain whether a battle was really fought and lost by the Egyptians (Josephus, *Antiq.* X. vii. 3), or whether they retreated without fighting at all. In 588 a breach was made and the Chaldeans entered the city (xxv. 3 and 4). Zedekiah fled (xxv. 4), hoping to break through the investing lines, but he was captured and taken to Riblah (xxv. 6), where Nebuchadnezzar was encamped. His sons were slain before his eyes. He was then blinded and taken captive to Babylon. One month later (xxv. 8, *cf.* xxv. 3) Nebuzaradan was deputed to carry out the systematic destruction of Jerusalem, and deportation of the most influential of its population. This he did thoroughly, though not without some slight leniency (chap. xxv. 12–22). However, the fanaticism of Ishmael and his party destroyed the last hope of maintaining the Jewish nationality, even in the pitiful form in which the Chaldeans had yet spared it (xxv. 25). The history of Judah, from this time on, is merged in that of the great world-monarchies.—W. G. S.]

HISTORICAL AND ETHICAL.

*1. The author treats very curtly *the history of the last four kings of Judah*. In Chronicles we find a still more abbreviated account. He passes hastily over this part of the history of Judah, just as he did over the similar part of the history of Israel (see *p.* 162 *sq.*), for it is the twenty-three years of the "death-agony of the nation" (Ewald). Josiah was the last genuine theocratic king. With his death begins the end of the kingdom; the history of his four successors, three of whom were his sons and one his grandson, is nothing more than the

* [GENEALOGICAL TABLE OF THE LAST KINGS OF JUDAH.



Sovereigns in small capitals. The numbers designate the order of succession on the throne.—W. G. S.]

story of this end. The author tells no more in regard to them than appears to him from his theocratic and pragmatic standpoint to be absolutely necessary. So he tells first what the attitude of each was towards Jehovah, that is, toward the covenant or the Mosaic law, and then so much of their history as pertains to the downfall of the kingdom, which was approaching step by step. We therefore learn rather what happened to them according to the counsel of God than what they themselves did. Essential additions to the history are contributed by Jeremiah, especially by the historical portions, but also by the prophetical discourses, though it is not always easy to determine which reign these latter belong to, nor what events they refer to. It is very remarkable that this great prophet, who certainly was an important personage during these last four reigns, and who is one of the most remarkable individuals mentioned in the Old Testament, is not mentioned or referred to at all in the historical book, perhaps for the reason that the acquaintance of the readers with the book of the prophet is taken for granted. [This is one reason for thinking that Jeremiah himself wrote the Books of Kings. See *Introd.* § 1.—W. G. S.]

2. *The reign of king Jehoahaz*, although it only lasted for three months, had important influence on the course of the history, inasmuch as it broke with Josiah's theocratic régime, and introduced another policy which hastened on the downfall of the kingdom. All that Josiah had built up with such anxious care and labor fell in ruins in a few months. Although the Jehovah-worship was not formally abrogated again, yet the door was opened for all manner of heathen falsehood and corruption to re-enter, and no one of the following kings abandoned the new policy which was thus inaugurated. This is the heavy guilt which rests upon Jehoahaz. How he came to adopt this course we can only guess, since we have no explanation of it offered in the Scriptures. The notion of some of the old expositors, that he was seduced by his mother, is entirely without foundation, and is especially improbable as she came from the ancient priest-city Libnah, and so cannot certainly have been bred to idolatry. It is much more probable that the heathen-party, to which many persons of rank and influence belonged, but which had been repressed under Josiah, arose once more after his death, and sought to regain its power. He either brought them over to his side or sought to win them by concessions. It does indeed seem probable, from the course which Necho adopted towards him. that "he continued to be hostile to Egypt" (Ewald), but the text nowhere states that "he resisted unworthy proposals of the Egyptian king." Niemeyer (*Character der Bibel* V. *s.* 105) says of him: "When compared with his elder brothers and successors, he seems to have been superior to them in many respects. One passage in Jeremiah would almost lead us to the opinion that the people longed for his return from Egypt." Umbreit also remarks on Jerem. xxii. 11 *sq.*: "He seems, during his reign of three months, to have made himself very much beloved." But it by no means follows, because the people passed over his elder brothers to make him king, that he was in any way better than they, for he certainly did not fulfil any hopes which may have been formed in regard to him, and Josephus (*Antiq.* X. v. 2), who certainly would not contradict the general verdict in regard to him which had been crystallized in tradition, calls him ἀσεβὴς καὶ μιαρὸς τὸν τρόπον. As for the text, Jerem. xxii. 10–12, in which he is called Shallum, it certainly cannot mean that Shallum deserved to be lamented more than the model king, Josiah, who walked in the way of his father David, and turned neither to the right hand nor to the left, whereas Jehoahaz followed in the ways of Ahaz, Manasseh, and Amon (chap. xxii. 2; xxiii. 32). The prophet there threatens the house of David (ver. 1) with destruction, because it has abandoned the covenant of Jehovah (vers. 5–9). He says that one king has already been carried away captive out of his land,—the land of promise,—that he will die and be buried in a foreign land (a great calamity and disgrace, according to Israelitish notions), and that another will be cast out before the city like a dead animal and find no burial at all. There is, therefore, no syllable here of desire and longing on the part of the people for the return of Jehoahaz as one who was better than the rest. Why should the people long for the return of a king who had disappointed all their hopes and expectations?

3. Josephus says (*Antiq.* X. v. 2) of *king Jehoiakim*: ἐτύγχανε ὢν τὴν φύσιν ἄδικος καὶ κακοῦργος, καὶ μήτε πρὸς Θεὸν ὅσιος, μήτε πρὸς ἀνθρώπους ἐπιεικής. The correctness of this criticism appears especially from the passages in Jeremiah which serve as supplements to the history before us, Jerem. xxii. 13–19; xxvi. 20–24; xxxvi. 20–32. The idol-worship which Jehoahaz had tolerated once more grew and spread with great rapidity under Jehoiakim. All the abominations which had existed under Manasseh reappeared. Ewald and Vaihinger infer from Ezek. viii. 7–13 that he "added to" the Asiatic forms of idolatry which had existed under Manasseh, "by introducing also the Egyptian cultus," but the reference in that passage is to the worship of Thammuz (Adonis), a well-known deity of Western Asia, the chief seat of whose worship was the ancient Phœnician city of Byblus, and to whose cultus belong the representations of worms and unclean animals on the walls (ver. 10.—See Hävernick on Ezek. *s.* 98 and 108). Moreover, the question may be raised whether this cultus was introduced under Jehoiakim, or not until the reign of Zedekiah. However that may be, there is no hint of any Egyptian cultus under Jehoiakim, although he was a vassal of Egypt, and in fact there is no hint at all of any Egyptian forms of idolatry among the Hebrews. Jehoiakim was the tool of the heathen party; he not only did not listen to the prophets, he hated and persecuted them. He caused the prophet Urijah, who had fled from him to Egypt, to be brought back from thence, to be put to death, and then his corpse to be shamefully handled (Jerem. xxvi. 20–24). Jeremiah barely escaped death (Jerem. xxxvi. 26). 2 Kings xxiv. 3 and 4 also shows that Jehoiakim shed much innocent blood. He had also a passion for building, and he caused expensive structures to be erected unjustly, and without paying wages to the laborers. [Jerem. xxii. 13 *sq.*] He exacted the tribute which Necho had imposed upon him from the people instead of using the royal treasures for this purpose. Even after the resources of the country were exhausted he continued his exactions so that the courageous prophet rebuked him: "Thine eyes and thine heart are not but for thy covetousness, and for to shed innocent blood, and

for oppression, and for violence to do it" (Jerem. xxii. 17). Therefore the prophet warns him that he will not be lamented nor buried, but that, in spite of all his royal grandeur and glory, he will be dragged forth and cast upon the field like a dead ass. No doubt he early showed what sort of a disposition he had, and it is not strange that the people, after Josiah's death, passed him over and made his brother king. He was a tyrant who was forced upon the nation by a victorious enemy, through whom it was punished for its apostasy. His reign formed a part of the divine judgment which had already begun to fall.

4. *King Jehoiachin* is placed before us by both the historical narratives (2 Kings xxiv. 9; 2 Chron. xxxvi. 9) as just like the three other kings as regards his attitude towards Jehovah. It is simply said of him without restriction: "He did that which was evil in the sight of Jehovah, like to all that his father had done." The only thing further which is related in regard to him is that, when the Babylonian army appeared before Jerusalem to besiege it, he went out and surrendered himself, begging for mercy. Josephus (*Antiq.* X. vii. 1) regards this as a praiseworthy action. He says: *ὁ δὲ φύσει χρηστὸς ὢν καὶ δίκαιος οὐκ ἠξίου τὴν πόλιν κινδυνεύουσαν δι' αὐτὸν περιορᾷν*; that the king had a solemn promise from the generals whom Nebuchadnezzar had sent that no harm should happen to him or to the city, but that this promise was broken, for Nebuchadnezzar had given orders that all who were in the city should be taken captive and brought into his presence. Niemeyer also says (*Charact. d. B.* V. *s.* 107): "Jehoiachin, the son of Jehoiakim, was undeniably a better king than his father. He does that which wisdom and humanity require under the circumstances. He desists from the active prosecution of a revolt which could only result in greater cruelty from the enemy, and greater exhaustion of the land, which was already thoroughly worn out. He must have been regarded, even in his captivity, as a man who deserved great respect (Jerem. lii. 31)." Similarly Ewald (*Gesch.* III. *s.* 734) says: "This prince was obliged to yield, in religious matters, to the prevailing depravity, but he did not lack good features of character which served to excite good hopes of him. There was a greater feeling of happiness under him than under his father, and there was great lamentation when he was obliged, at an early age, to go into captivity. Probably the touching psalms xlii., xliii., and lxxxiv. are from his hand." Vaihinger also (Herzog, *Real-Encyc.* VI. *s.* 787) agrees with this general opinion: "Although he had not reigned in the spirit of the Jehovah-religion, yet there continued to be among the people a longing for his return. The false prophets especially nourished this hope (Jerem. xxviii. 4)." These favorable opinions, however, are not at all well founded. From his sudden surrender of the city we may rather infer that he was weak and cowardly than anything else. [It should be noticed, however, that this is just what Jeremiah urged Zedekiah to do afterwards, viz., to yield to the Babylonians and sue for mercy (Jerem. xxxvii. 17 *sq.*, *cf.* also xxxvii. 2). Jehoiachin, by surrendering, seems to have saved the city from sack and pillage and burning, which was its fate after Zedekiah's resistance. We cannot condemn Jehoiachin for pusillanimity in surrendering at discretion, and Zedekiah for obstinacy in resisting to the end. See next section. The surrender is as much a sign of wisdom as of weakness.—W. G. S.] There is no support in this text nor in Jeremiah for what Josephus adds in regard to the promise which had been given him and was broken. The words of the prophet (Jerem. xxii. 24–34), where he pronounces the divine oracle, come in here with peculiar significance: "As I live, saith the Lord, though Coniah [Jehoiachin], the son of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, were the signet upon my right hand, yet would I pluck thee thence! And I will give thee into the hand of them that seek thy life, and into the hand of them whose face thou fearest, even into the hand of Nebuchadrezzar, king of Babylon, and into the hand of the Chaldeans. And I will cast thee out, and thy mother that bare thee, into another country where ye were not born, and there shall ye die, but to the land whereunto they desire to return, thither shall they not return. Is [then, do ye ask] this man Coniah a despised, broken, idol? Is he a vessel wherein is no pleasure? Wherefore are they cast out, he, and his seed, and are cast into a land which they know not? O! earth, earth, earth, hear the word of the Lord. Thus saith the Lord: Write ye this man childless, a man that shall not prosper in his days, for no man of his seed shall prosper, sitting upon the throne of David, and ruling any more in Judah." This stern condemnation by Jehovah cannot rest upon any other foundation than the fact that Jehoiachin had done "that which was evil in the sight of the Lord, like to all that his father had done." It would have been a very unjust condemnation, if Jehoiachin had been "a man deserving of the highest respect," and if, by virtue of his good traits, he had been "superior to his brothers and his uncle," or had belonged to the better portion of the nation. The comparison to a signet ring, which has been so often interpreted to Jehoiachin's advantage, does not mean, if he were as dear to me as such a ring, nevertheless I would cast him away. Only those are dear to Jehovah who walk in His ways, and such he does not cast away. The meaning rather is, as is shown by the tearing off from the hand, this: however firmly he supposes that, as a king [of the House of David], he is held by me, even like the signet on my hand, nevertheless I will cast him away on account of his own sins and the sins of the people. When the false prophet Hananiah (Jerem. xxviii. 5 *sq.*) foretells that Jehovah will bring back all the vessels of the house of Jehovah, and king Jehoiachin, and all who are captive with him, and will break the yoke of the king of Babylon, this does not express any especial "longing" for the return of this king, but only a general desire for deliverance from the Babylonian yoke, and the restoration of the kingdom with its independent dynasty. On the other hand it is generally understood, and with far more apparent reason, that the "young lion," Ezek. xix. 5 *sq.*, represents Jehoiachin. but this also is impossible, because all that is there implied in regard to him cannot possibly have taken place within three months (Schmieder on that passage). In the abbreviated name Coniah (see the *Exeg.* notes on chap. xxiv. 8), which is there used, many old expositors, such as Grotius and Lightfoot, and also Hengstenberg and Schmieder, have seen an intention to figure forth to the king his approaching doom: "The future is put first in order by cutting off the י to cut off hope: a

Jechoniah with J, a God-will-confirm without the 'will'" (Hengstenberg). Not to speak of any other objection to this, it is enough that the abbreviated form Coniah is used instead of Jeconiah not only in prophetical but also in historical passages (Jerem. xxxvii. 1), where there is no possible intention to signify the "cutting off of hope."

[Bähr seems to allow his judgment of Jehoiachin to be too much controlled by the standing formula that "he did that which was evil," &c. This formula covered many grades of evil, and no violence is done to the general justice of this verdict upon him, if we recognize the fact that he was not one of the worst among the bad. Ewald is justified in saying: "The king meant no harm, but he was negligent in his duties. He did not look forward to the future with good judgment. He was a tool of the nobles, and he was far too weak for the bitter crisis in which he was called to reign." Stanley also gives a fair estimate of the king and of the popular feeling in regard to him: "With straining eyes the Jewish people and prophets still hung on the hope that their lost prince would be speedily restored to them. The gate through which he left the city was walled up like that by which the last Moorish king left Grenada, and was long known as the gate of Jeconiah. From his captivity as from a decisive era the subsequent years of the history were reckoned (Ezek. i, 2; viii. 1; xxiv. 1; xxvi. 1; xxix. 1; xxxi. 1 [2 Kings xxv. 27]. The tidings were treasured up with a mournful pleasure, that, in the distant Babylon, where, with his royal mother (Jerem. xxii. 26; 2 Kings xxiv. 15), he was to end his days, after many years of imprisonment, the curse of childlessness, pronounced upon him by the prophet (Jerem. xxii. 30), was removed; and that, as he grew to man's estate, a race of no less than eight sons were born to him, by whom the royal race of Judah was carried on (1 Chron. iii. 17, 18; *cf.* Susan. i.-iv.); and yet more, that he had been kindly treated by the successor of his captor (2 Kings xxv. 27-30; Jerem. lii. 31-34); that he took precedence of all of the subject kings at the table of the Babylonian monarch; that his prison garments and his prison fare were changed to something like his former state. . . . More than one sacred legend—enshrined in the sacred books of many an ancient Christian Church—tells how he, with the other captives, sat on the banks of the Euphrates (Baruch i. 3, 4), and shed bitter tears as they heard the messages of their brethren in Palestine; or how he dwelt in a sumptuous house and fair gardens, with his beautiful wife, Susannah, 'more honorable than all others' (Susannah i.-iv.)." —W. G. S.]

5. The account of *the eleven years' reign of Zedekiah* only states how that reign came to an end, for besides the standing formula that he did evil in the sight of the Lord, it contains only the remark that he revolted from the king of Babylon. We obtain a more complete picture of this reign from the descriptions and historical accounts which are preserved in the book of Jeremiah, and also to some extent in the book of Ezekiel. As concerns his attitude towards Jehovah and the law of Moses, he does not seem to have been himself devoted to idolatry, but he did not oppose it any more than his brother Jehoiakim had done. On the contrary, heathenism and immorality rather increased and spread during his reign. The stone was rolling; it could not be stayed any more. The class whose especial duty it was to oppose this tendency, namely, the priests and prophets, sank during this time lower and lower (see Jerem. xxiii.). Then, too, the revolt of Zedekiah from Nebuchadnezzar was of a very different kind from that of Hezekiah from Sennacherib (see notes on chap. xviii. 7), nay, it was even worse than that of his brother Jehoiakim from Pharaoh-Necho, for he not only owed to Nebuchadnezzar his crown and his throne (as Jehoiakim had owed his to Pharaoh-Necho), but he had also sworn an oath of allegiance to him, as is expressly stated in the brief account, 2 Chron. xxxvi. 13. This oath he broke in a frivolous way without any sufficient reason. The prophet Ezekiel declares that this oath-breaking was a great sin, not only against him to whom it was sworn, but also against him by whom it was sworn, Jehovah, and he even gives this as the reason for the ruin of the king and of the nation (chap. xvii. 18-20): "Seeing he despised the oath by breaking the covenant, when lo! he had given his hand, and hath done all these things, he shall not escape. Therefore thus saith the Lord God, As I live, surely mine oath that he hath despised, and my covenant that he hath broken, even it will I recompense upon his own head. And I will spread my net upon him, and he shall be taken in my snare, and I will bring him to Babylon, and will plead with him there for his trespasses that he hath trespassed against me." He does not appear in a much better light according to some facts which Jeremiah mentions. During the siege of Jerusalem he entered into a solemn covenant with all the people "that every man should let his manservant, and every man his maidservant, being a Hebrew or a Hebrewess, go free, that none should serve himself of them, to wit, of a Jew his brother." The "princes" and the "people" agreed to this and manumitted the serfs or slaves. But when it was heard that the Egyptian army was coming to help them, and they thought that they would not need the freed people any more, they broke the covenant and reduced them once more to slavery. This led the prophet to declare: "Therefore, thus saith the Lord: 'Ye have not hearkened unto me in proclaiming liberty every one to his brother, and every man to his neighbor: behold I proclaim a liberty for you, saith the Lord, to the sword, to the pestilence, and to the famine, and I will make you to be removed into all the kingdoms of the earth . . . And Zedekiah king of Judah and his princes will I give into the hand of their enemies, and into the hand of them that seek their life, and into the hand of the king of Babylon's army, which are gone up from you. Behold, I will command,' saith the Lord, 'and cause them to return to this city; and they shall fight against it and take it and burn it with fire, and I will make the cities of Judah a desolation without an inhabitant'" (Jerem. xxxiv. 8-22). What is narrated in Jerem. xxxvii. and xxxviii. is still more significant. At that time of great anxiety and distress the king sent messengers with this request: Pray for us to Jehovah! then, however, he allowed the officers to seize Jeremiah, maltreat him, and cast him into prison, because they were angry at his threats. Not until some time afterwards did he send for Jeremiah, though secretly, and ask of him an oracle of the Lord. Even yet he did not set him free, but only granted him a somewhat less severe imprisonment. Then, when the prophet repeatedly fore-

told the victory of the Chaldeans, the officers and chiefs demanded his death, and the king replied: "Behold he is in your hand; for the king is not he that can do anything against you." Then they lowered him into a dungeon in which there was no water, indeed, but slime, into which he sank, and where he would have perished wretchedly, if he had not been rescued through the efforts of an Ethiopian, Ebedmelech. Even yet, however, he was held as a prisoner. Still again the king sought a secret interview with him, but did not obey his counsel to give himself up, because he feared that he should be despised and maltreated by those Jews who had deserted to the Chaldeans. He commanded the prophet to keep the interview a secret, and especially not to let the "princes" know of it. When finally the Chaldeans penetrated into the lower city, he took flight by night with his immediate attendants from the opposite side of the city, but was soon caught by the Chaldeans, and brought before Nebuchadnezzar, who caused him to be blinded, and his sons to be put to death. From this entire story we see what was the chief feature in Zedekiah's character: "Weakness, and weakness of the saddest kind" (Niemeyer). Instead of ruling as king, he allows himself to be controlled by those who stand nearest to him; he cannot do anything against them. [Yet it would not be fair to overlook the fact that a powerful party of nobles, in a besieged city, where excitement and confusion and anxiety reigned, might make a strong king powerless to resist a policy on which they were determined. The party of the "princes" seems to have been possessed by that fanatical patriotism which not unfrequently takes possession of men under such circumstances, and drives them to heroic folly or foolish heroism. This passion appeared among the Jews in every crisis of their history. In this case it pushed the nation on to its fate, and though Zedekiah was a weak king, he might have been a strong one and not have been able to stem this tide.—W. G. S.] He has good inclinations, but he never attains to what is good. He demands an oracle of God but in secret, and, when he receives it, he does not obey it. His weakness of character makes him vacillating, false to his word and oath, unjust and pitiless, cowardly and despondent, and finally leads him into misery. We have here another example which shows that weakness and want of character are the very gravest faults, nay, even a vice, in a ruler. Josephus (*Antiq.* X. vii. 2) justly says of Zedekiah: *τῶν δὲ δικαίων καὶ τοῦ δέοντος ὑπερόπτης. καὶ γὰρ οἱ κατὰ τὴν ἡλικίαν ἦσαν ἀσεβεῖς περὶ αὐτὸν, καὶ ὁ πᾶς ὄχλος ἐπ' ἐξουσίας ὕβριζεν ἃ ἤθελε.*

6. Zedekiah's end was *the end of the royal house of David* and of the Israelitish monarchy. This dynasty had remained on the throne for nearly 500 years, while, in the seceded kingdom of the ten tribes, within a period of 250 years, nine dynasties of nineteen kings reigned, of which each one dethroned and extirpated the preceding one. "What a wonder it is to see one dynasty endure through almost five entire centuries, and that too in the ancient times when dynasties usually had but brief duration, and to see this dynasty, in the midst of perils and changes, form a centre around which the nation always formed, so that when it perished at last, it perished only in the downfall of the nation itself. . . . Such a kingdom might fall into grievous error for a time, but in the long run it must be brought back by the example of its great hero and founder David, and by the wealth of experience which it had won in its undisturbed development, to the eternal fundamentals of all true religion, and all genuine life" (Ewald, *Gesch.* III. *s.* 419). This "wonder," however, of the uninterrupted existence of the dynasty of David does not rest upon human will or power, but upon the promise which was given to David (2 Sam. vii. 8 *sq.*): "And thy house and thy kingdom shall be established forever before thee; thy throne shall be established forever" (ver. 16). The premise on which this promise was based was the idea that the Old Testament theocratic monarchy was realized in David. This monarchy is, as it were, realized in him, and he is not only the physical ancestor of his family, but the model for all his successors, according to their fidelity to which their reigns are estimated and judged (1 Kings xi. 38; xv. 3, 11; 2 Kings xiv. 3; xvi. 2; xviii. 3; xxii. 2). God sustains the monarchy in their hands for David's sake, even when they do not deserve it, for their own (1 Kings xi. 12; xiii. 32; xv. 4; 2 Kings viii. 19). When he went the way of all the earth he left as a bequest to his son the following words: "Be strong and show thyself a man, and keep the charge of the Lord thy God, to walk in his ways, to keep his statutes and his commandments, and his judgments, and his testimonies, as it is written in the law of Moses, that thou mayest prosper in all that thou doest, and whithersoever thou turnest thyself: That the Lord may continue his word which he spake concerning me, saying, If thy children take heed to their way, to walk before me in truth, with all their heart and with all their soul, there shall not fail thee, said he, a man on the throne of Israel" (1 Kings ii. 2–4). When, however, after Josiah's death, four kings in succession abandoned the way of David, and apostasy became a fixed and permanent tradition, the monarchy ceased to be what it was its calling and purpose to be: it was necessarily doomed to perish. "When the traditions of evil are maintained, or at least tolerated, then the monarchy suffers a transformation. Kings become incapable of executing the duties of their office, and a divine judgment becomes inevitable. So it was with the sons of Josiah, whose fate is a warning beacon on the horizon of history" (Vilmar). But, in spite of the inevitable doom of the nation, the promise to David was fulfilled in its integrity. Although the external authority of the house of David ceased with Zedekiah, yet from the time of his fall the preparation went on, all the more surely, for the coming of that Son of David who was to be a king over the house of David forever, and whose kingdom should have no end (Luke i. 33). The place of the light of the house of David, which had been extinguished (1 Kings xi. 36; 2 Kings viii. 19), was taken, when the time was fulfilled, by the true light which illumines the whole world (John i. 9), and which will not be extinguished to all eternity. The last king who sat upon the throne of David, and who falsely called himself צִדְקִיָּהוּ [The righteousness of God], served to point forward, in the Providence of God, and according to the words of the prophet, to the coming king and shepherd of his people, whose name should be called: יְהוָֹה צִדְקֵנוּ, "The Lord our Righteousness" (Jerem. xxiii. 6).

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

See the above paragraphs and compare the additional information afforded by the passages above quoted from Jeremiah.

Chap. xxiii. 31–xxv. 7. The Four Last Kings of Judah. (*a*) The way in which they all walked. (They all abandoned the living God and His law, though they had the best model and example in their ancestor. They did not listen to the warnings and exhortations of the prophets, but followed their own lusts. Instead of being good shepherds of their people, they led them into deeper and deeper corruption.) (*b*) The end to which they all came. (They all learned what misery comes of abandoning the Lord, Jerem. ii. 19. Two of them reigned for only three months each; their glory was like the grass, which in the morning groweth up, but in the evening is cut down, dried up, and withered. One of them was forced to go to Egypt, where he died, and another to go to Babylon, where he remained a captive for thirty-seven years. Two of them died miserably: one was dragged to death and his corpse was thrown out like that of a dead animal; the other was forced to see his sons slain before his eyes, then he was blinded and ended his days in a prison. The godless, even though they be princes, perish utterly, Ps. lxxiii. 19. The judgments of God are true and righteous, Rev. xvi. 7; Ps. cxlv. 17.)—KYBURZ: We are surprised that Jehoiakim did not take warning by Jehoahaz, and that Jehoiachin and Zedekiah did not take warning by Jehoiakim, but that all made themselves abominable to God by the same sin; but how many great families and races have we seen since then come to a fearful end, without taking warning by their fate. On the contrary, we have made ourselves guilty in his sight with the same or greater sins.—A dynasty in which apostasy has become hereditary and traditional has no blessing or happiness; it must sooner or later perish. The words of Ps. lxxxix. 14: "Justice and judgment are the habitation of thy throne," apply also to an earthly throne. A throne or a government which lacks this "habitation" [more correctly, *stronghold*] has no sure foundation. It rocks and reels and finally falls. This is shown by the history of these four kings, all of whom departed from righteousness and the law of God, and were guided in their rule only by political considerations. They became the sport of ambitious conquerors.—There can be no greater disgrace or humiliation for a country than that foreigners should set up or depose rulers for it according to their whim.

Chap. xxiii. 31 *sq.* The son's want of loyalty to the law of God tore down in three months what the father's zeal had built up by thirty-one years of anxious labor. How often a son squanders in a short time what a father has collected by years of careful toil.—What a responsibility falls upon the ruler who opens the door again for the return of the evils which a former government has earnestly labored to shut out.—Ver. 34. Two brothers stand in hostile relations to each other. One deposes the other. They are both sons of the same pious father, but they resemble him in nothing.—Jehoiakim and Zedekiah each receive a new name when they ascend the throne. What is the use, however, of changing the name when the character is not changed, or of taking on a name to which the life does not correspond?—A throne which is bought with money won by exactions is an abomination in the sight of God. Jehoiakim does not contribute anything from his own treasures, but exacts all from his subjects. He builds great houses and lives in abundance and luxury, but does not give to the laborers the wages which they have so well earned. This is the way of tyrants, but they receive their reward from him who recompenses each according to his works (Jerem. xxii. 15–19). Avarice is the root of evil, even among the great and rich; it brings them into temptation, 1 Tim. vi. 9.—Chap. xxiv. 1. To-day the mighty king of Egypt makes Jehoiakim his vassal, to-morrow the still more mighty king of Babylon; such is the fate of princes who put their trust in an arm of flesh, and turn away from the Lord instead of calling after him: "He is my refuge and my fortress, my God, in him will I trust" (Ps. xci. 2).—Ver. 2. WÜRT. SUMM.: It is not a mere chance when an armed enemy invades a country; they are sent by God, without whom not one could set a foot therein. It is a punishment for sin. Therefore let no man take courage in sin because there is profound peace. Peace is never so firm that God cannot put an end to it and send war.—He revolted. He who cannot bend under the mighty hand of God will not submit to the human powers in subjection to which he has been placed by God. Resistance, however, is vain, for God resisteth the proud.—KYBURZ: Hear, ye kings and judges of the earth! God demands that ye shall humble yourselves before His messengers. David did this before Nathan. Do not think that your majesty is thereby diminished; God can exalt again those who humble themselves before him. But, if ye do not do this, God will do to you as he did to Jehoiakim and Zedekiah.—The word of the Lord, which He spake to Jehoiakim by His prophet, the king threw into the fire and thought that he had thus reduced it to naught (Jerem. xxxvi. 23), but he was brought to the bitter experience that the word of the Lord cannot be burned up, but is, and remains to all eternity, true and sure.—Vers. 3, 4. The sin of Manasseh was not visited on his descendants in such a way that they could say: "The fathers have eaten sour grapes and the children's teeth are set on edge" (Jerem. xxxi. 29), for "The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father" (Ezek. xviii. 20), but the punishment fell upon Judah because it had made itself a participant in the crime of Manasseh, and, like him, had shed innocent blood (Jerem. xxvi. 20–23; see also Ezek. xxxiii. 25 *sq.*).—Ver. 7. Easy won, easy lost. This has always been the fortune of conquerors. What one has won by robbery and force another mightier takes from him. The Lord in heaven makes the great small, and the rich poor (1 Sam. ii. 7; Ps. lxxv. 7).

Vers. 8–16. OSIANDER: As long as the people of God does not truly repent it has little cause to rejoice that one or another tyrant is removed, for a worse one may follow.—"Wheresoever the carcass is, there will the eagles be gathered together" (Matt. xxiv. 28). A nation which is in decay attracts the conquerors, who do not quit it until it is torn to pieces.—STARKE: There is always misery and danger where there is war, therefore let us pray to be preserved from war and bloodshed.—Ver. 12. Instead of calling upon God, Jehoiachin surrenders himself at once and asks for mercy. He who does not trust in God soon falls into despondency. *Delirant reges, plectuntur Achivi.*—

Vers. 14–16. Notice God's mercy and longsuffering even in his judgments. He still allows the kingdom to stand, and turns the heart of the enemy so that he does not yet make an utter end of it (Ezek. xviii. 23, 32; see notes on chap. xxv. 21).

Chap. xxiv. 17 to xxv. 7. Zedekiah, the last king on David's throne. See *Historical* § 5. Roos: Zedekiah is an example of a man who, in spite of some good traits, finally perishes because he never can attain to victory over the world and over sin. He listened unmoved to Jerem. xxvii. 12 *sq.* and xxxiv. 2 *sq.* He made an agreement with the people to keep a year of manumission (Jerem. xxxiv. 8). He desired that Jeremiah should pray to the Lord for him and for his people (chap. xxxvii. 3). He rescued Jeremiah from a fearful dungeon into which he had been cast without the king's authority, asked of him secretly a divine oracle, and caused him to be brought into an endurable prison (chap. xxxvii. 17 *sq.*). He saved him once more from a terrible prison and asked once more privately for the divine oracle (chap. xxxviii). Yet in the midst of all this he remained a slave of sin. He asked and listened, but did not obey. His purposes had no endurance or energy. He was a king whom his nobles had succeeded in overpowering. He feared them more than God. He had no courage to trust God's word and he feared where there was no reason (chap. xxxviii. 19 *sq.*). On the other hand he allowed himself to be persuaded by his counsellors and nobles (chap. xxxviii. 22). He hoped for miracles such as had been performed in early times, particularly in the time of Hezekiah (chap. xxi. 2), although he had no promises of God to serve as a ground for such hope. He trusted in the strength of the fortification of Jerusalem (chap. xxi. 13), and did not believe what Jeremiah foretold in regard to the destruction of this city.—Chap. xxiv. 20. Zedekiah broke his oath for the sake of earthly gain and honor. Be not deceived, God will not be mocked. He who calls upon God and then fails of his word mocks at Him who can ruin soul and body in hell. All the misery and woe which befell Zedekiah came from his perjury (Ezek. xvii. 18 *sq.*). Pfaff: We must keep faith even with unbelievers and enemies (Josh. ix. 19).—A prince who breaks his own oath cannot complain when his subjects break their oath of allegiance to him.—Chap. xxv. 1 *sq.* Starke: When the rod does not avail, God sends the sword (Ezek. xxi. 13 and 14).—Ver. 3. Cramer: God often punishes loathing of His word by physical hunger (Lament. iv. 10).—Vers. 4–6. Würt. Summ.: When God means to punish a sinner no wall or weapon avails to protect him (Jerem. xlvi. 6).—Starke: If we will not take that road to escape which God has given us we cannot escape at all (Hos. xiii. 19; Jerem. ii. 17).—Ver. 7. Starke: Many parents, by their godless behavior, bring their children into temporal and eternal ruin. Such children will some day have just cause to cry out against their parents (Sir. xli. 10).—A punishment which is deserved must be inflicted upon the just condemnation of the proper authority, but even the mightiest earthly power has no right to torture a convict. The civil authority is indeed an avenger to punish the guilty, and it does not carry the sword in vain, but it ceases to be God's servant when it becomes bloodthirsty and delights in pain.

B.—*Fall of the Kingdom of Judah; Jehoiachin set at Liberty.*

Chap. XXV. 8–30. (Jerem. LII. 12–34.)

8 And in the fifth month, on the seventh *day* of the month, which *is* the nine-
teenth year of king Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, came Nebuzar-adan,
9 captain of the guard, a servant of the king of Babylon, unto Jerusalem: And
he burnt the house of the Lord, and the king's house, and all the houses of
Jerusalem, and every great *man's* [*omit man's*[1]] house burnt he with fire.
10 And all the army of the Chaldees, that *were with*[2] the captain of the guard,
11 brake down the walls of Jerusalem round about. Now the rest of the people
that were left in the city, and the fugitives that fell away to the king of Baby-
lon, with the remnant of the multitude, did Nebuzar-adan the captain of the
12 guard carry away. But the captain of the guard left of the poor of the land *to*
13 *be* [*read* to be] vinedressers and husbandmen.[3] And the pillars of brass that
were in the house of the Lord, and the bases, and the brazen sea that *was* in the
house of the Lord, did the Chaldees break in pieces, and carried the brass of
14 them to Babylon. And the pots, and the shovels, and the snuffers, and the
spoons, and all the vessels of brass wherewith they ministered [the service was
15 performed], took they away. And the firepans, and the bowls [sprinklers],
and such things as *were* of gold, *in* gold, and of silver, *in* silver, the captain of
16 the guard took away. The two pillars, one sea, and the bases which Solomon
had made for the house of the Lord; the brass of all these vessels was without
17 weight. The height of the one pillar *was* eighteen cubits, and the chapiter
[capital] upon it *was* brass; and the height of the chapiter three cubits; and
the wreathen work, and pomegranates upon the chapiter round about, all of
brass: and like unto these had the second pillar with wreathen work.

18 And the captain of the guard took Seraiah the chief priest, and Zephaniah
19 the second priest, and the three keepers of the door: And out of the city he
took an officer that was set over the men of war, and five men of them that
were in the king's presence, which were found in the city, and the principal
[*omit* principal] scribe of the [captain of the] host, which mustered the people
of the land, and threescore men of the people of the land *that were* found in the
20 city: And Nebuzar-adan captain of the guard took these, and brought them to
21 the king of Babylon to Riblah: And the king of Babylon smote them, and slew
them at Riblah in the land of Hamath. So Judah was carried away out of their
22 land. And *as for* the people that remained in the land of Judah, whom Nebuchad-
nezzar king of Babylon had left, even over them he made Gedaliah the son of
23 Ahikam, the son of Shaphan, ruler. And when all the captains of the armies,
they and their [the] men, heard that the king of Babylon had made Gedaliah
governor, there came to Gedaliah to Mizpah, even Ishmael the son of Netha-
niah, and Johanan the son of Careah, and Seraiah the son of Tanhumeth the
Netophathite, and Jaazaniah the son of a Maachathite, they and their men.
24 And Gedaliah sware to them, and to their men, and said unto them, Fear not
to be [*omit* to be] the servants of the Chaldees: dwell in the land, and serve the
25 king of Babylon; and it shall be well with you. But it came to pass in the
seventh month, that Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, the son of Elishama, of the
seed royal, came, and ten men with him, and smote Gedaliah, that he died [and
put him to death], and the Jews and the Chaldees that were with him at Miz-
26 pah. And all the people, both small and great, and the captains of the armies,
arose, and came to Egypt: for they were afraid of the Chaldees.
27 And it came to pass in the seven and thirtieth year of the captivity of Je-
hoiachin king of Judah, in the twelfth month, on the seven and twentieth *day*
of the month, *that* Evil-merodach king of Babylon in the year that he began to
28 reign did lift up the head of Jehoiachin king of Judah out of prison; And he
spake kindly to him, and set his throne above the throne of the kings that *were*
29 with him in Babylon; [.] And [he] changed his prison garments: and he did
eat bread continually before him [in his presence, *i. e.*, at his table] all the days
30 of his life. And his allowance *was* a continual allowance given him of the king,
a daily rate for every day, all the days of his life.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

[1] Ver. 9. [בית גדול. The translators took the stat. const. to mean house of a great (sc. man). It is a case, however, of an adjective bound somewhat more closely to its substantive by the stat. const.=*every great house*, *mansion*. *Cf.* חיל כבד, chap. xviii. 17. Ew. § 287, 1.

[2] Ver. 10. ["After אשר we must supply את from Jerem lii. 14." Ew. *Lehrb. s.* 787, ut 1.—W. G. S.]

[3] Ver. 12. For the chetib ולגבים the keri presents וליגבים as in Jerem. lii. 16. The signification is the same.—Bähr.

CHRONOLOGY OF THE PERIOD FROM THE FALL OF THE KINGDOM OF ISRAEL TO THE FALL OF THE KINGDOM OF JUDAH.

Although the chronology of this period presents far fewer difficulties than that of the two former ones (pp. 86 and 180), yet a certain transmutation of its data into dates of the Christian era is hardly possible, for this reason, that the number of years stated as the duration of each reign does not always represent so many complete twelvemonths, and, of course, the years intended are not years of the Christian era, so that one year of a reign may fall in two different years "before Christ," and two years of these reigns may fall in one year B. C. We cannot, therefore, avoid some uncertainties in the transfer from one to the other of these two modes of reckoning, and a difference of a single year cannot demand an explanation, or vitiate the calculation.

(*a*) Let us start from the fixed date which we have reached above (p. 181), 721 B. C., the year of the fall of Samaria. As this was the sixth year of Hezekiah, who reigned twenty-nine years (2 Kings xviii. 10), there remain twenty-three years of his reign to be reckoned into this period. This gives us the following results:—

	Reigned for			
Hezekiah	23 years	longer,	*i. e.*, until	698.
Manasseh	55 "	(chap. xxi. 1)	" "	643.
Amon	2 "	(chap. xxi. 19)	" "	641.
Josiah	31 "	(chap. xxii. 1)	" "	610.
Jehoahaz	3 mos.	(chap. xxiii. 31)		
Jehoiakim	11 yrs.	(chap. xxiii. 36)	" "	599.
Jehoiachin	3 mos.	(chap. xxiv. 8)		
Zedekiah	11 yrs.	(chap. xxiv. 18)	" "	588.

The Book of Chronicles agrees exactly in all these dates. There is no variant in regard to a single one of them; the old versions have them exactly as they are given in the Hebrew text, and Josephus also gives the same. We are, therefore, as sure of these numbers as of any. Some modern scholars have taken scruples at the long reign of fifty-five years which is ascribed to Manasseh, and have shortened it arbitrarily either to thirty-five years (Movers, Von Gumpach), or to forty-five years (Bunsen, Wolff). This change, however, is inadmissible, for it necessitates other changes and throws the whole chronology into confusion. [This change is made in the interest of what is known as the "shorter period" for the space of history which is here included. The grounds for it are found in the Assyrian, Babylonian, and Egyptian chronologies. The problem is very complex, and the solution of it is hampered at many points by the uncertainty of many of the data. The majority of scholars have not, therefore, thought it wise to make any changes in the Hebrew chronology, to bring it into accord with that of contemporary nations, until the latter shall be more satisfactorily determined. Those who desire to attempt, even now, to bring about an accord, find it necessary to *shorten* the time which is required by the sum of the reigns for this period, and they see in the long reign ascribed to Manasseh the point where the error is most likely to lie.—W. G. S.] The time for which the kingdom of Judah outlasted the kingdom of Israel amounts to 133 years. The six months for which Jehoahaz and Jehoiachin reigned are here left out of the account, and with justice, for it can hardly be that the years ascribed to the other reigns were all full twelvemonths. It is immaterial whether each three months' reign is reckoned into the preceding or the following reign. It is possible that Zedekiah did not ascend the throne until 598, so that he reigned until 587, but in no case can his dethronement be placed later than 587. Instead of the year 588, in which, according to our reckoning, the fall of Jerusalem took place, many have lately adopted 586 as the date of that event. Bunsen, starting from the very uncertain Assyrio-Egyptian chronology, puts the fall of Samaria in 709 instead of in 721. He would be obliged, if he admitted 133 years for the subsequent duration of the kingdom of Judah, to put the fall of Jerusalem in 576, but, as he sees that this is inadmissible, he arbitrarily cuts off ten years from the reign of Manasseh and thus reaches the date 586. Ewald also adopts the date 586, but he reaches it by putting the fall of Samaria in 719 instead of in 721. This obliges him to set the date of accession of each of the following kings two years later than our dates, and thus he arrives at 586 instead of 588. We saw above (p. 181) that the date 719 is incorrect; with the incorrectness of this date, the date 586 falls to the ground. If, as we have seen, the date 721 is certainly established, then 588 is the only date which can be correct for the fall of Jerusalem, for, even if we suppose that all the years of all the reigns were full years, they only amount to 133 years.

(*b*) Besides the statements as to the duration of these reigns, we have the following chronological data in regard to them: (1) The thirteenth year of Josiah is given as the year in which Jeremiah first appeared as a prophet (Jerem. i. 1). This was the year 628, for Josiah began to reign in 641. Also the eighteenth year of Josiah is mentioned as the year of his reformation and celebration of the passover—that is, 623 (2 Kings xxii. 3; xxiii. 23). As Josiah was slain in his battle with Necho, the invasion of Asia by the latter took place in Josiah's thirty-first year, that is, in 610. The invasion of Judah by the Scytha, which is not mentioned at all in the historical books, must have taken place during the reign of Josiah, not before the public appearance of Jeremiah (628), and not after the great reformation (623). Duncker sets it in the fourteenth year of Josiah's reign, that is, 627. [See the *Supp. Note*, p. 285.]—(2) King Jehoiakim ascended the throne either at the very end of 610, or perhaps in 609, for Jehoahaz reigned for three months after Josiah's death. According to Jerem. xlvi. 2, the great battle at Carchemish, in consequence of which Nebuchadnezzar advanced into Palestine, took place in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, that is, in 605 or 604 (see notes on chap. xxiii. 36). In this same fourth year of Jehoiakim, Jeremiah caused to be written down his prophecies, which were solemnly read in public in the following year, on a great holiday (Jerem. xxxvi. 1, 9). Up to this time, therefore, Jehoiakim was not yet subject to Nebuchadnezzar; he cannot have become so until the end of 605 or the beginning of 604. He revolted after three years (2 Kings xxiv. 1), that is, in 602 or 601. Chaldean and other forces harassed him from that time until his death in 599 (2 Kings xxiv. 2 *sq.*).—(3) As Jehoiachin only reigned three months, it may well be that Zedekiah ascended the throne before the end of the year (599) in which Jehoiakim died. His fourth year, in which, according to Jerem. li. 59, he made a journey to Babylon, was, therefore, 595; certainly it was not 593, as Duncker and Ewald state, for, if he had not become king until the beginning of 598, this journey would fall, at the latest, in 594. In his ninth year, 590, the Chaldeans appeared before Jerusalem (chap. xxv. 1). In his tenth year (589), while the city was being besieged, he ordered Jeremiah to be imprisoned (Jerem. xxxii. 1). In his eleventh year (588), Jerusalem was taken, and Zedekiah was blinded and taken away captive to Babylon. In this same year occurred the destruction of the temple and of the city (2 Kings xxv. 4, 8).

(*c*) Several synchronisms are given between the reigns of the Jewish kings and that of Nebuchadnezzar. According to Jerem. xxv. 1, the first year of Nebuchadnezzar was the fourth of Jehoiakim (606), that is (see above), the year of the battle of Carchemish (Jerem. xlvi. 2). This first year of Nebuchadnezzar and fourth of Jehoiakim was also, according to Jerem. xxv. 1–3, the twenty-third year of Jeremiah's work as prophet, which began (Jerem. i. 2) in the thirteenth year of Josiah (628). According to 2 Kings xxiv. 12, Nebuchadnezzar took Jehoiachin prisoner in his own eighth year, that is, in 599, in which year, as we have seen above, the three months' reign of Jehoiachin fell. Nebuchadnezzar's eighteenth year corresponds, according to Jerem. xxxii. 1, to the tenth year of Zedekiah, that is, since Zedekiah became king in 599, 589, and his nineteenth year, in which he took Jerusalem (2 Kings xxv. 8; Jerem. lii. 2), corresponds to the eleventh year of Zedekiah (2 Kings xxv. 2). This is the year 588. In Jerem. lii. 28 *sq.*, the seventh year is given instead of the eighth, and the eighteenth instead of the nineteenth of Nebuchadnezzar, but we shall see be-

low, in the appendix to the *Exegetical* notes, that this difference, which only amounts at best to one year, is only apparent and not real. It cannot invalidate the calculation. The last chronological statement which occurs in the book is that, in the thirty-seventh year of Jehoiachin's captivity, Evil-Merodach, Nebuchadnezzar's successor, released Jehoiachin from his prison in Babylon (chap. xxv. 27; Jerem. lii. 31). As the exile took place in the year 599 (see above under *a*), the liberation must have occurred in 562. According to Josephus (*Antiq.* x. 11, 1) Nebuchadnezzar reigned for forty-three years. We have seen above that he became king in 606; his death, therefore, took place in 562. In this year Evil-Merodach followed him, and, on his accession, he showed grace to Jehoiachin.

Thus the chronological statements in reference to this period which are presented by the Bible stand in the fullest accord with each other, and we have the more reason to hold to them, inasmuch as they are consistent with those of the former period. It is not our duty to inquire whether they agree with the results of the Assyrian and Egyptian investigations. We need only remark that these results are based, partly upon later unbiblical authors, and partly on attempts to decipher old Asiatic inscriptions, which have as yet produced no certain results, so that, as Rösch says: "They are not yet by any means so firmly established that they could force us to surrender the data of the Old Testament." [See the *Appendix on the Chronology*.]

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

Ver. 8. **And in the fifth month, on the seventh day.** Instead of the seventh day, Jerem. lii. 12 gives the tenth day. As the tenth day was the day on which Nebuchadnezzar came to Jerusalem, according to that passage, it is impossible to assume, with the Rabbis, that the seventh day was the day that the burning commenced, and the tenth the day on which it ended. Also in ver. 17 Jeremiah has five cubits instead of three, and in ver. 19 seven men instead of five. The difference in these numbers is to be explained by a mistake in the numeral-letters. In ver. 17 the number five is unquestionably correct (*cf.* 1 Kings vii. 16; 2 Chron. iii. 15), and in this verse the number ten (י) no doubt is to be preferred to seven (ז). In fact, the text of Jeremiah is in many respects to be preferred. Josephus (*Bella Jud.* 6, 4, 8) states that Herod's temple was burned on the tenth of the fifth month, and adds that it was a marvellous coincidence that the first temple was burned on the same day by the Babylonians.—**The nineteenth year of king Nebuchadnezzar.** See the *Chronological* section above.—**Nebuzar-adan.** On the etymology and signification of this name see Gesenius, *Thesaurus* II., p. 839, and Fürst, *H.-W.-B.* II., *s.* 6. [The former interprets it by *Mercurii dux dominus*, *i. e.*, *dux cui Mercurius favet*], the latter considers it equivalent to the Hebrew expression which immediately follows: רַב־טַבָּחִים (שַׂר), *i. e.*, literally: *The captain of the executioners*, the one who commands those who are commissioned to execute the king's commands, especially his death-sentences, and so, in general, *the captain of the* [royal] *guard* (Gen. xxxvii. 36). ["It is probably a Hebrew corruption of Nebu-zir-iddin, which means Nebo-has-given-offspring" (Rawlinson). This is the only explanation which has any value, since it alone rests on an etymological study of Chaldee names.—W. G. S.] The supplementary description in Jerem. lii. 12: "Who stood before the king of Babylon," designates him as the first and highest officer who stood nearest to the king. He therefore remained in the camp at Riblah with the king, and only went to Jerusalem for the execution, and not, as Thenius thinks, in order to bring the siege to a conclusion. [It is laying too much stress on the primary signification of the word, which, moreover, is incorrect, to suppose that he did not go up to the city until it had been taken, and that then his business was to "execute" upon it the vengeance or punishment ordained by the king. He went up as the chief officer of the king "to bring the siege to a conclusion," to take possession of the city in the king's name, and to carry out the king's determinations in regard to it.—W. G. S.]

Ver. 9. **And he burnt the house of the Lord, &c.** We see what is meant by כָּל־בָּתֵּי, *all the houses*, from 2 Chron. xxxvi. 19, where we read: כָּל־אַרְמְנוֹתֶיהָ, *all the palaces.* He left the small houses standing for the poor and humble people who were left behind.—In Jer. lii. 14 we find כָּל before חוֹמֹת in ver. 10. It has been omitted here by some accident, or because it was regarded as a matter of course; it is by no means "an arbitrary exaggeration" (Thenius). On the other hand we must supply אֵת before רַב on the authority of the passage in Jeremiah. Many old MSS. contain it, and all the versions supply it. Nebuzar-adan directed the work of destruction; the entire army fulfilled his commands.—The exiles were composed, as the repetition of וְאֵת shows, of "remnants" (יֶתֶר) of two classes; first, of those whom famine, pestilence, and sword had yet spared, and those who had deserted to the Chaldeans; and, secondly, of הֶהָמוֹן, or, as we read in Jerem. lii. 15 הָאָמוֹן, which Hitzig declares to be the original reading, and to mean *master-workman* in a collective sense, comprising both the classes which are mentioned in Jerem. xxiv. 1. The parallel passage, however, in Jerem. xxxix. 9 does not admit of this interpretation, for there we read: יֶתֶר הָעָם הַנִּשְׁאָרִים. הָעָם is not a synonym of הָאָמוֹן (master-workman), but of הֶהָמוֹן (multitude). This latter word is used for the mass of the people, and especially for the multitude of persons capable of bearing arms (Isai. xiii. 4; xxxiii. 3; Judges iv. 7; Dan. xi. 11). We must understand this class of exiles to be the remainder of the able-bodied male population who were capable of bearing arms (Thenius). In האמון, א is an error for ה. The one class were inhabitants of the city; the other were persons who had belonged to the army without being inhabitants of the city.—דַּלַּת הָאָרֶץ, ver. 12, is used as in chap. xxiv. 14. The words do not mean that he left vinedressers and husbandmen, but, as

is stated in Jerem. xxxix. 10, that he "left of the poor of the people, which had nothing, in the land of Judah, and gave them vineyards and fields at the same time." The Chaldee version has it, "that they might cultivate vineyards and fields." The land was not to remain desert and uncultivated.

Ver. 13. **And the pillars of brass, &c.** In regard to these pillars, and the bases, and the sea, see notes on 1 Kings vii. 15–39. The מִזְרָקֹת (sprinklers), mentioned in Jerem. lii. 18, are not named among the utensils enumerated in ver. 14 (for description of which see notes on 1 Kings vii. 40, 50); they are mentioned in ver. 15. In ver. 15 we have the utensils of the forecourt, and in ver. 15 those of the sanctuary. It is expressly stated in Jerem. xxvii. 19, 21 that there remained after the first spoliation, chap. xxiv. 13, a portion of these utensils which may have been hidden away at that time. The parallel passage, Jerem. lii. 19, adds four more to the utensils which are mentioned in ver. 15. In general the account here is brief, and all articles not mentioned are summarily disposed of by the words: "such things as were of gold, in gold, and such things as were of silver, in silver," *i. e.*, "so much as there was to be found of either kind" (Thenius).—לָקַח is not to be supplied in ver. 16 from ver. 15, and הָעַמּוּדִים, &c., are not the objects of this verb. The verse means to show that there was such a mass of the brass which was carried away that it could not be weighed. הָעַמּוּדִים is a nominative absolute. As for the pillars, &c., the mass of the brass was so great, &c. אֶחָד with הַיָּם stands in contrast to שְׁנַיִם with הָעַמּוּדִים. There were *two* of the pillars but only *one* sea.—In ver. 17 the author recurs to the pillars in order to say that they were very valuable, not only on account of the mass of the brass which was on them (ver. 16), but also on account of the artistic labor which had been spent upon them. שָׁלֹשׁ, as has been said above, is an error, the consequence of mistaking the numeral character, for the height of the capital of the column, according to the consistent statements in 1 Kings vii. 16; 2 Chron. iii. 15; and Jerem. lii. 22 was *five* cubits. עַל־הַשְּׂבָכָה, at the end of the verse, is difficult, for the second column was in all respects, and not simply in respect to the "wreathen work," like to the first. Moreover, the wreathen work was not the most remarkable feature in these columns, so as to deserve to be especially mentioned. Thenius sees in the clause "the residuum of a sentence which is given in full in Jeremiah" [lii. 23], and which closes with the words עַל־הַשְּׂבָכָה סָבִיב. We must admit either that the original account [which was used by the author of "Kings"] was here *too much* abbreviated by him, or else that the text at this point is defective. The account in Jeremiah is, at this point, fuller and more satisfactory. As this author had already given a full description of these things in 1 Kings vii. 15–22, he did not think it necessary to go into detail here.

Ver. 18. **And the captain of the guard took Seraiah.** The persons who are mentioned here and in ver. 19 are not the same ones who are called, in Jerem. xxxix. 6, חֹרִים, and who were put to death with the sons of Zedekiah, for these were first captured by Nebuzar-adan after the taking of the city. *Seraiah* is not the person of that name who is mentioned in Jerem. li. 59, but the grandfather or great-grandfather of Ezra (see Ezra vii. 1; 1 Chron. v. 40). *Zephaniah* was no doubt the son of the priest Maaseiah, who, although a priest of the second rank (see notes on chap. xxiii. 4), appears to have been a person of importance (Jerem. xxi. 2; xxix. 25, 29; xxxvii. 3). **The three keepers of the door** were the chiefs of the body of levites who guarded the temple; one was stationed at each of the three main entrances to the temple (Jerem. xxxviii. 14); according to Josephus: τοὺς φυλάσσοντας τὸ ἱερὸν ἡγεμόνας. The chief royal officers were also taken, together with these chief men in the personnel of the temple (ver. 19). עִיר stands in contrast with the temple; whether it has the narrower meaning of the "City of David" (Thenius), is uncertain. סָרִיס cannot mean *a eunuch* here, any more than in chap. xx. 18, and xxiv. 12. The command of soldiers would never be intrusted to such a person. Jerem. lii. 25 has הָיָה instead of הוּא, evidently more correctly, for he was so no longer. We cannot tell whether five men of those who belonged to the king's immediate circle were carried away, as is here stated, or seven, as is stated in Jerem. lii. 25. The diverse statements are the result of some error in reading or copying the numerals. Hitzig: "*Seven* persons are mentioned as having been chosen to be a sacrifice on account of the mystical significance of that number," but the number *five*, half of ten, which was the number for a complete whole incorporated of parts, may also have had mystical significance. The reason why just this number, whether five or seven, were taken appears to be given in the relative clause which follows, and that is that there were just so many left in the city. שַׂר הַצָּבָא is a genitive after הַסֹּפֵר [the scribe of the captain of the host], and הַמַּצְבִּא is not to be joined with שַׂר but with הַסֹּפֵר [the scribe who was put on the staff of the commander-in-chief, and whose duty it was to enroll the persons liable to military service, &c.] The article with סֹפֵר (it is wanting in Jerem. lii. 25) shows that that is not a proper name in apposition with "Captain of the host," as the Vulg. and Luther understand it: "Sopher, the commander of the army." It means the general's clerk, the officer who had charge of the writing which might be required. "Perhaps the commander himself had fled with the king" (Thenius). [Of course any one who filled this office at a time when writing was a special accomplishment would be a person of far more importance than a military clerk now is. The Babylonian king thought him an officer whom it was worth while to put to death among the high officials of the kingdom.—] The **threescore men of the people of the land,** who were put to death with the chief officers, were either "the chiefs of the rebellion with their immediate followers" (Von Gerlach), or "Such as

had in some way distinguished themselves above others in the defence of the city" (Keil). It is very doubtful whether they were, as Thenius thinks, the handful that were left of the garrison of the city of David, and the opinion of Hitzig and Bertheau that they were the country people who had fled into the citadel is very improbable.—Ver. 21. **So Judah was carried out of their land.** "Nebuzar-adan took up his march toward Riblah, not only with these who were destined to death, but also with all the people of Judah" (Hitzig). This sentence evidently closes the history, like Jerem. lii. 27, and chap. xvii. 23. At the same time it forms the introduction to what follows. Thus was Judah (that is, the mass and strength of the nation) led away into captivity. As for those who were left behind (the comparatively small, and poor, and weak portion), Nebuchadnezzar set Gedaliah over them.

Ver. 22. **And as for the people that remained in the land of Judah.** What is here narrated in vers. 22 to 26 is omitted in Jerem. lii. because it is narrated, in that book, in chaps. xl. and xli., and in much fuller detail. The verses before us form only an extract from that account, which is here inserted in its proper historical connection.—*Gedaliah*, whom Nebuchadnezzar appointed governor, was the son of *Ahikam*, who is mentioned in chap. xxii. 12 as a man of importance under Josiah, and who, according to Jerem. xxvi. 24, saved the life of the prophet when, during Jehoiakim's reign, he was in danger of falling a victim of popular rage. Gedaliah, like his father, was a friend of the prophet. He shared the prophet's judgment in regard to the wise policy to be pursued, and joined with him in advising Zedekiah to surrender to the Babylonians (Jerem. xxxviii. 17). Hence Nebuchadnezzar, after he had taken the city, intrusted the prophet, who until then had lain in captivity, to the care and protection of Gedaliah (Jerem. xxxix. 14; xl. 6).—**The captains of the armies, they and the men, &c.** Instead of הָאֲנָשִׁים we find in Jerem. xl. 7: אַנְשֵׁיהֶם, *their* men. These are they "who were scattered when the king was captured, so that Jerem. xl. 7 describes them as those 'which were in the fields'" (Thenius). *Mizpah* was a city in the territory of Benjamin (Josh. xiii. 26), some hours' journey north-west of Jerusalem. Here, in this city, which was situated in a high position and strongly fortified (1 Kings xv. 22), the governor established himself, as he could not live in the destroyed city of Jerusalem. *Ishmael*, according to ver. 25, was the grandson of *Elishama*, the סֹפֵר of king Jehoiakim (Jerem. xxxvi. 12, 20). For further particulars in regard to *Johanan* see Jerem. xl. 13 *sq.*; xli. 11 *sq.* *Jonathan* is mentioned with him, Jerem. xl. 8, as another son of *Careah*. Possibly the similarity of the names caused the latter to be omitted in this place. *Seraiah* came from *Netopha*, which appears to have lain between Bethlehem and Anathoth (Ezra ii. 22; Nehem. vii. 26). *Jaazaniah* came from *Maacha*, which is mentioned in 2 Sam. x. 6, 8; 1 Chron. xix. 6, and Josh. xii. 5, together with Syrian districts, and, in Deut. iii. 14, is mentioned as lying on the boundary of the country east of the Jordan. He was, therefore, a naturalized alien.—**By the servants of the Chaldees** (ver. 24) we have to understand the officers whom Nebuchadnezzar had left to govern the country, and whom he had perhaps put under Gedaliah's command The latter, therefore, makes promises on their behalf, provided that the Jewish captains would acquiesce in the new order of things.—Ver. 25. **In the seventh month,** that is, only two months after the destruction of Jerusalem (ver. 8). **Of the seed royal;** this is expressly stated in order to show what incited him to this action. He believed that he, as a descendant of the royal house, had a claim to the position of governor. According to Jerem. xl. 14 he was also incited to this action by Baalis, king of the Ammonites, who no doubt would have been very glad to throw off the Chaldean yoke.—The author breaks off abruptly with ver. 26, and simply states the result of this act. The people, fearing the return and vengeance of the Chaldeans, fled into Egypt. For further details see Jerem. xl.–xlii.

Ver. 27. **In the seven and thirtieth year of the captivity.** See the *Chronological Remarks* above. In Jerem. lii. 31 the twenty-fifth day is given instead of the twenty-seventh, in the Hebrew text, and in the Sept. the twenty-fourth, evidently in consequence of a mistake in the numerals. We see from this accuracy in the date what significance was attached to the event. *Evilmerodach* was the son and successor of Nebuchadnezzar. He only reigned two years and was put to death by his brother-in-law, Neriglassar (Berosus, cited in Josephus *c. Apion.* i. 20). The signification of *Evil* is uncertain. *Merodach*, or *Berodach*, was the name of the Babylonian Mars. We find it in the composition of other proper names also (see notes on xx. 12). **In the year that he became king.** For מָלְכוֹ we find in Jerem. lii. 31: מַלְכֻתוֹ, *i. e.*, *of his reign*, equivalent to: When he came to be king. This is evidently more correct. Sept.: *ἐν τῷ ἐνιαυτῷ τῆς βασιλείας αὐτοῦ.* נָשָׂא אֶת-רֹאשׁ, as in Gen. xl. 13, 20, means, *To lift up the head* (for some one), *i. e.*, inasmuch as captives moved about in despondency, with bowed heads, to lift up their heads is to release them from captivity, despair, and misery (Job x. 15, *cf.* Judges viii. 28). Here again the text before us is abbreviated. It omits וַיֹּצֵא, which is found in Jerem. lii. 31, before מִבֵּית. This deliverance from captivity was an act of grace performed by him at his accession, but there seems to have been a special ground for it in the case of Jehoiachin, as he was preferred before the other captive kings. ["The rabbis say that Evilmerodach had formed a friendship with Jehoiachin in prison, into which Nebuchadnezzar had cast the former because he had been guilty of excesses in carrying on the government during an illness of the king, and had expressed pleasure at the same; evidently a fiction based on this passage and Dan. iv." (Thenius).]—**And set his throne above, &c.,** ver. 28. This certainly means that he gave him the preference and the higher rank. Whether he merely held him in higher estimation (Rosenmüller, Keil), or "allowed him actually to occupy a more elevated seat" (Hitzig, Thenius), is not a matter of importance. **The kings that were with him in Babylon,** are "those who, having been deprived, like Jehoiachin, of their kingdoms, were forced to

enhance the triumph and glory of the court at Babylon, *cf.* Judges i. 7" (Hitzig).—Ver. 29. **And changed his prison-garments.** Instead of the late Aramaic form שְׁנָא we find in Jerem. lii. 33 שִׁנָּה. The subject is not Evilmerodach (Hitzig), but Jehoiachin, who is the subject of the following verb וְאָכַל. In חַיָּיו the suffix can only refer to Jehoiachin and not to Evilmerodach. It would be a false inference, therefore, that Jehoiachin's period of grace only lasted through Evilmerodach's short reign. "Jehoiachin ate in person at the royal table, but he probably also received an allowance for the support of his little court, consisting of his servants and attendants" (Hitzig). Here again this text is abbreviated. In Jeremiah there follow after בְּיוֹמוֹ the words: "until his death." Here those words are omitted as unnecessary after: **all the days of his life.** The Sept. also have these words in this place. The fact that they omit them in Jerem. lii. 34 does not justify the assumption of Thenius that they were borrowed from ver. 29, and are not original in that place. Hitzig very properly declares that they are "evidently genuine," and adds: "In ver. 11 'all the days of his life' might well be omitted. Here, however, where he narrates something joyful, the author looks back once more, after fixing the term or limit, over the entire period of good fortune. *Cf.* 1 Kings v. 1; xv. 5." He wants to tell once more what good fortune Jehoiachin enjoyed until the end of his life, and how Evilmerodach at least had the intention of providing for him. This good fortune lasted until Jehoiachin's death, whether he died before or after Evilmerodach.

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APPENDIX.—After the words: **So Judah was carried away out of their land,** there follows, in Jerem. lii. 28–30, the following statement, which is omitted in the book of Kings: "This is the people whom Nebuchadrezzar carried away captive; in the seventh year three thousand Jews and three and twenty. In the eighteenth year of Nebuchadrezzar he carried away captive from Jerusalem eight hundred thirty and two persons. In the three and twentieth year of Nebuchadrezzar, Nebuzar-adan, the captain of the guard, carried away captive of the Jews seven hundred forty and five persons. All the persons were four thousand and six hundred." 2 Kings xxv. 22–26 is wanting in Jeremiah lii. because its statements had been given in detail in chaps. xl. and xli.; the statements above quoted are inserted in Jerem. lii. because they had not been given before, as they are in 2 Kings, in chap. xxiv. 14–16. The numbers given in Jeremiah vary very much from those in Kings. The former, however, are recommended, as Hitzig says, by their detail; they cannot have been invented. They are evidently derived from a different source, and the only question is, what relation does that source bear to the statements in the book of Kings? Of the three separate deportations mentioned, one took place in the seventh, and one in the eighteenth, year of Nebuchadnezzar. These can be no other than the one which took place according to 2 Kings xxiv. 12, in the eighth, and the one which took place according to 2 Kings xxv. 8 and Jerem. lii. 12, in the nineteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar. The eighteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar would be, as is expressly stated in Jerem. xxxii. 1, the tenth of Zedekiah, that is, the year in which Jerusalem was first besieged. There cannot have been any deportation in this year. Again, the seventh year of Nebuchadnezzar would not be the year in which Jehoiachin reigned for three months, and in which it is said that he and ten thousand others were led into exile, but the last year of Jehoiakim. In this year there was no deportation. We are therefore compelled to assume, if we will not alter all the other chronological data in the book of Jeremiah itself, that the original document from which Jerem. lii. 28–30 is derived, reckons the reign of Nebuchadnezzar from another starting-point from that which is adopted in the book of Kings and elsewhere in Jeremiah. This may well be, inasmuch as the years of Nebuchadnezzar's reign do not coincide exactly with those of the Jewish kings. The difference, however, only amounts to one year. The third deportation in the twenty-third year must, therefore, have taken place in the twenty-fourth year. It is not mentioned in Kings at all, but no doubt took place. In view of the continual disposition to revolt, it is very likely that he carried off more of the people in his twenty-third or twenty-fourth year, especially as he was at that time busy besieging Tyre. He intrusted this duty to the same officer who had had charge of the previous deportation. There is a much more serious difficulty in regard to the *number* of the exiles. According to Jerem. lii. 28 there were only 3,023 in the first deportation; according to 2 Kings xxiv. 14 there were 10,000. Josephus says there were 10,832. Evidently he has joined the 10,000 in Kings, for the first deportation, with the 832 in Jeremiah for the second (*Antiq.* x. 7, 1). Thenius suggests that the sign for ten (yod) may have resembled the sign for three (gimel) in the original document from which these statements are derived, and so 3,023 took the place of 10,023. This last would then be the accurate number for which 10,000 is the round number. But the sum given at the end, 4,600, supports 3,023 in this place, and this testimony cannot be put aside by the critical decree that: "The summation at the end was interpolated by the redactor." According to Ewald, "עֶשְׂרֵה has fallen out after שֶׁבַע in ver. 28 just as certainly as it has fallen out after שְׁמוֹנֶה in the statement of Jehoiachin's life in 2 Chron. xxxvi. 9." According to this we should have to take it as referring, not to the deportation mentioned in 2 Kings xxiv. 14, but to the later one under Zedekiah. The seventeenth of Nebuchadnezzar was the 9th of Zedekiah, and in that year Nebuchadnezzar advanced against Jerusalem (2 Kings xxv. 1). He took the city in Zedekiah's eleventh year (2 Kings xxv. 2), and before that no deportation can have taken place. The discrepancy between 10,000 and 3,023 can hardly be accounted for otherwise than by the explanation of Estius. In ver. 28 the 3,023 are expressly mentioned as "Jews," that is, persons who belonged to the tribe of Judah. The 10,000 included persons not of that tribe, Benjamites and others who had joined themselves to Judah, since it alone represented the Israelitish nationality, and who made common cause with it against the Chaldeans. There may well have been 7,000 of these, and the entire number in the first captivity, including the 3,023 "Jews," was thus 10,000. It is evident that

the statements in Jerem. lii. 28–30 are meant to apply only to the persons of the tribe of Judah (see יְהוּדָה ver. 27), and not to *all* who were carried away captive. This opinion is also favored by the number 4,600 as the sum of the exiles, for this number would be far too small for the sum of all the persons carried into captivity. [There can be no doubt that Jerem. lii. 28–30 refers to the *Jews* who were taken captive. What reason have we for supposing that 2 Kings xxiv. 14 refers to or includes any *others* than Jews? There is none. It is only an invention for the sake of harmonizing the two passages. Then the probabilities are against it. The persons carried away were chosen on account of their rank, position, and influence. We have an instance in Jaazaniah of Maacha (ver. xxv. see *Exeget.* notes on that verse) that others than men of Judah held power and rank. Shebna the scribe (Isai. xxii. 15) is another instance to prove that in the time before the captivity pure Israelitish, much more pure Jewish blood, was not necessary to hold high office in Jerusalem. The persons of the highest rank were the ones taken away—*as such*—whether Jews or not. Non-Jews were, of course, rare exceptions. Of the common people large numbers were spared. Naturally people of Judah, who were most deeply interested in the fate of Jerusalem, would be taken first, together with such of other tribes or nationalities as were dangerous from their rank and influence and ability. It is, therefore, improbable that many non-Jews of the common people were carried away. It amounts to a certainty that the exiles were not composed of non-Jews in the ratio of 7,000 to 3,000. This explanation must, therefore, be abandoned. It is the only true policy, in this and in similar cases, to take note of the discrepancy as a fact, and to abandon the attempt at forced and strained explanations. Between the two accounts, that in Jeremiah deserves the preference as the more specific, and also as the more moderate statement. The larger number and the *round* number is suspicious.—W. G. S.] Only 832 were taken away in the second deportation, because there were only so many left of the more influential people. The 745 who were taken away at the third deportation were not inhabitants of Jerusalem but יְהוּדִים (ver. 30). The smallness of this number is due to the fact that most of the Jews, properly speaking, had been taken away before.

[The numbers certainly are astonishingly small in one point of view, though in another we are not surprised that they are no larger. Taking the number of Israelites who entered Palestine at the lowest estimate, and noticing the numbers which formed the armies, or were engaged in battle at various times, as well as the pictures of society which are given, especially by Isaiah and the other older prophets, we get the impression that there was a very large population in Palestine before the Assyrian Empire began to press upon the North. On the other hand, when we consider the great difficulty of leading a large mass of people, with the aged, the women, and the children, on a long journey through a rough country, we can hardly conceive it possible that the conquerors should have taken away an entire population. The Assyrians, however, blotted out the kingdom of the ten tribes. The whole picture which is presented to us gives the impression that the land was depopulated and left desert. The wild beasts took possession of it. Not enough remained to continue the ancient traditions and worship there. It was found necessary to begin almost *de novo* in the population and cultivation of the country. So too in Judah. The pictures presented by the prophets and in the Psalms, as well as by the books of Ezra and Nehemiah, are those of a depopulated and desert country. Such numbers were taken away that some had to be left on purpose to cultivate the land. When the exiles came back they had to re-found the nation. Now we hear that there were only 4,600 exiles in all, or, at most, 10,000. This seems reasonable in view of the difficulty of transportation, but it is difficult to see how it accounts for the destruction of the nation. Two suggestions present themselves: in the first place, the last 150 years, with their internal dissensions, their reformations and revolutions, their counter-reformations and counter-revolutions, as well as their foreign wars, may have greatly reduced the population. In the second place, in a nation such as Judah was, the centre of gravity of the nationality was, no doubt, in the upper and better classes. The poor and uneducated and humble were probably very dependent upon the more fortunate classes. One proof of it is the fact that the prophets and psalmists were continually rebuking the arrogance of the latter towards the former. The Babylonian king's policy of carrying off the "chief men" may, therefore, have been radical and all sufficient for rooting out the nationality.—W. G. S.]

Those who were carried away last were probably those who had formerly been considered harmless, but whom it was found, upon experience, inexpedient to trust. However the numbers may be explained, it is certain from Jerem. lii. 28–30 that there were only three deportations, and not six, as Usher and the *Calw. Bib.* assume, viz., *the first* in the seventh of Jehoiakim (Dan. i. 1, 3 (?)), *the second* in the seventh of Nebuchadnezzar, *the third* under Jehoiachin, *the fourth* in the eighteenth, *the fifth* in the nineteenth, and *the sixth* in the twenty-fourth year of Nebuchadnezzar. Later scholars have reduced these to four: *the first* under Jehoiakim, *the second* under Jehoiachin, *the third* under Zedekiah, and *the fourth* some years after the destruction of Jerusalem. But this is not correct, for there is no hint of any deportation under Jehoiakim either in Kings or Chronicles or Jeremiah. So much only may be accepted, that Daniel was sent to Babylon as a hostage when Jehoiakim became a vassal of Nebuchadnezzar (2 Kings xxiv. 1). Perhaps, also, at that time Jehoiakim gave some of the temple utensils to the enemy to pacify him (2 Chron. xxxvi. 6, 7).

HISTORICAL AND ETHICAL.

1. *The destruction of Jerusalem* did not take place immediately after the fall of the city, but one month later. It is clearly designated in the record as a later and independent event. Nebuzar-adan who "stood before the king of Babylon" (Jerem. lii. 12), who, that is, attended his orders, came to Jerusalem, by the express command of the king, not to take the city, which had not yet been captured (as Thenius thinks), but, as ver. 9 distinctly shows, in order to destroy the captured city.

The destruction of the city was intended and distinctly commanded by Nebuchadnezzar. It was the punishment which the king had decreed and which Nebuzar-adan was to execute. He went methodically to work. First of all he caused the temple to be burned, then the royal palace, then the houses of the great men, then he tore down the walls, and finally he took the inhabitants away. In vers. 13–17 the account returns to the temple and enumerates its decorations and furniture, which were destroyed or carried off. The utter destruction of the temple cannot have been insisted on, on account of the value of the objects it contained, for these were not of gold, like the ones which had formerly been carried away (chap. xxiv. 13). The only ground for it was that the temple had especial significance, as the dwelling of the one God in the midst of His chosen people. Both politically and religiously it was the centre of the State, the basis and the bond of the national unity. It was the building of chief importance, and was, therefore, to be destroyed first and utterly. The temple worship had become, under the four last kings, a mere external ceremonial. Even the priests made of it a mere hypocritical show, so that Jeremiah cried out: "Trust ye not in lying words, saying, The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord are these" (Jerem. vii. 4). Then he commanded them to repent and amend. They did not, however, and so the externals in which they trusted were taken from them. The destruction of the temple was the seal of God's truth impressed upon the words of the prophets, in which the people had not believed (Jer. xxvii. 19–22). The two brazen columns are mentioned first and chiefly in the description of the glories of the temple. (They are described with more detail in Jeremiah than in Kings.) The cause of this is, as we saw in the *Exeg.* note on 1 Kings vii. 21 and *Hist.* § 5 on 1 Kings vii. 1–51, that these columns represented the foundation and the strength of the temple, and were, therefore, in a certain measure, representatives of Jehovah. The destruction and removal of these showed, more than any other event, that the house of Jehovah, as the physical centre of the theocracy, had come to an end. The ark of the covenant is not mentioned in either account. It seems to have been removed from the temple before its destruction. It had been removed under Manasseh or Amon, for Josiah commanded the levites to bring it back into the temple (2 Chron. xxxv. 3). We may suppose that it was removed again under one of the following kings, perhaps under Jehoiakim. What became of it we cannot tell. The inference from Jer. iii. 16 that it was no longer in existence in the time of Jeremiah (Hitzig) is not justified. Some suppose, as Carpzov does (*Apparat. Crit. p.* 298), that it was among the articles which Nebuchadnezzar caused to be either destroyed or carried off in the time of Jehoiachin (chap. xxiv. 13; 2 Chron. xxxvi. 10). The story of the rabbis that Josiah had caused it to be hidden in a subterranean chamber, and that Jeremiah commanded those who fled to Egypt (chap. xxv. 26) to take it with them, and that they hid it in a cleft of the mountain on which Moses had once been (2 Macc. ii. 5. *Cf.* Buxtorf, *De arca fœd., cap.* 22. Winer, *R.-W.-B.* I. *s.* 203), sounds very wild.

2. *The fall of the kingdom of Judah* was, according to the distinct statement of the Scriptures, the divine judgment which had long been threatened by the prophets (Isai. xxxix. 6, 7; 2 Kings xxi. 10–15; Jerem. xix. 3–13). It fell when all Jehovah's attempts to recall the chosen people to their allegiance had failed, and the apostasy from Him and from His law had reached the utmost limit. Sun and Moon, Baal and the Queen of Heaven, Adonis and Astarte, all the host of heaven were worshipped, and children were sacrificed to Moloch in the valley of Hinnom. Idols stood even in the House of Jehovah; idol-altars stood in the streets. On the hills, on the roofs, in the groves, incense was offered to idols. There was no abomination of idolatry which was not practised. All that remained of the Jehovah worship was external ceremonial, and priests and prophets uttered lies (Jerem. vii. 17, 18, 30, 31, 32; viii. 2; xi. 12, 13; xvii. 2; xix. 4, 5, 13; xxxii. 29, 34, 35; Ezek. viii. 3, 9, 10, 14; xxiii. 38, 39, &c.). Moral corruption kept pace with this religious apostasy: "Will ye steal, murder, and commit adultery, and swear falsely, and burn incense unto Baal, and walk after other gods whom ye know not; and come and stand before me in this house, which is called by my name, and say: We are delivered to do all these abominations?" [Lit. we are concealed to do, &c., *i. e.*, we have impunity] (Jerem. vii. 9, 10). Avarice, love of gain, and cheating (Jerem. vi. 13), licentiousness and whoredom (Jerem. v. 8, 9), injustice and violence (Jerem. vi. 6), shedding innocent blood (Jerem. ii. 34; vii. 6), overriding justice and right (Jerem. vii. 6), falsehood and hypocrisy (Jerem. viii. 9, 10), bigotry and obstinacy (Jerem. vii. 24–26), infidelity and perjury (Jerem. ix. 2, 3, 7), in short, all sins and vices were prevalent, especially among the rich and great. "Run ye to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem, and see now and know, and seek in the broad places thereof, if ye can find a man, if there be any that executeth judgment, and that seeketh the truth, and I will pardon it" (Jerem. v. 1; *cf.* 2 Chron. xxxvi. 14–16). So the measure had become full. Judah had fallen lower than Israel, therefore the Lord cast it away from before His face as He had cast away Israel (2 Kings xvii. 20; xxiv. 20). As there the king of Assyria, so here the king of Babylon was the instrument of the divine judgment, "the rod of his anger," which, after it had served His purpose, He broke and cast into the fire (Jerem. l. 17, 18; *cf.* Isai. x. 5). This punishment, however, was not the annihilation of the chosen people, but the sole radical cure for it. The Lord keeps His promises even while He chastises and punishes. The only means by which the chosen people could preserve and fulfil its destiny in human history, to bring the knowledge of God and salvation to all nations, was by the downfall of the visible kingdom, the earthly theocracy. The downfall of the visible kingdom was a step in the divine economy of salvation, and it marked progress towards the true kingdom of God. The people needed to be convinced of the nothingness of the visible kingdom, and to have its attention directed to the new, spiritual, true, and eternal kingdom. This was the aim of the divine judgment, to awaken an appreciation of this kingdom and a longing for it, and this aim was reached in the end. The idea of the messianic kingdom which the prophets had brought forward long before the downfall of the visible kingdom, but which had fallen uncomprehended, now took firm root. Hasse well says (*Gesch. des A. B. s.* 136):

"It belonged to the consummation of the history of Israel that Judah also should perish. It had long ago made this necessary by its backsliding after every momentary reformation, and by its obstinate resistance to every call of grace; but the power of the Davidic element to recover from corruption had thus far saved it. This power exhausted its last energies in Josiah, and, after his death, the kingdom sank rapidly into ruins. As the old passed away, the prophets were obliged to turn and give expression to what they perceived as something new and future. A sharp division separated this new from the old. On the one hand, the judgment and penalty were recognized as a penalty of death. On the other hand arose the figure of the new life, and it was transfigured into a lofty ideal." Lisco (*Das A. T.* I. *s.* 538) gives a similar conception: "The breach which was made by the separation of the kingdom was never healed. On the contrary, its evil effects lasted on until the downfall, first of Ephraim and then of Judah. In the measure in which the political confusion and decay increased, and the impending calamity approached, in the same measure the prophetic word grew loud and clear, and, when the blow fell which destroyed the Jewish nation, Jeremiah arose upon the ruins of Jerusalem, Daniel appeared as a prophet to speak in the name of his people before the king of Babylon, and Ezekiel watched over the scattered remnants of the nation who were in exile on the Chaboras. The civil power was dead; the prophetical power survived its death." The fall of Jerusalem forms the most important crisis in the history of the ancient people of God. It was not an event between two nations; it was an event in the history of the world. Many a great nation fell both before and after, but the fall of none of them had anything like the significance for the history of the world which that of Judah had. It is an event which is as unique in history as the Jewish people was unique among nations, for "Salvation cometh of the Jews" (John iv. 22). By its fall Judah became the keeper and bearer of salvation for all the world (*cf.* Jerem. xxx.–xxxiii.).

3. *The deportation of conquered peoples from their country* was the ordinary policy of the ancient Asiatic conquerors, in order that the nationality might thus be obliterated (see *Exeg.* on 1 Kings viii. 46 *sq.*). In this case, however, the effect was, on the contrary, in the providence of God, to preserve the conquered people in all their peculiarity of character and calling and destiny. Herein consists the great difference between the downfall of Samaria and that of Judah, as we saw above (2 Kings xvii. *Hist.* § 3); whereas the exile of the people of the ten tribes in Assyria served to annihilate their nationality, and they sank lower and lower until they disappeared from history, the exile of the people of Judah in Babylon served only to strengthen and purify them, so that they far out-lived the world-monarchy which had conquered them. Nothing could show more clearly the indestructibility of the chosen people than this fact, that the event which should have destroyed them only served to purify and strengthen them. The distress of the captivity brought them to their senses, and made them see their own sinfulness. They repented, and turned to Jehovah and to His Law with a sincerity which they had never before felt. The exile awakened in them a deep longing for the promised land, for the city in which Jehovah had placed His name (2 Kings xxi. 7), for the temple which was the pledge of the selection of Israel to be the chosen people, and the centre of its nationality. This is expressed in Ps. cxxxvii. and cxxvi. It was a dispensation of Divine Providence that the king of Babylon did not do as the king of Assyria had done in Samaria—bring heathen colonists to settle in the land of Judah after its population was taken away. If he had done so a mixed population would have grown up there and the land would have become the home of many diverse religions and forms of worship (2 Kings xvii. 24–33; *cf.* 2 Kings xvii. *Hist.* §§ 4 and 5). Judah maintained its purity of religion and nationality both in captivity and in the home country. The exiles retained their national constitution (Ezek. xiv. 1; xx. 1; Sus. v. 28). According to the Talmud (*Gem. Makkoth* i. 1; *Sanhedr.* i. 12, 21) they were put under a ראש הַגָּלוּת [Governor of the captivity, *i. e.*, of the captives] of their own nation. The practice of their religion was also allowed them, but they could not offer sacrifices, because they lacked the one central sanctuary at which alone sacrifice might be offered. This only increased their longing to erect the sanctuary once more, and this longing endured until the time of chastisement was at an end (Jerem. xxv. 12; xxix 10). When they returned their first care was to rebuild the sanctuary (Ez. i. 3; vi. 3).

4. *The two brief narratives* by which the author closes his work are not mere appendages to the history, but the proper epilogue to the words: "So Judah was carried away out of their land." They are parallel, in a certain manner, to the review which the author gives in chap. xvii. 7 *sq.* of the history of Israel. The first of these incidents shows us how deep was the corruption which had pervaded the kingdom, and how hopelessly depraved the monarchical constitution had become. It was not possible any longer to have even a deputy-king under Babylonian sovereignty. Gedaliah, whom Nebuchadnezzar had left as governor, was put to death after a few months in spite of his oath (ver. 24), and the murderer, Ishmael, who desired to make himself king, was obliged to flee with his followers into the territory of the Ammonites. Others fled, for fear of the vengeance of the Chaldeans, into Egypt. Every attempt to unite the scattered remnants, and to set up at least the shadow of a monarchy, failed. Judah could not any longer stand any kind of a monarchy. It was incapable of sustaining an independent existence under an independent dynasty. The inauguration of such a government only served to produce greater confusion and disorder. The events which followed the destruction of Jerusalem only showed how necessary the divine chastisement had become. This is what the author desires to show by the first incident which he relates. However, he could not and would not close his work, which was written primarily for those who, like himself, were living in exile, with such a sad and hopeless incident. He therefore adds the story of the deliverance of Jehoiachin from his prison after thirty-seven years of captivity. He thereby offers to the people who sat weeping "by the waters of Babylon," and thinking of Jerusalem, a prospect into a more hopeful future. The release of Jehoiachin "was the first ray of light in the long night of the captivity . . . and was a guarantee

to the people that the Lord would keep His promise, and would not withdraw his grace from the house of David forever" (Keil). It gave the captive people hope that the hour of their deliverance also would come. The author could not have given a more appropriate close to his work, in which he had shown God's plan of grace and redemption in the history of the chosen people.

5. In conclusion, we must notice *the manner in which the latest modern historians conceive of, and represent, the fall of Judah.* "There had been," says Duncker (*Gesch. des Alt.* I. *s.* 542), "no increase in power since the time of Hezekiah. There was no better guarantee for the existence of a small State than there had been at that time. If Egypt went on, as it had begun under Psammetichus, making conquests in Asia, and if a new great power arose to inherit and increase the might which Assyria had once possessed, the existence of Judah would once more be threatened as seriously as it was in the time of Hezekiah (*s.* 552): The effort of the nation to regain its independent existence, the stiff-necked resistance with which the Jews were ready to fight for their fatherland, and to break the yoke of the foreigner, were as well justified as was the abstract religious policy of Jeremiah. Who can blame those who hold the duty of sacrificing one's life for one's country, even under the most hopeless circumstances, higher than the counsel to submit at discretion? Who can blame those who regarded Jeremiah's conduct and policy as ruinous, who demanded that Jeremiah should stand on the side of his own nation against the foreign foe, and who stigmatized his discourses as treason? . . . (*s.* 553): He (Jeremiah) is bitter and violent enough to call down bloody destruction upon his [personal] enemies (Jerem. xv. 5). . . . (*s.* 556): However much Jeremiah's assertions were calculated to discourage the king and people, they did not have that effect. It was natural that Jeremiah should seem to the people to be a cowardly traitor. . . . (*s.* 557): Jeremiah's persistence in advising submission, under the circumstances, finally so far outraged the chief men that they demanded his life of the king . . . (*s.* 544): The prophet went so far in his opposition to Jehoiakim that he finally brought his own life into danger. At the same time he irritated the people against himself by his persistent prophecies of the coming fall of Jerusalem. . . . He was no less severe against the people for the wickedness of their conduct, and for their practice of some remains of foreign usages which had not been eradicated by the (new) Law-book." It is hardly necessary to say that this view is diametrically opposed to that of the Bible, and yet the biblical documents are the only authority for the history. In the text the grounds of the national downfall are stated to be the apostasy of the nation in religion, its corruption in morals, and the unfaithfulness, tyranny, and depravity of its king. The downfall is represented as a divine judgment upon the nation in punishment for all this. Duncker, however, ignores this view. In his view all is explained by the physical weakness of the kingdom of Judah in face of the great world-empires, Assyria, Egypt, and Babylon. It was all due to external and natural causes, such as have often produced similar catastrophes in human history. It was an undeserved misfortune, in which the king and people appear battling with desperate courage for the highest national interests. They appear great and admirable, while the truly great one, the prophet, who was persecuted while laboring for the true welfare of the people, who held firm and impregnable as a rock in the midst of the storm, is represented as a factious oppositionist, nay, even as a traitor. This is not writing history, but turning it upside down.

[The facts of history are one thing; their philosophy is another. The theocratic philosophy of history is one thing, and the purely human philosophy of it is another. To pass behind history and trace the moral causes which were at work, and observe their effects, is the great task of the historian, but he limits himself to the second causes, and contents himself with seeing God's plan only in the grand results of centuries, and in the movements of epochs. The attempt to pursue this latter investigation into details never succeeds when men try it. God's Providence is in every event of history, and in the character of every historical personage, but its presence and its operation there are matters of faith. Try to seize it, to specify it, and to examine it, and you are baffled and disappointed. God is in every blade of grass. His presence there is clear to our reason, our conscience, and our faith. If we hastily infer that, if God is in the blade of grass which we hold in our hands, then we can seize Him and see Him, and if we betake ourselves to the microscope and the dissecting apparatus, we find that we fail. Just so it is here in history. This biblical history is the only one we have in which the history is written from the theocratic standpoint, and in which the presence of God in history is traced step by step and man by man. If we attempt to take up this stand-point and follow it and apply it rigorously we involve ourselves in hopeless contradictions. The standpoint is not rational, it is prophetic; that is, its norm and standard of consistency is that of the divine plan, not of the human reason. The reason, however, is the only instrument at *our* disposal, and it falls short of its task if it undertakes to adopt the prophetical method. It took a prophet to give us this view of the Jewish history, and it would require a prophet to apply the same method elsewhere, or to follow it here into greater detail. Duncker lays aside the theocratic and prophetical conception, and approaches the *facts* of the history, as here recorded, in exactly the same spirit, and with exactly the same method, by which he treats the history of Egypt, Assyria, and Greece. His work is a universal history. The history of Israel *as an earthly monarchy* enters into the scope of his work *as regards its earthly and external fortunes.* Its theological and religious significance are aside from his plan. He is an historian, not a prophet, and he can only treat history as ordinary historians treat it. His view, therefore, naturally appears low and worldly and commonplace, when quoted in a book of this kind, which is avowedly biblical and theocratic, and only follows and explains the biblical presentation. His undertaking is a legitimate one for an historian. We cannot say that it is wrong for him to treat history as he does, and to include Jewish history in his plan, but he is engaged in a work whose stand-point and aim are so different from that in which we are engaged, that we are not called to consider it here. His readers must add to his representation of the history the explanation and philosophy of it which is furnished by their Bibles. The distinction which is brought out

aere is one which it is most important to bear in mind in commenting on the historical books.—As for Jeremiah's attitude at the siege of Jerusalem, the question is the one which always arises in such cases between *prudence* and *valor*. The rôle which was filled by Jeremiah, to give wise and prudent counsel to men who are heated with the strongest passions, and to stem alone a tide of feeling which animates a body of men of which he is a member, and with which he is expected to sympathize without reserve or question, is the most thankless one which can possibly devolve upon any man. He cannot succeed in persuading his companions; he can only draw down persecution on himself. His only consolation is his fidelity to his convictions, and our judgment of him, as of any other man who has the courage to undertake the prophet's task, must be regulated by the issue. He stakes all upon the *wisdom* of his counsel. If in a calm view of the situation and its results, we see that he was wise and right, we must "blame" those who persecuted him and denied the wisdom of his counsel. Humanly speaking, Jeremiah was the only wise counsellor in Jerusalem, for his counsel would have saved the city and the national existence, if not the national independence. If, however, we turn to the theocratic standard, we see how utterly impossible it is for us to apply it. As we have seen above (§ 2), the fall of Jerusalem was no step backwards, but a great one forwards, in the development of the redemptive plan. When a church or a nation reaches the point of saying "The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord are these," that is, when it puts its trust in externals, in ceremonies, and sacred houses, and sacred things, while the spirit of truth and righteousness is lost, and treats God's promises as if He had bound His own hands against punishing their sins, their fate is sealed. The downfall of Jerusalem might have been delayed, it could not have been averted, or, if it had been averted, as far as we can judge, all the religious truth of which Israel was the keeper and witness would have been lost. Here, however, is just the difficulty. History only takes one course of two or more which are conceivable. This one only is open to our study and observation, and we are forced to assume that that was God's plan. The consequences of the other policy, supposing it to have been adopted, are a pure matter of speculation. Now Jeremiah counselled submission. That might have saved the city and the temple and the nationality, but, if we can rely upon our judgment expressed in § 2, it would have sacrificed the kingdom of God. He also preached amendment and righteousness as the only condition of permanent safety, but we cannot see, as far as we judge, that such amendment was possible until after severe chastisement, and it remains for us, what it was for Jeremiah, a subject of faith, that God would have preserved the national independence if the people had repented.—W. G. S.]

Ewald's presentation of the fall of Jerusalem (*Gesch.* III. *s.* 712–717) is very different from Duncker's superficial and perverted view of it. As he sees in the whole course of the history, from the time of Solomon on, a continual conflict between two "independent authorities," the monarchy and the prophetical institution, and explains this conflict by the "violence" which was characteristic of either (see Pt. II. pp. 103 and 4), so he finds the causes of the ruin of the kingdom in this conflict. "It remained to be shown, by the fate of Judah also, that violence destroys its own cause, even when that cause seems to be the most permanent and enduring. . . . The second of these independent powers, the prophetical institution, was now also irrevocably broken." The reason why the prophetical office no longer possessed its ancient power was that "it had rid itself of the last relics of the violence which marked it even in Isaiah, and had risen to a purely spiritual activity and influence. It was long since violence had been able to accomplish any sound results even in the prophetical office. Thus the highest prophetical activity lost its power when it lost its fierce and violent forms of action, and the second of the two forces on which the nationality rested was radically ruined. . . . When the two forces which could alone carry and preserve the nation were thus worn out, when the nation could no longer find either the right king or the right prophet, it sank rapidly towards its catastrophe. Then first did the evils which had long threatened it, or which had made themselves temporarily felt, become fatal to it." In this view also the idea which is made uppermost in the biblical narrative, that the fall was a divine judgment justly and deservedly inflicted as a punishment for persistence in sin, is obscured and neglected, and the fall is represented as a catastrophe which was the legitimate result of a regular development. [There is no real disagreement here. The one is a pragmatic and the other is a philosophical statement of the same idea. The ancient Hebrew writer states it as a balance between so much sin and so much punishment. We cannot expect a critical and philosophical statement from him. In his view God stands over the sinful nation patiently and with long-suffering, and finally His hand falls in punishment. The modern German critic sees, in "persistence in sin," the adoption of certain depraved doctrines, principles, and modes of thought, which form a creed or sum of convictions tacit or expressed. These produce a reiteration of unchaste, immoral, and irreligious acts—sins. This finally becomes a national habit, a characteristic of the nationality. It rises into a *moral cause*, and according to *the laws of God's moral government*, this cause will in time produce inevitably certain moral and *physical* results—national decay (which will show itself first in the most vital organs of the State, its throne, its altar, and its pulpit), and finally national ruin. The two forms of statement are identical.—W. G. S.] As for the theory that there were two "independent authorities" in the State, and that the great characteristic of each was violence—employment of force in word or deed—in fulfilling its functions, it has been sufficiently noticed on p. 104. We need only remark here, that if violence was a characteristic of Isaiah, then Jeremiah's discourses are far more forcible, vigorous, and violent than his, so that Duncker (quoted above) charges him with passion, severity, and sternness. No prophet ever rebuked the sin and apostasy of king and people with more plain and severe language than Jeremiah. It cannot be said of him that he had thrown off the violent manner of the ancient prophets, and that "one and the same ruin enveloped the last great prophet and the nation, with all of its better interests which still remained at this stormy time." His forcible words of rebuke and reproof, his endurance, pertinacity, and inflexibility, in the hardest conflicts and sufferings, down to the very end, bear

testimony, not to the weakness and decay of the prophetical office, but to the fact that it was as grand, as great, and as vigorous as ever before. The monarchy sank and ceased at the fall of the kingdom, but the prophetical institution, so far from ceasing, arose again to new glory and strength. Those have the less ground for denying this who ascribe the second part of Isaiah to a great unknown prophet, who lived near the end of the captivity.

[The decay of the prophetical office is undeniable, in spite of the fact that one or two last great ones yet appeared. There had been false prophets, in greater or less number, at all times, but see the 23d chap. of Jeremiah, from the 9th verse on, for a sweeping denunciaton of the contemporary prophets. No distinction between false and true is specified. Depraved priests and prophets are together branded with one terrible denunciation. In xxiii. 38–40 the degeneracy of the prophets seems to be given as the cause why Jehovah had abandoned the city. Prophecy ceased at some time—when did it cease? It did not cease abruptly, but shared the fate of all similar institutions among mankind. It degenerated into formalism and superstition (see Jerem. xxiii. 33–37). In its rise and bloom and decay we can trace undeniable steps of change, development, progress, and decline. After the exile we have a few prophets, but not like the ancient ones. The spoken word gave way to the written word; the original oracle gave way to the commentary; the prophet gave way to the scribe. Following the stream upwards we come to the "Great Unknown" (?), and to Jeremiah. We find in Jeremiah descriptions of the contemporary prophets, and we see that the institution was dying, and that the one or two great ones who yet arose were great and grand as exceptions to the prevalent degeneracy. Jeremiah was the last prophet who was a statesman also, as the old prophets had been (Stanley).—W. G. S.]

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

Vers. 8–21. God's Judgment upon Judah. (*a*) It was well deserved (Rom. ii. 5–11); (*b*) it was terrible (Hebr. x. 30, 31; Deut. iv. 24); (*c*) it was a warning (1 Cor. x. 11; 2 Thess. i. 8–10; Isai. ii. 10–17). Comparison of the destruction of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans with its destruction by the Romans. (*a*) Wherein they were alike; (*b*) wherein they differed.—Keil: The saying that the world's history is the world's condemnation, finds its full justification in the history of Judah, and nowhere else.—Vers. 9–17. Kyburz: No place is so strong, no building so grand, no wall so firm, that sin cannot undermine and overthrow it. Let no man trust in ceremonies, or sacred houses, or sacred traditions, so long as his heart is far from God, and his life is not in accord with his righteous creed. The destruction of the temple was a testimony that God will spare no house in which any other name than His is worshipped, or in which He is worshipped only with the lips while the hearts are far from Him. If the temple of Solomon was not spared, no physical temple can save us.—Starke: If temples are not used for the true worship of God, He allows them to fall into the hands of unbelievers, Matt. xxxii. 37 (as at the time of the extension of Mohammedanism).—Pfaff. Bib.: The highest pitch of the divine condemnation is reached when God removes the light of His Word from its place, and takes away from us the ordinances of true worship (Rev. ii. 4, 5; 1 Pet. iv. 17).—Vers. 18–21. God often executes His judgments by means of wicked and godless men. This does not excuse or justify them in their cruelty or wickedness. They are only the rod of his anger, which he breaks after it has unconsciously served His purpose (Isai. x. 5; xiv. 3–6; Jerem. l. 51).—Ver. 21. Pfaff. Bib.: When the measure of sin is full, and the judgment of God has begun to fall, nothing can any longer arrest its flood.—Cramer: He who will not serve God in peace and prosperity must learn to do so in misery and adversity.—Osiander: Those who will not serve God in their own fatherland, must serve their enemies in harsh subjection.—The Curse and the Blessing of the Exile, Deut. xxx. 19. (*a*) The curse consisted in this, that the Lord removed the people from before His face (chap. xxiii. 27; xxiv. 3, 20), that is, He removed them from the land of promise, in which He gave them His gracious blessings, and placed them in a distant country, where nothing was known of the true and living God. This curse, which had long been threatened (Levit. xxvi. 33; Deut. iv. 27; xxviii. 26; Dan. ix. 11) is a proof of the truth of the words: "Be not deceived; God is not mocked," &c. (Gal. vi. 7). God still does spiritually to individuals and to nations what He did to Judah—He removes them from before His face; He removes from them His word and His means of grace, if they do not repent, and leaves them to live in darkness, without Him. (*b*) The curse became a blessing for this people. It humiliated itself and repented. It experienced that there was no greater curse than to live far from its gracious God, and it longed for the land of promise. When it had lost its earthly kingdom and its earthly king, it learned to look for the kingdom of heaven, and for that One in whom all God's promises to man are fulfilled. The exile became a blessing for the whole world, for the Jewish nation was thereby made fit to fulfil its destiny in the redemptive plan of God. It was "a great opportunity, by which the name and glory of Jehovah were spread abroad, as a preparation for the preaching of the gospel of Christ" (Starke). We all lay under the curse of the law, but Christ has redeemed us (Gal. iii. 13, 14).

Vers. 22 to 26. See Jerem. xlii.–xliv. The People who remained in the Country. (*a*) Their protection by Gedaliah, vers. 22, 23, 24. ("The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord," Prov. xxi. 1. Nebuchadnezzar gave them a ruler from among their own countrymen who promised them favor and protection. So the Lord often offers consolation even in deserved misfortune, but men go their own way and plunge themselves into ruin.) (*b*) Their flight into Egypt (Jerem. xliii. 7; xlii. 18, 22. Their bad conscience leads them back to the country from which God had wonderfully delivered them. Starke: When the godless attempt to flee from a calamity they plunge themselves into it. Isai. xxiv. 17 *sq.*)—Ver. 24. Osiander: It is great wisdom to bear our burdens with patience; we thus make them lighter. It is folly to resist a greater power, for thus we only make our burdens heavier. —Ver. 25. We see, by the example of Israel, how envy and jealousy, pride in high descent and destiny, and love of power, lead to the most utter ruin (Ps. v. 6; Prov. xxvii. 4). Passion makes men

fools. Ishmael could not hope with his small company to resist the Chaldean power.

Vers. 27–30. Jehoiachin's Deliverance from his Prison. (*a*) Its significance for the whole captive people (Levit. xxvi. 44); (*b*) the warning which we may find therein.—An unfortunate state of things often endures for a long time. It seems that it never will end. Happy is he who does not murmur against God, but can say with the Apostle,—Rom. v. 3–5; see also Rev. ii. 10,—The time of our deliverance is in the hands of the Lord. It comes when He sees that it is best for us.—WÜRT. SUMM.: We should despair in no trouble or punishment, but cry to God and trust in Him.—Ver. 27. STARKE: Kings win great love by acts of grace and mercy (Acts xxv. 1–9).—THE SAME: We should be kind to captives, and pray to God for a loving disposition towards our enemies (Matt. v. 44).—*Per Aspera ad astra!* That is the way in which our Lord walked and in which we all must follow Him (Rom. viii. 17; Ps. cxxvi. 1–6).—Final Review of the History in the Apostle's words: "Oh the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For of him, and through him, and to him are all things; to whom be glory forever. Amen" (Rom. xi. 33 and 36).

APPENDIX ON THE CHRONOLOGY.

1. THE chronology of the history contained in the Books of the Kings presents difficulties which have never yet been conquered. There are data in the text which are contradictory. The only means of forming any chronology at all is to sacrifice some of the statements, and the text does not offer sufficient critical grounds upon which to decide which ones are correct. The usual method has been to fill out and reconcile conflicting texts by inventing interregna and joint governments, or to guess arbitrarily which datum was to be sacrificed. It is evident that this is only another way of admitting our inability to solve the problem satisfactorily by the means which we as yet possess. All the schemes which we form must be regarded as tentative. We need to arrive at some hypothetical chronology as a stepping-stone to further investigation, but we must frankly admit, while taking this course, that the knots are neither untied nor cut, but only marked for further study by our arbitrary guesses and our fabricated interregna.

2. Bähr says in his *Preface* (at the end) that he has "followed a method, in regard to the Chronology, which differs somewhat from the ordinary one." It consists in adopting certain dates which have been fixed with the greatest certainty, and reckoning from these, by periods, through the intervening reigns (see Pt. II. p. 86 and the translator's note there). It is evident that this method has no independent value. The chronologers who have undertaken this task have gone minutely over the separate texts, and have managed to bridge over the difficulties by one or another hypothesis. All the uncertainty which inheres in these hypotheses must inhere also in their completed schemes. If there were a consensus in their results, it would not, therefore, produce any certainty; it would merely prove that those who have confined themselves to the biblical data, and have stepped over the difficulties by various hypotheses, reach conclusions which vary only within certain moderate limits. However, there is, in fact, no consensus among the authorities. It is fallacious, therefore, to regard these dates, which are only an average between the results of various independent scholars, as possessing any certainty. Furthermore, it seems to be labor thrown away to pore over the data for the intervening details of the chronology. The consensus in regard to one date is not greater than that in regard to any other in the whole list. If we borrow one date from the average, why not borrow the whole list in the same way? In fact, in the present state of this subject, there might be much wisdom in so doing. The general scheme about which the authorities seem to cluster is the one at which Bähr arrives. His method only borrows the results of certain independent scholars, and then travels back for a certain distance on the road by which they reached those results. In the following pages I have collected the dates upon which he fixes, and arranged them in a table. This scheme is substantially that of Usher, for, of all who have studied this subject, confining themselves to the biblical data, no one has succeeded in going much beyond what he, the first thorough student of it, established. I have also added to the table a sort of outline of the history, of the synchronisms with the contemporaneous history of other nations, and of the varying religious condition of the two Israelitish kingdoms. The data enclosed in brackets are those which are not mentioned in the text of the Bible.

3. For the final solution of the problems which present themselves we must look to the synchronisms with contemporaneous history. The deciphering of the Egyptian hieroglyphics and of the Assyrian cuneiform inscriptions has furnished us with material which promises to make a solution ultimately possible. This promise is so good that it seems unprofitable to repeat the labor of comparing and reconciling the biblical data, a labor which has already been so often performed and with such meager results. We have above (Pt. II. p. 162) an instance of the amount of light which we may hope for from these sources. If Oppert is right in his interpretation of the data in the Assyrian inscriptions which bear upon the reign of Pekah (and no one but a trained Assyrian scholar is competent to dispute his conclusions), then one of the most perplexing of these chronological problems is solved. It is true that the Assyrian scholars are not in accord as to all their results, and it is also true that many of the best living scholars (the Germans especially) are skeptical in regard to the whole system of interpretation of the cuneiform, and also that the scholars who have thus far prosecuted this subject have not always followed the independent unbiased *method* which would recommend their results, but, in spite of all this, the progress in this department is undeniable. Every step verifies and confirms what has gone before; the original Assyrian grammatical and lexical works multiply in an enormous ratio the rate of progress; and the results acquire such certainty as compels assent.

4. In the *Athenæum* of May 18th, 1867, Sir H. Rawlinson announced the discovery that two fragments in the British Museum were parts of the same stone, and that together they furnished a canon for the most important part of Assyrian history. The Assyrians had a system of naming the years after eponymous magistrates, and the canon contains a list of them, by which the chronology may be reckoned with certainty. It also contains mention of an eclipse of the sun which occurred on the 30th of the month *Sivan*, in the 9th year of king *Asshur-edil-ilani* II., and which furnishes a definite starting-point, if it can be identified. Rawlinson identifies it with the eclipse of June 15th, 763. Oppert, however, identifies it with the eclipse of the 13th of June, 889. He also says that an eclipse of the sun is several times referred to in the inscriptions of *Asshur-nazir-pal* as having occurred on the day of that monarch's accession. This he identifies with an eclipse which took place on July 2d, 930. This eclipse is not mentioned by Rawlinson, but, if Oppert is correct in regard to it, it goes far to support his identifi-

cation of the other one. The difference of 46 years in regard to the first of these eclipses, marks their respective chronologies down to the date of *Tiglath Pileser* II. (747 or 745). The gap is closed up in Oppert's scheme by inserting *Pul* between the first destruction of Assyria by the Medes and Chaldeans in 789 (an event which Rawlinson does not credit at all, but which Hincks accepted) and the accession of *Tiglath Pileser* II. Thus their lists compare, at this point, as follows (the names in the two lists refer to the same persons, though they are transcribed differently):—

Oppert. (Lenormant's *Manual*).		Sir. H. Rawlinson. (Prof. Rawlinson's *Manual*).
Asshur-edil-ilani II.	818	
Eclipse 13th June	809	
Asshur-likhish (the Sardanapalus of the Greeks)	800	
Destruction of Nineveh	789	
Pul (a Chaldean)	788	
	771	Asshur-danin-il II.
	763	15th June, Eclipse
	753	Asshur-likh-khush
Tiglath Pileser II.	747	
	745	Tiglath Pileser II.
but he reckoned from	744	
Shalmaneser VI.*	727	Shalmaneser IV.*

In favor of Rawlinson is the fact that *Pul* is not mentioned in any inscription yet found or in the canon, and that Oppert is obliged to assume that the succession of eponymous magistrates was interrupted during his reign, and that, as he was a Chaldean, the account was kept, after the Chaldean fashion, by the years of his reign. In favor of Oppert's scheme is (*a*) the fact that it makes a chronology which is in accord with the biblical chronology, while Rawlinson would shorten the period of the Israelitish monarchy (see note 5 on the *Chronological Table*); (*b*) the fact that there was certainly a break in the succession at *Tiglath Pileser's* accession (Rawlinson says that he was a usurper); (*c*) the fact that the Era of Nabonassar of Babylon begins at 747, which is in excellent harmony with the hypothesis that, at the death of *Pul*, Chaldea was unable to maintain dominion over Assyria, but found itself separate and independent, so that a new era was founded. It had not been independent for centuries before this, and it was resubjugated by Sargon in 709. (*d*) This combination is supported by the words: "Pul, king of Assyria," 2 Kings xv. 19. (*e*) It is supported by the Greek story of Sardanapalus.—It is evident that we have here a clue which promises ultimately to unravel the intricacies and contradictions of the biblical chronology.

Opposite the reign of Pekah will be found marked that solution of the contradiction in the data concerning his reign which Oppert claims to have obtained from the inscriptions. See above, p. 162 of Part II. of the Comm.

5. The other important series of synchronisms is that with Egyptian history. Here also scholars have given the most diligent labor to the scientific investigation of the evidence which bears on the biblical chronology. A fundamental question here meets us, whether the dynasties of Manetho are all consecutive, or whether some of them were parallel and contemporaneous with others. If reckoned as successive, the period which they cover reaches back to more than 5,000 years before Christ. Very many scholars, appalled at the magnitude of this period, have inferred that the dynasties must, many of them, have been contemporaneous. Lepsius adopts this view, and in his *Königsbuch der Alten Aegypter* he has reconstructed with admirable skill and diligence the entire list of Manetho's dynasties. Prof. Rawlinson adopts the same view, avowedly following the English Egyptologers. He carries it further than Lepsius, and, in fact, the weakness of the theory is that it may be carried as far as any one finds necessary in order to reduce the period of Egyptian history to what he considers a reasonable length. It is especially suspicious that the shortening is accomplished by putting many of *the most ancient* dynasties contemporaneous with one another, that is, the dynasties which fall at the time of which we know least. In Rawlinson's scheme (*Manual*, p. 77) six of Manetho's dynasties are put as contemporaneous in the period from 2100 to 2000. In the more modern period of the history, where we know that there were many rulers in different parts of Egypt at the same time, we find that Manetho only recognized one. The especial importance of this for us, at present, is that the synchronisms fall in such a way as to require a *shortening of the period* of the Israelitish monarchy. Lepsius carries out the calculation of the Israelitish chronology in consistency with his scheme for that of Egypt, and fixes the chief dates as follows (*Königsbuch*, ss. 102, 3, and 4): Division of the kingdom, 953; Accession of Athaliah and Jehu, 861; Fall of Samaria, 693; Destruction of Jerusalem, 586.

6. It will be seen from this and from what was said about Rawlinson's dates for Assyrian history that the chronologers may be divided into two classes or schools, the defenders of the "long period" for the Israelitish monarchy (chiefly those who rely on such a scheme as they are able to form from the biblical data), and the defenders of the "short period" (Assyrian and Egyptian scholars, who rely on the data furnished by the monuments).

7. The "short period" has always been strong from the fact that both the Assyrian and Egyptian chronologies seemed to demand it, but it will be noticed that, whatever date we may assign to the great eclipse, the Assyrian authorities fix the Fall of Samaria certainly in 721, and set aside Lepsius' date as impossible. All the shortening therefore must come before that date, but the synchronism with Tirhaka is one of the most important in the Egyptian scheme. Therefore the Assyrian and Egyptian chronologies are not in accord in the shortening which they require.

8. Others, however, discard the notion of contemporaneous dynasties, and reckon the dynasties as successive. This is carried out in Lenormant's *Manual*, and it brings the synchronisms into accord with the "long period" which he adopts for the Israelitish monarchy, and also with the Assyrian chronology, which he borrows chiefly from Oppert, and which has been described above.—Evidently we may hope that from this quarter also confirmatory evidence will come, and that all will converge to a reliable result. Our task here has been to give a succinct account of the present state of the question.—W. G. S.

* The same person, but different mode of counting.

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE

OF THE

PERIOD FROM THE DIVISION OF THE KINGDOM TO THE COMPILATION OF THE BOOK OF KINGS.

Dates adopted in this Comm.	KINGS OF JUDAH.	Age at Accession.	Year of Contemp.	Duration of Reign.	KINGS OF ISRAEL.	Age at Accession.	Year of Contemp.	Duration of Reign.	SYNCHRONISMS, &c.
975	REHOBOAM	41	1	17	JEROBOAM		1	22	*Jehovah-calf-worship in Israel.* Fifth of Rehoboam. *Shishak*, king of Egypt, invades Judah. (*Sheshonk* I., 1st king XXII. Dyn.) Hostility between Judah and Israel.
957	ABIJAM		18	3					
955	ASA		20	41					War between Judah and Israel.
953					NADAB		2	2	
952					BAASHA		3	24	Tirzah capital of Northern kingdom. Fifteenth of Asa. He defeated *Zerah*, "the Ethiopian,"[1] at Zephathah. *Supremacy of the Jehovah-religion in Judah.* Baasha attacks Asa.—Latter forms alliance with *Benhadad* I.,[2] king of Syria. *Heathen idolatry in Israel.*
930					ELAH		26	2	
929					ZIMRI [OMRI, TIBNI].		27	7 d'ys	Civil war in Israel for four years.[3]
925					OMRI		31	12	923 Omri founded Samaria and made it the capital. War between Israel and Syria.
920–19					AHAB		38	22	
917–16	JEHOSHAPHAT	35	4	25					*Political and religious reforms in Judah.* Peace and prosperity. *Ethbaal* in Tyre.[4] Elijah. *Phœnician idolatry* (*sensual and materialistic nature-worship*) *introduced into Israel by Jezebel.* 902 and 901. War between Israel and Syria. Success of Israel and alliance with Syria. *Benhadad II.*[5]
898–7					AHAZIAH		17	2	898. Renewed war between Israel and Syria.[6] Revolt of Moab against Israel.
896–5					JORAM		2 Jehoram.[7] 18 Jehosh.[8]	12	Elisha. *Slight and temporary reaction against Phœnician worship in Israel.* Judah, Israel, and Edom in alliance against *Mesha*, king of Moab.[9] Moab, Ammon, and the Edomites of Mt. Seir invade Judah, but quarrel and kill each other near Engedi.

[1] This king, who was formerly identified with Uaserken I. (the Osorkon of the Greeks), who was king of Egypt, is now known to be *Aserch-Amen*, an Ethiopian conqueror, who overran Egypt during the reign of Uaserken, and was not arrested until he was on the point of entering Palestine. See Lenormant, B. II. chap. iv. sec. 2, note; and B. IV. chap. iv. sec. 2.

[2] See *Exeg.* notes on 1 Kings xi. 23, and xv. 18.

[3] The date given for Omri's accession (925) is the "31st of Asa," but, as Ahab followed in the "38th of Asa," Omri's 12 years' reign must be reckoned from 929, when he was first called to the throne. This would give four years for his contest with Tibni for the crown.

[4] See *Exeg.* on 1 Kings xvi. 31. He put an end to a period of anarchy and founded a dynasty 937 B.C. Asshurnazirpal says, on an obelisk now in the Brit. Mus., that he took tribute of Tyre, Sidon, etc., in 916. (Lenormant, B. VI. chap. iii. sec. 2, 6.

[5] Shalmaneser IV. (II. R.) mentions, on a stele found near the source of the Tigris and now in the Brit. Mus., Benhadad and "10,000 of the men of Ahab of Israel" among the forces whom he defeated at Karkar in 900, the year after this alliance was formed. (Lenormant, B. II. chap. iv. sec. 3; and B. IV. chap. ii. sec. 4.) Rawlinson, in the *Manual*, says that Shalmaneser II. was contemporary with Ahab, but gives as the date of Shalmaneser's reign 858–823 (see p. 42), and for Ahab's reign 918–897 (p. 66). In the "*Five Great Monarchies*" (1 ed.) Vol. II. p. 362 note, this notice is quoted as "Ainab of Samhala," not yet having been distinctly recognized. Sir H. Rawlinson, after the discovery of the Canon, fixed the date of this battle as 853. See the *Appendix on the Chron.* § 4.

[6] We should infer from 1 Kings xxii. 3, that Ramoth had not been given up to the Israelites, as, perhaps, was stipulated in the treaty of alliance three years before.

[7] 1 Kings i. 17.

[8] 2 Kings iii. 1.

[9] This is probably the Mesha of the Moabite stone. See the COMM., Part II. p. 31.

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE—(CONTINUED).

Dates adopted in this Comm.	KINGS OF JUDAH.	Age at Accession.	Year of Contemp.	Duration of Reign.	KINGS OF ISRAEL.	Age at Accession.	Year of Contemp.	Duration of Reign.	SYNCHRONISMS, &c.
892–1	JEHORAM.......	32	5	8					*Jehoram introduces Phœnician idolatry into Judah;* murders his six brothers and others. Edomites revolt successfully against Judah. The priest-city Libnah revolts. Arabs and Philistines invade Judah. Siege of Samaria by Benhadad and miraculous deliverance. *Hazael* in Syria.
885–4	AHAZIAH.......	22	12[10] 11[11]	1					*Progress of Phœnician idolatry in Judah.* Israel at war with Syria (siege of Ramoth).
884	ATHALIAH......			6	JEHU............			28	Revolution in Israel. Massacre of Ahab's family. *Religious reformation. Phœnician idolatry abolished.* *Massacre of Ahaziah's family, and supremacy of Phœnician idolatry in Judah.* Hazael conquers territory of Israel east of the Jordan. *Shalmaneser*[12] takes tribute of Jehu, 883.
877	JOASH...........	7	7	40					Restoration of the line of David and *religious reformation. Phœnician idolatry abolished in Judah.*
856					JEHOAHAZ......		23	17	*Limited revival of Phœnician idolatry in Israel.* *Hazael* continues to attack Israel. Time of depression and weakness. Israel overrun by the Syrians. *Phœnician idolatry tolerated in Judah.* *Hazael* takes Gath and threatens Jerusalem.
840–39					JOASH...........		37	16	*Benhadad* III. in Syria. Israel successful against the Syrians—recovery of lost cities.
838	AMAZIAH	25	2	29					*Phœnician idolatry once more abolished in Judah.* Amaziah made a successful expedition against the Edomites and took Sela (Petra). War between Israel and Judah. Amaziah prisoner of Joash. Israelites plunder the temple.
824 823					JEROBOAM II...		15	41 read 52	Time of strength and prosperity in Israel. Territory from Damascus to the Dead Sea recovered. Luxury, folly, and vice in Israel. Amos.
811–10	AZARIAH or UZZIAH.	16	27 (?)	52					Time of peace and prosperity in Judah. *Supremacy of the Jehovah-religion.* [789. First destruction of Nineveh by the Medes and Chaldeans (?)] Elath taken from the Edomites, Gath and Ashdod from the Philistines; Ammonites and Arabs of Gurbaal tributary.
773					ZACHARIAH		38	6 mos	
772					SHALLUM........		39	1 mo.	
772					MENAHEM[15].....		39	10	*Pul*[16] takes tribute from Menahem.
762					PEKAIAH........		50	2	
760					PEKAH..........		52	20 read 30	
759–8	JOTHAM.........	25	2	16					[747. Era of Nabonassar of Babylon.]

[10] 2 Kings viii. 25.

[11] 2 Kings ix. 29.

[12] This Shalmaneser (IVth, according to Lenormant; IId, according to Rawlinson) is the same mentioned above in note 5. He reigned from 905 to 870 (Len.). Among his campaigns and exploits mentioned on the "black obelisk" (Brit. Mus.), the same mentioned in note 5, we find it stated that, in 883, he received tribute of "Jehu, son of Omri" (the change of dynasty not being known or not being remembered), and, on the same obelisk, Jehu is represented, in one of the bas-reliefs, as prostrating himself before Shalmaneser. He probably entered into tributary relations to Shalm. in order to get protection against Hazael. (Lenormant I., 166, 381. Rawlinson, *Five Gt. Mon.* [2d ed.] II., 105 and 106.) This is the distress which fell upon Jehu and kept him from that energetic development of Israel which we should have expected of him. See Pt. II. pp. 114 and 115.

[13] 2 Kings xv. 30.

[14] 2 Kings xvii. 1.

[15] Rawlinson (*Manual*, p. 67) gives for Menahem's reign 772–762. On p. 44 he says that Tiglath Pileser II. took tribute of Menahem in 743. It is another case of the inconsistency mentioned above in note 5. See also the foot-note p. 161 of Part II. It is agreed that Tig. Pil. II. is stated in the insciptions to have taken tribute of Menahem of Israel. Oppert, by combining this with the other data, arrives at the construction mentioned on p. 162, and which is placed in the column of remarks opposite the reign of Pekah.

[16] Pul is called, in 2 Kings xv. 19, "king of Assyria," but he is not mentioned in the inscriptions or the Canon. See in regard to him, p. 162 of Part II.

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE—(CONTINUED).

Dates adopted in this Comm.	KINGS OF JUDAH.	Age at Accession.	Year of Contemp.	Duration of Reign.	KINGS OF ISRAEL.	Age of Accession.	Year of Contemp.	Duration of Reign.	SYNCHRONISMS, &c.
743	AHAZ............	20	17	16					[744. *Tiglath Pileser* II. in Assyria until 727.] [New rise of the Assyrian power.] [742. Tig. Pil. in Syria; Rezin, Pekah, and Ashariah son of Tabeal, confederated against Ahaz.] [742. Pekah dethroned. Menahem II.[18] set up by Tig. Pil. and tributary to him.] *Assyrio-Chaldean star-worship introduced into Israel and Judah.*[17] [734. Rezin and Pekah unite and revolt. Pekah regained the throne.] 732. Campaign of Rezin and Pekah against Ahaz of Judah. 732. Damascus taken. 731. Forced migration of Syrians and Israelites. [730. Tiglath Pileser took Gaza, Ashdod, Dumah in Arabia, and probably went to Jerusalem.[19] At the end of the same year he held a court of his vassals at Damascus, at which Pekah and Ahaz were present.[20]]
730					HOSHEA.......		20 Jotham.[13] 12 Ahaz.[14]	9	[730. Pekah in alliance with Methon of Tyre revolts against Assyria. On the approach of the Assyrians, Pekah is slain by Hoshea, who submits to pay tribute.] *Phœnician idolatry and Moloch-worship encouraged in Judah. Political and religious degradation in Israel.*
728									*Luxury and corruption in Judah. The temple of Jehovah closed.*
727	HEZEKIAH......	25	3	29					[Shalmaneser[21] in Assyria, 727–722.] [725. Sabacon I.,[22] the first king of the XXVth Ethiopian Dyn. in Egypt.] *Reformation in Judah. Revival of the Jehovah-worship. Passover renewed.*
	4 OF HEZEKIAH.	=	=	=	6 OF HOSHEA.				724. Hoshea, in reliance upon So,[23] revolts against Assyria. Shalmaneser besieges Samaria. [722–704. Sargon[24] in Assyria.]
721	6 OF HEZEKIAH = FALL OF SAMARIA = 9 OF HOSHEA.								[719 or 718. Sargon's campaign in Phœnicia. Battle of Raphia, in which he defeats the Egyptians.] [718–14. Siege of Tyre by Sargon for five years without success.] [715 (about). New revolt of Samaria, Damascus, and Hamath subdued by Sargon.] [710 (about). Sargon's campaign against Ashdod.[25]] [710–704. Sargon occupied in building at Dur-Sharyukin.[26]] [709. Sargon defeats Merodach Baladan at Dur Yakin[31] and reduces Chaldea to subjection.] [704–681. Sennacherib in Assyria.] [701. Sennacherib in Phœnicia.[27]] [Wins battle of Eltekon[29] against the Egyptians (Sabacon II.).] 700. Sennacherib in Judah.[28] Judah tributary to Assyria. Sennacherib's army destroyed. [699. Babylon in revolt against Assyria under Merodach Baladan.] Merodach Baladan sends messengers to seek an alliance with Hezekiah.[30]

[17] See *Exeg.* on 2 Kings xvi. 3; xvii. 16; xxiii. 12.
[18] See note 15.
[19] *Cf.* 2 Chron. xxviii. 20.
[20] *Cf.* 2 Kings xvi. 10.
[21] See the *Supplementary Note*, p. 189.
[22] See p. 189.
[23] See *Exeg.* on 2 Kings xvii. 4, and p. 189.
[24] See p. 189. The Assyrian form of the name is *Sharyukin*.
[25] *Cf.* Isai. xx. 1.
[26] *I.e.* Castle of Sharyukin or Sargon. It is the modern Khorsabad.
[27] See p. 220.
[28] See p. 220.
[29] See p. 220.

[30] This date is in dispute. We are told that Hezekiah reigned 29 years (2 Kings xviii. 2), that Sennacherib's invasion fell in his 14th year (2 Kings xviii. 13), and that he lived 15 years afterwards (2 Kings xx. 6). These data are consistent with each other, but the second would make Sennacherib's invasion fall in 713. This is irreconcilable with Assyrian data, which seem to be beyond question. All the explanations or conjectures offered sacrifice the statements of the biblical text. They cannot be regarded as solutions of the difficulty. It should be noticed, therefore, that the dates given to this and other events connected with it are not those which the biblical text would give. See *Supp. Note* after *Exeg.* on Chap. 20.
[31] See *Supp. Note* on Chap. 20.

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE—(CONTINUED).

Dates adopted in this Comm.	KINGS OF JUDAH.	Age at Accession.	Duration of Reign.	SYNCHRONISMS, &c.
698	MANASSEH	12	55	[697–682. Sennacherib in constant war with Babylon, which revolts again and again.] *Supremacy of the heathen religions in Judah. Persecution of Jehovah-worshippers.* [681–667. Esarhaddon in Assyria.] c. 680. Manasseh captive in Babylon.[32] [Manasseh tributary.] [c. 675. Esarhaddon conquers Egypt.] [667–647. Asshurbanipal in Assyria.[33]] [657. Phraortes establishes Median Empire.] [647–625. Asshuredililani III. in Assyria.][33]
643	AMON	22	2	[Between 650 and 640 Psammetichus becomes independent king of Egypt.][33]
641	JOSIAH	8	31	[Cyaxares in Media.] *Revival of Jehovah-worship.* [625–606. Saracus in Assyria.] [Nabopolassar in Babylon until 604.][34] [625. First attack of Medes and Babylonians on Nineveh. Scythian invasion.] 622. Repair of the Temple. Discovery of the Book of the Law. *Great Reformation. Passover celebrated.*
615				
610	JEHOAHAZ	23	3 mos	610. Battle of Megiddo. Josiah slain. 609. Jehoahaz taken captive to Egypt.
610	ELIAKIM OR JEHOIAKIM.	25	11	Judah tributary to Egypt. *Heathenism in the ascendant.* [607. Nebuchadnezzar associated with his father as king of Babylon.][34] [606. Nineveh taken by the Medes and Babylonians.][34] 605. Battle of Carchemish. Nebuchadnezzar defeats Necho. [604. Nebuchadnezzar in Babylon until 561.] 602. Nebuchadnezzar invades Judah.
599	JEHOIACHIN	8 (?) / 18	3 mos	599. Nebuchadnezzar again in Judah. BEGINNING OF THE CAPTIVITY.
599	MATTANIAH OR ZEDEKIAH.	21	11	595. Confederated plan of revolt with Phœnicia, Ammon, and Moab.[34] 594. Zedekiah's visit to Babylon.[35] Hophra (Uahprahet) in Egypt. 590. Revolt of Judah. Babylonians besiege Jerusalem.
[illegible]	Destruction of Jerusalem			587. Gedaliah killed by Ishmael. [561. Evil Merodach in Babylon.] Jehioachin released from prison.
c.[illegible]	Compilation of the "Book of the Kings."			

[32] *Cf.* 2 Chron. xxxiii. 11. *Supp. Note* on Chap. 21.

[33] See *Supp. Note* on Chap. xxi. Rawlinson (*Five Great Mon.* II. 52) gives Asshur-banipal's reign 668–626, and that of his son, whom he calls Asshur-emid-ilin, 626–625.

[34] I give here the dates of Lenormant. On the question at issue and the conflicting authorities, see p. 284 *sq.*

[35] Jerem. li. 59.

W. G. S.